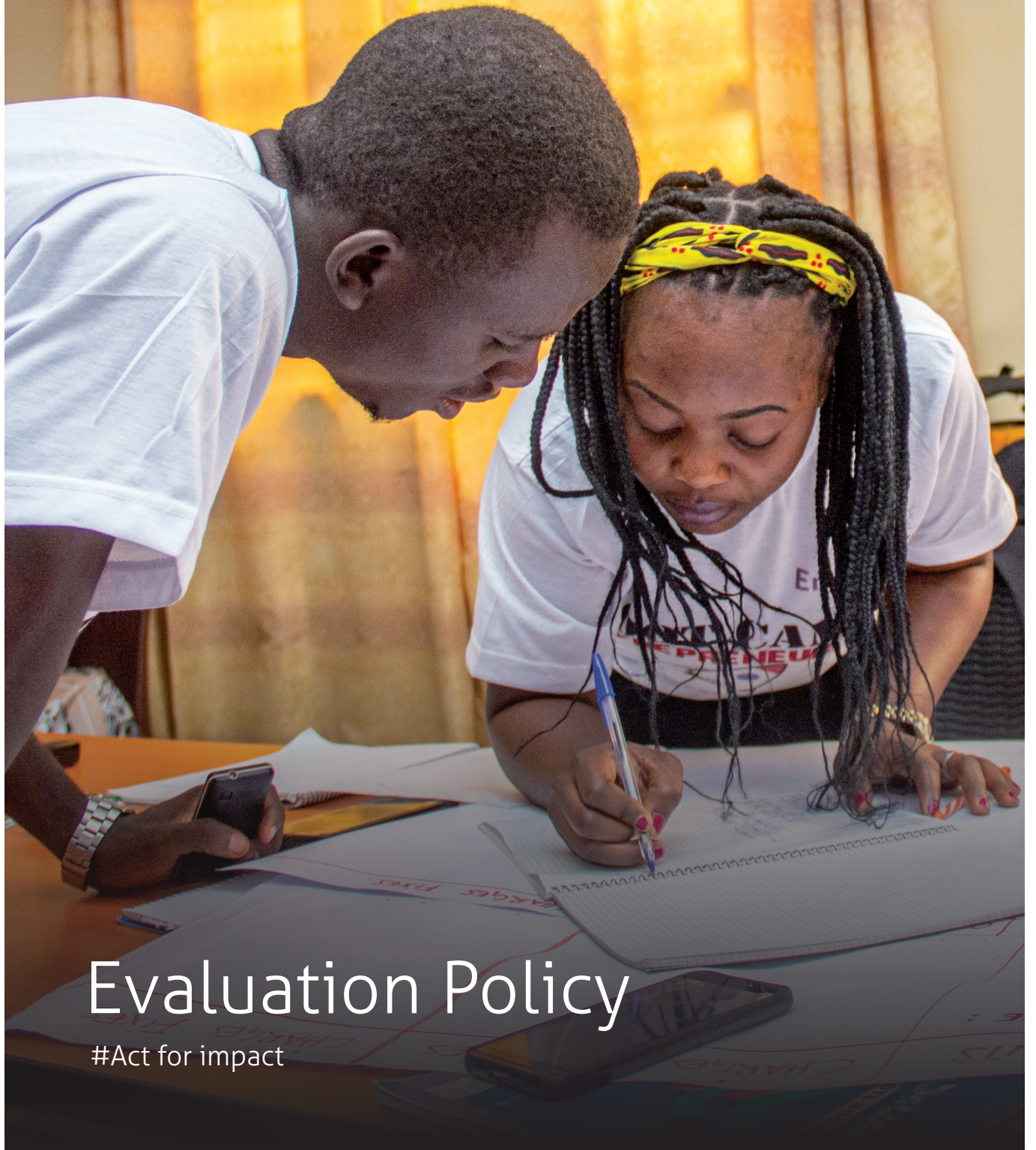


Enabel 



Evaluation Policy

#Act for impact

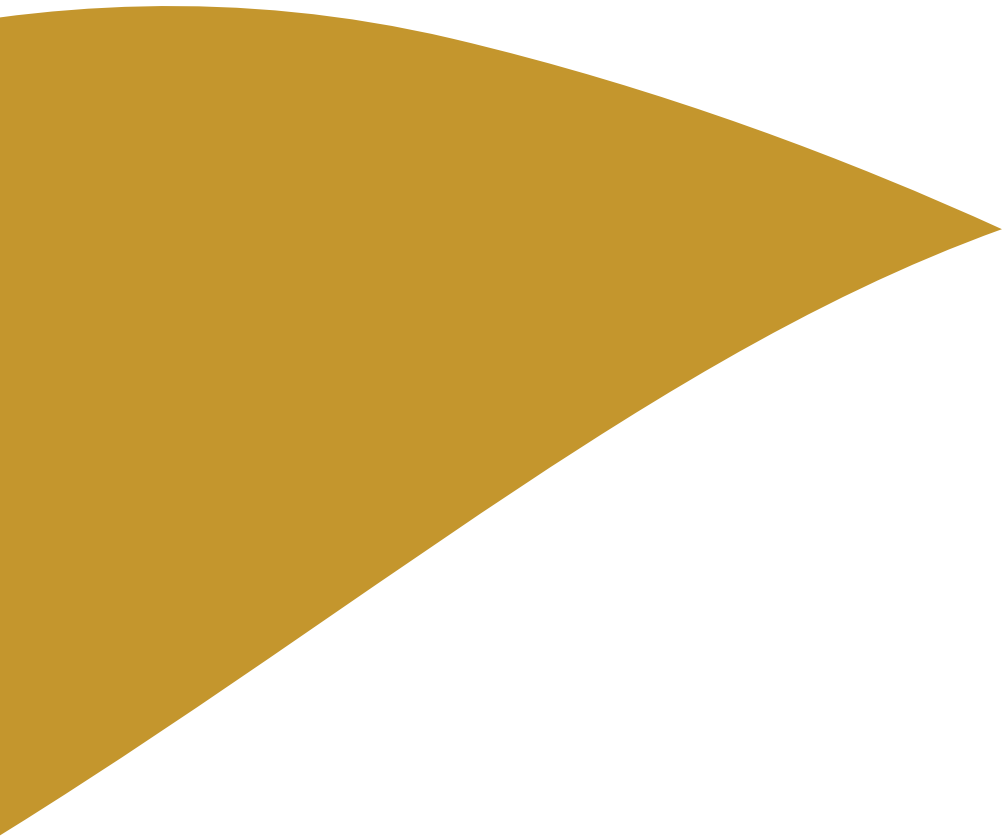


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Introduction

This chapter provides the rationale for updating Enabel's Evaluation Policy. It presents the essential reasons for the revision and summarises the major adaptations, which will be explained in the following chapters.

Reasons for revising the Policy

The previous Evaluation Policy goes back to 2013. It provided the organisation with a structured Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework – MoRe Results. A framework that resulted in continuous investment in both evaluation and project monitoring through the various Management Contracts between the Belgian government and, first, the Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC) and, later, Enabel. BTC/Enabel conducted approximately 400 evaluations between 2013 and 2022. The MoRe Results framework above all strengthened the accountability of the Belgian Technical Cooperation.

Enabel's institutional and organisational context has evolved in the meantime. With the creation of Enabel in December 2017, the Belgian development agency was given a more strategic mandate and greater autonomy in its operations. Enabel was also given a stronger responsibility to become a "learning organisation" and an organisation that demonstrates its impact and contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals. This evolution is reflected in the Ambitions of Enabel's 2030 Strategy.

The transformation of the Belgian Technical Cooperation into Enabel also implied an evolution of the working approach: in a context of limited resources, the volume of missions managed by Enabel is expected to increase (double volume) and the ambitions to maximise results (triple impact) are reinforced. This translates into the need for a more agile organisation, a search for internal efficiency and a focus on the essential and useful, which also impacts the organisation's evaluation system.

The adaptation of the Enabel evaluation system is a continuous improvement process. The 2013 Evaluation Policy was first supplemented by an Evaluation Charter and the creation of the Internal Evaluation Office in 2017. The certification of the evaluation system by the Special Evaluation Office (SEO) in 2017 and again in 2022, as well as the evaluation of Enabel's results management conducted in 2018, provided diagnostic feedback on Enabel's

M&E system allowing the organisation to evolve a more agile and updated evaluation system based on informed choices. This revised Evaluation Policy aims to adapt Enabel's evaluation system to its new realities.

Major adaptations and their consequences

Enabel considers evaluations to be of importance for the organisation. They generate evidence, knowledge, and lessons learned that allow Enabel to inform decision-making with a view to maximising its impact and to being accountable for the changes it seeks to achieve. In this way, evaluation contributes to the development objectives, to the strategic organisational objectives and to Enabel's credibility in the eyes of partner country authorities, the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD) and other donors, and of the public and other stakeholders.

The main adjustments from the 2013 Policy are:

- In line with the 2030 Strategy and the 2020 Results-based Management (RBM) Policy, the **strategic-level learning** purpose of evaluations is strengthened as a counterweight to the primary focus on project accountability under the 2013 Policy. Accountability to the public is strengthened through broader communication of Enabel's evaluation results.
- The mechanical and systematic conduct of evaluations for all projects as foreseen in the 2013 Policy is replaced by an approach that prioritises the **quality and usefulness of evaluations**: the quantity of evaluations conducted is rationalised in favour of a stronger need for quality and usefulness of continuous improvement of working approaches.
- **Improving the quality of evaluations** goes hand in hand with strengthening the application and use of principles, norms/standards and working approaches that ensure that evaluations are of

good quality. This includes a **more prominent place and a strengthening of the participation of the partner country** in the evaluation process as well as the **participation of the final beneficiaries** of Enabel's actions.

- **Better complementarity** is sought between external evaluations, including those of the SEO, but also between internal instruments such as monitoring, capitalisation and other RBM instruments, in order to optimise their use for Enabel's learning, decision-making and accountability.

These major adaptations have the following concrete implications:

- **Strategic and quality evaluations**, which did not exist in the 2013 Policy, are added to the instruments used by Enabel; the use of evaluations is integrated into internal strategic learning and decision-making mechanisms at the organisational level. Evaluation reports are systematically made public.
 - The so-called "mid-term reviews" and "final reviews" of interventions (2013 Policy) are no longer conducted systematically; they are replaced by **evaluations of cooperation programmes**, and by **project evaluations** at least once during the implementation cycle. These evaluations are complemented by a strengthened monitoring and learning system throughout implementation.
 - The various evaluations have a main purpose: evaluations of government cooperation programmes are used to **steer and guide decisions** for future programming cycles in partner countries; project evaluations contribute to **accountability** and assess the achievement of targeted effects and systemic changes as well as the reasons for successes and failures in order to adapt Enabel's approaches and strategies; strategic evaluations are used for **learning**; and finally, quality assessments ensure that the monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems are reliable.
- The organisation and management of Enabel's evaluations is entrusted to the Internal Evaluation Office, which is reinforced with additional human resources. A transition phase between the two systems is scheduled in order to effectively manage the volume of ongoing evaluations, to strengthen the team in charge, to update the Charter of the Internal Evaluation Office, to complement the Policy with a set of adapted processes and tools, including an adapted monitoring Policy and to ensure the understanding and ownership of the new Evaluation Policy by the relevant Enabel teams.

The following chapters present the strategic positions on evaluation taken by Enabel and detail the various adaptations that constitute Enabel's new Evaluation Policy.

Purpose and scope

This chapter summarises the purpose of Enabel's Evaluation Policy, who it is intended for, and it prescribes its scope.

Purpose of the Evaluation Policy

- The Evaluation Policy serves as the **first level of the evaluation framework of reference** at Enabel's. Its purpose is to describe the diverse types of evaluations conducted by the organisation, the guiding principles and positions adopted for planning, managing, using the results of evaluations, and reporting. It also specifies the responsibilities that apply to evaluation within the organisation.
- The Evaluation Policy is addressed to Enabel staff involved in the evaluation processes at the various levels of the organisation, including the Board of Directors. It also aims to **inform the various stakeholders and partners** about the way Enabel organises and conducts its evaluations.
- The Evaluation Policy provides the framework for the **second level of the framework of reference**, namely the processes related to evaluation. Process descriptions, guides and tools complement the Evaluation Policy for application purposes.

Scope of the Evaluation Policy

- The Evaluation Policy applies to Enabel's **internal evaluation**, i.e. the evaluation organised by Enabel, as provided for in the [Law of 19 March 2013 on Development Cooperation](#) (Chapter 9 Articles 32 and 33).
- It applies to interventions, portfolios, cooperation programmes and projects covered by the Belgian Law of 23 November 2017 changing the name of the Belgian Technical Cooperation and defining the missions and functioning of Enabel, the Belgian development agency¹.

¹ | Enabel Law Art. 5, 6, 7 and 9. Article 5 regards the governmental cooperation programme and covers the country strategy as well as the portfolio (coherent set of interventions), Article 6 regards projects resulting from a request of the Minister in the framework of a request for support from the administration to Enabel, Article 7 regards the Junior Programme, Article 9 regards projects within the framework of Enabel's mandate to implement missions for donors other than the Belgian federal state.

General positioning

This chapter summarises Enabel's main positioning on internal evaluation. The following questions are addressed: What is the purpose of the evaluation at Enabel's? What types of evaluations are conducted by the organisation and what are their main characteristics?

Purpose of evaluations at Enabel

- Enabel subscribes to the OECD DAC definition of evaluation: "The **systematic and objective assessment** of a planned, on-going or completed project, programme or Policy, its design, implementation and results (...)". An evaluation provides information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned from the experience into the decision-making process of actors and partners involved. Evaluations promote dialogue and improve cooperation among partners in the development process.
- Evaluation is a useful assessment tool for results-based management. Through the findings and lessons learned, it allows the organisation to learn from its experience, to use these learnings to **support decision-making** and to **strengthen accountability**.
- **Evaluations support Enabel's ambition to become a "learning organisation"**. Evaluations explain which mechanisms, conditions and contextual elements were critical for achieving or not achieving the intended developmental results and systemic changes. Lessons learned from evaluations are evidence-based. The knowledge generated by evaluations contributes to a broader understanding of development processes, to innovation and to adaptations of development strategies.
- **Through the recommendations and lessons learned, evaluations support strategic decision-making for Enabel and its partners**. Lessons learned can be incorporated into future decisions by Enabel and its stakeholders. In order for evaluations to play an influential role in strategic decision-making, it is important that they not only respond to a need in a timely manner, but that internal knowledge management mechanisms and processes, sharing and decision-making platforms exist and are used to facilitate the use of this knowledge.
- **Evaluations support Enabel's accountability**. Evaluations are a means of assessing the performance of projects to be reliably and transparently accountable for the use of resources, for the results achieved or not achieved, and to **explain the how and why**. Evaluations also foster transparent communication with stakeholders and the general public and help to ensure accountability for actions and decisions taken.
- Clearly defined objectives before conducting an evaluation as well as the manner in which information from an evaluation is used determine its usefulness and purpose. Based on Enabel's experience over the past few years and the lessons learned², evaluations should have very clear and focused objectives. Enabel is aware of the link between different purposes, yet the approach used assigns a **main purpose** according to the type of evaluation. This will increase effectiveness, efficiency and use of each evaluation and increase complementarity with other RBM instruments.
- In order for it to be useful, Enabel conducts the evaluation **at the most appropriate time** to meet its objective.
 - Where the purpose is to guide **strategic steering and decision-making** during the implementation period or to influence strategic decisions for the next programming cycle, an **evaluation during implementation or at "mid-term"** is most appropriate. This type of evaluation contributes primarily to **steering**.
 - If the purpose is to determine **the extent to which the intended effects have been achieved or are being achieved and to understand the mechanisms** of the changes generated to improve future practices, an **end-term evaluation** is most appropriate. This type of evaluation contributes to **accountability and learning** of the stakeholders of the evaluation subject.
 - If the purpose is to assess in depth the **longer-term effects of the actions and the sustainability**

2 | Results Management System Evaluation, Syspons, 2018.

of the development results, it is best to organise an ex-post evaluation. Conducting an ex-post evaluation requires a robust and continuous monitoring system throughout the evaluation period and the **availability of a budget in the next cycle** of the programme(s)/project(s) to be evaluated. This type of evaluation is done on targeted themes of interest in order to capitalise on the successes and failures of development approaches and strategies. It contributes primarily to the **learning** of Enabel, its partners and other stakeholders.

- Enabel wants to **ensure an integrated approach** and a **better alignment** between the different instruments of results-based management: planning, monitoring, evaluation, action research, continuous learning and capitalisation. Evaluating should not be seen as an isolated process, but rather as a **link in the chain** that complements and builds on previous thinking and analysis. Thus, the different types of evaluations conducted by Enabel complete the entire results-based management and learning process at the project, country and organisational levels in a balanced and efficient way.
- The evaluations conducted by Enabel are used by the Special Evaluation Office as a reliable source of information to feed into broader evaluation processes concerning the Belgian Development Cooperation as a whole. Therefore, Enabel through its Internal Evaluation Office coordinates regularly with the Special Evaluation Office to ensure that its evaluations are **complementary and consistent** with the evaluations conducted by the Special Evaluation Office. The evaluations conducted by Enabel are also **systematically shared** with the SEO and DGD, thus promoting the use of lessons learned for the Belgian Development Cooperation.

Types of evaluations conducted by Enabel

Enabel conducts evaluations at different levels:

- Project evaluations;
- Evaluations of cooperation programmes;
- Strategic evaluations;
- Quality assessments.

Project evaluations³

- The project evaluation concerns the projects as foreseen in the Enabel Law (Articles 6, 7 and 9). It **looks back** on the achievement (or non-achievement) of systemic changes and development results, as well as on the lessons learned from implementation and the contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals. Depending on the context and the needs of the stakeholders, other dimensions can also be assessed.
- Project evaluation supports **accountability** to partner countries, donors and other stakeholders. The recommendations and strategic lessons learned from project evaluations also feed into the decision-making processes of Enabel and its stakeholders. In the event that the project is extended or has an additional phase, the lessons learned are used in the next programming cycle. In this sense, the learning function is also important.
- The project evaluation is conducted **at the end of the implementation period** in lieu of "final reviews". This maximises the use of available development results information and allows for a more efficient analysis of Enabel's contribution. It is then possible to have a better understanding and appreciation of the achievements, successes and failures, contextual constraints and strategic lessons learned.
- Each project implemented by Enabel includes an evaluation **at least once during the cycle**. Depending on the relevance, this evaluation can be conducted **individually or jointly with other projects** on the same theme. The relevance of this choice is analysed during the annual and multi-year planning of Enabel's evaluations.
- When a project or group of projects on the same theme is funded by several donors, the possibility of organising a **joint evaluation** should be considered by the implementing teams to avoid duplication of efforts and loss of resources. This approach also contributes to harmonisation and alignment.
- A mid-term project evaluation is no longer systematically organised, but may nevertheless be

³ | The 2013 Law on Development Cooperation as well as the Enabel Law and the successive Management Contracts use the term "intervention" and "mission" to mean "projects." For the sake of simplicity, we have chosen to use the term "project".

considered in cases where the project requires an **external and independent evaluation** that cannot be addressed by the other processes in place, including monitoring and support and learning visits as well as distance support to projects; if the question arises, this evaluation is used for strategic decision-making on the future of the project in progress (reorientation, termination or continuation). The decision to organise a mid-term evaluation for a specific project is made at the latest at the last Operational Risk and Delivery Committee (ORC) of the ongoing year and integrated into the annual planning of evaluations for the following year.

Evaluations of cooperation programmes

- The evaluation of cooperation programmes concerns **bilateral cooperation programmes** between Belgium and the partner countries of the Belgian Development Cooperation as well as **thematic or regional cooperation programmes** (Article 5 of the Enabel Law). The cooperation programme evaluation covers the **strategy and the portfolio**.
- The objective of this type of evaluation is to guide the strategic steering of the cooperation programme and the **strategic decisions** for the preparation of the next programming cycle.
- The evaluation of the cooperation programme covers the assessment of the following aspects:
 - The **dynamics of the partnership** between Belgium and the respective partner country (or countries) or regional institution(s) concerned in the framework of the cooperation programme implemented, in order to generate evidence on the quality of the partnership relationship, mutual accountability and thus contribute to an open, effective and transparent dialogue on development changes and results.
 - The **relevance of the strategic orientations** adopted for the cooperation programme, as well as the **overall performance of the programme** according to the OECD DAC criteria and based on the findings of the monitoring of the implementation of the projects that make up

the programme. This assessment implies the existence of a robust monitoring system that allows for the availability of information on results, changes generated and progress made.

- The **contribution of missions for donors other than the Belgian federal state** to development objectives, in order to assess the strengthening, synergy and complementarity of actions.
- The evaluation of cooperation programmes is carried out **once during the period of implementation** of the programme. In order to be as relevant as possible, for a 5-year programme, this evaluation usually takes place between the 3rd and 4th year of implementation. The results of the evaluation must be available to feed into the preparation of the next programming cycle and also take into account the fact that government cooperation is part of a longer-term partnership.
- In the event that an ex-post evaluation of specific components or projects forming part of the cooperation programme is envisaged and due to the operational and financial modalities of the cooperation programme cycles, the budget for the evaluation will have to be foreseen in the following cooperation programme.
- The evaluation of the cooperation programme closely involves the partner, the Belgian State represented by the Embassy and the Enabel Representation in the country/countries concerned in all stages of the process. As provided for in the Management Contract, this evaluation feeds into the consultative body provided for in the programme's Specific Agreement.

Strategic evaluations

- Strategic evaluations use a set of projects to draw the richest lessons and most representative findings possible. Depending on the specific objective and the needs that arise, the set of projects selected for strategic evaluation may be **thematic, regional or global**, but may also be determined by other transversal and organisational criteria. Any type of project can be included in the strategic evaluation (projects funded individually or as part of a cooperation programme).

- Strategic evaluations aim to generate knowledge relevant to the development of internal strategies and policies based on the experience and lessons learned from Enabel's practices. They address strategic issues relevant to the organisation and Enabel's priority needs for knowledge about its development cooperation work. They are **primarily for learning**, but also serve **organisational results accountability**.
- In addition to the strategic nature of these evaluations, which translates into a focused objective and a limited set of evaluation questions, the evaluation methodologies and approaches used to answer them must be specific and robust.
- Following an internal consultation within Enabel at different levels, the Internal Evaluation Office consolidates a proposal of topics for strategic evaluations, based on the organisational dynamics, the identified themes of interest, priorities and internal needs and the evolving context of development cooperation.
- The optimal time to undertake a strategic evaluation is when multiple stakeholders within the organisation, the Internal Evaluation Office and the managerial level proactively identify the need for evidence-based knowledge on a given topic in order to move a situation of strategic importance to Enabel forward.

Quality assessments

- The quality assessments evaluate the quality and functioning of the M&E systems and their components and provide guidance for adapting the existing system to meet Enabel's emerging needs. They ensure reliable reporting on the results of cooperation projects and programmes.
- Their primary purpose is to **ensure that results systems are reliable**. They generate new knowledge to **support decision-making** in order to improve the quality of Enabel's systems.
- The elements of the M&E system that are subject to quality assessment can be processes, competences, tools and products that make reliable information and data on Enabel's development results available at different levels of the organisation.
- The quality assessments cover a representative set of projects, products, etc. in order to have an overall assessment of quality.
- Within the framework of the certification of the internal evaluation system of the development cooperation actors according to the modalities foreseen in Article 33 of the Law on Development Cooperation, the Special Evaluation Office organises the external evaluation of the quality of Enabel's Monitoring and Evaluation system.

Principles of operationalisation

This chapter discusses the main principles for operationalising Enabel's evaluations. The following questions are answered: What are the key principles, criteria and quality standards that Enabel places the greatest importance on? What are the key positions in evaluation planning and management? How does Enabel organise and communicate the use of the results of the evaluations?

Evaluation quality standards

Each evaluation conducted by Enabel complies with the OECD DAC norms and quality standards for evaluation. The following paragraphs outline the guiding principles that Enabel wishes to emphasise in the context of internal evaluations. These guiding principles are interrelated. When properly considered, they contribute to the quality of an evaluation. A full description of the evaluation norms and standards and the implications can be found on the OECD DAC website.

Guiding principles

- **Usefulness:** For evaluation results to have real influence on decision-making, they must be perceived as relevant and useful and must reflect the interests and needs of the various stakeholders, including the end users of our actions. For Enabel, the decision to evaluate is a strategic one, taking into consideration the opportunity and relevance of doing so, in order to ensure that the evaluation is of **added value**. The decision to evaluate is integrated into the organisation's decision-making mechanisms (at the level of the countries of intervention and the organisation as a whole).
- **Transparency:** Enabel follows the global trend for **increased transparency** of evaluation results: The transparency of the evaluation exercise is also a decisive aspect of its credibility and legitimacy. To be transparent, the evaluation process must be as inclusive as possible and the results must be widely communicated.

In line with its 2020 Transparency Policy, Enabel is fully committed to the regular and timely publication of evaluation reports and related information to support and promote compliance with the transparency principle. The main channels for disseminating this information are: the www.enabel.be website, Open.enabel (<https://open.enabel.be>), IATI ([International Aid Transparency Initiative - iatistandard.org](http://InternationalAidTransparencyInitiative-iatistandard.org)). Enabel also

endeavours to provide results information of the evaluations through other means such as paper documents and informative briefs or social media and at conferences and seminars.

- **Credibility:** The credibility of the evaluation depends on professional competence and independence, as well as the degree of transparency of the process. To be credible, the evaluation must include both successes and failures. The involvement and commitment of the partner or intervention country in all stages of the evaluation helps to build credibility.

Enabel uses **external professional evaluators** to ensure that it has a sufficiently broad and diverse range of evaluation expertise and that its evaluations use internationally recognised quality standards, making them credible and useful.

- **Participation:** The participation of the different stakeholders contributes to the quality of the evaluation; it also contributes to sustainability since the partner and intervention countries become solely responsible at the end of the implementation period. To this end, evaluations must take into account the concerns of each partner.

In line with the 2030 Strategy, Enabel formally engages the partner in all phases of the evaluation process of cooperation programmes and projects. With the participation of the partner, Enabel wants to ensure that the operation of the partnership for which it is responsible uses an open, effective and transparent dialogue.

Enabel is committed to improving the consideration of the opinions of end users of its actions, through their participation and/or representation in the evaluation processes. Whenever appropriate, the opinions and special knowledge of the final beneficiary groups should be an integral part of the evaluation data.

- **Independence, impartiality and objectivity:** Enabel recognises that the principle of independence lends legitimacy and credibility to the evaluation and reduces the risk of conflicts of interest that could arise if managers were solely responsible for evaluating their own activities.

To avoid the risk of conflicts of interest, **evaluators** must not have been involved in the formulation, preparation, implementation or management of the actions to be evaluated. **Evaluation managers** should not have decision-making authority in the project/programme being evaluated.

Independence, impartiality and objectivity are also reflected in the professional ethics of evaluation managers and evaluators throughout the process.

Enabel ensures that the organisational structure and processes put in place for the organisation and conduct of its evaluations facilitate independence and impartiality and reduce any risk of conflict of interest.

- **Ethics and deontology:** The application of the Enabel Code of Conduct, Enabel's Policy regarding sexual exploitation and abuse, Enabel's Personal data protection Policy and Enabel's Policy regarding fraud and corruption risk management serve as a broader framework of reference for the ethical considerations to be taken into account when evaluating.

Ethics in evaluation is about respecting human rights, dignity and diversity of all stakeholders. Ethics must be ensured from the design of the evaluation and throughout the process. It concerns evaluators, evaluation sponsors and evaluation managers.

The professional integrity of the evaluators is a particular focus in the contracts established by Enabel and the evaluators and entities representing them. Evaluators must respect the right of individuals to provide information in confidence and ensure privacy. Participants in evaluations should be given informed information about the purpose of the evaluation and how the data will be used.

Use of evaluation criteria

- In line with the latest OECD DAC definitions, the evaluation criteria used at Enabel's are **coherence, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact**. Enabel uses these criteria to support the harmonisation of the quality of evaluation products. For assessing the overall performance of cooperation projects and programmes, the six OECD DAC evaluation criteria are taken into account through the use of a scoring grid.
- Each criterion provides a **different perspective** through which the project or programme can be viewed. Together, the criteria provide a more complete picture of the evaluated subject. Enabel makes a conscious choice to apply the evaluation criteria to ensure that each evaluation is useful and of high quality. The use of criteria depends on the purpose of the evaluation. All evaluation criteria should not be applied mechanically to the same extent if the objective does not justify it. It may be decided to put more emphasis on certain criteria depending on the context and the expectations of the stakeholders. The choices made are explained in the terms of reference of the evaluation.
- Enabel ensures that the evaluations it organises are gender-sensitive and respect the rights-based approach and the "leaving no one behind" and "do no harm" principles. These approaches are reflected in the processes and tools developed and used for the evaluation.
- Enabel acknowledges that its actions also have **unexpected positive and negative effects**. An analysis of unexpected effects of the actions is part of the evaluations according to the targeted objectives.

Methodological approaches and evaluability

- Enabel recognises that development is a complex undertaking, in often volatile and uncertain situations. This means that the methodological approaches used for the evaluation must be appropriate to the contexts, the nature of the programme/project, and relevant to the evaluation objectives and questions. **Utilisation-focused evaluation** approaches are preferred.
- Enabel wishes to integrate into its practice **a wider range and innovative evaluation methodologies**, allowing it on the one hand to address the broad range of actions (especially innovative projects) it implements, and on the other hand, to **assess the systemic changes** generated by the project. Enabel integrates **impact measurements** at the level of the end users of its actions where relevant and where adequate means are allocated.
- Although they do not replace the formal evaluation foreseen by the project/programme, **good practices** used in intervention countries or in Brussels are encouraged and shared within Enabel as they strengthen the evaluation culture and the use of evaluations to improve working approaches. Their purpose is to learn and support steering. These good practices include **self-evaluations** by project teams, **peer evaluations** (between teams from various countries or with other partners), **knowledge-building initiatives** that aim to cross-reference and discuss the conclusions of previous evaluations on a given theme, or other initiatives using an evaluative approach (after-action-review, results-oriented monitoring, real-time evaluations, etc.).
- The **quality of evaluations** is largely **determined upstream** of the conduct of the actions. An **evaluative logic** is used as from the development of the Theory of Change, when determining the baseline, in the description of the context and in the development of the Monitoring and Evaluation system and indicators as well as in the continuous learning process.
- Enabel is making needed efforts to improve the availability of baseline data and to strengthen monitoring and learning on development results throughout the cycle. These efforts help to improve the **"evaluability"** of programmes and projects, which is their ability to be evaluated on the basis

of robust, reliable and relevant data, and thus to ensure better quality and use of evaluations. Evaluability is dependent on the monitoring system in place. An evaluability analysis is built into the preparation of evaluations.

Planning evaluations

- Enabel establishes a **multi-year evaluation plan** in a concerted manner. Planning prioritises the different types of evaluations to be undertaken and schedules them accordingly. This plan is updated annually to allow for flexibility in determining the most appropriate time to conduct the evaluation and to take into account emerging needs. Evaluation users are involved in decisions about the organisation and timing of evaluations so that their needs can be taken into account.
- The **planning of evaluations of cooperation programmes and projects** must take into account the coherence and efficiency of the evaluation exercises planned in each country of intervention; to the extent possible and when relevant, the theoretical dates set are adapted to allow a better distribution of evaluation efforts and activities over the year. Each evaluation has its own specificity and on the whole the various evaluations are organised in a complementary way with a view to avoiding duplication.
- The **planning of strategic and quality evaluations** is done in a way that complements the evaluation programme of the Special Evaluation Office. Strategic evaluations, prioritised according to the needs of the organisation as well as quality assessments are proposed in the work plan of the Internal Evaluation Office and validated by Enabel's Board of Directors.
- In order to strengthen the **evaluation culture and the internal ownership** of strategic evaluations, the Enabel teams are asked to share their opinions on the topics of interest for evaluation. Strategic evaluation planning takes into account the specific and strategic demands of the organisation.
- Enabel's annual evaluation planning is supported and approved by the Management Team. Planning for strategic and quality evaluations is also approved by the Board of Directors.

Human resources and budget

- Enabel provides the teams that manage the evaluations – the Internal Evaluation Office and other entities involved in carrying out evaluations – with the human and financial resources required for implementing its Evaluation Policy.
- Enough staff must be provided and they must benefit of regular competence development to maintain in-house capacity and expertise to design, steer and manage the volume of planned evaluations, ensure quality and promote the use of evaluation results.
- The budget for carrying out strategic and quality evaluations is provided for under Enabel's management fee. This budget allows for at least one strategic evaluation to be conducted annually.
- The budget for carrying out evaluations of projects and cooperation programmes is planned and systematically included in projects and cooperation programmes formulation. When several projects/programme components are evaluated together (e.g. within a theme or region), the budget comes from the projects and programmes involved.
- In line with the practices of other Belgian Development Cooperation actors and the recommendations of the Special Evaluation Office, Enabel ensures that at least 1% of the budget of each project (including the projects that make up the cooperation programme) is set aside for evaluation. The costs of an evaluation should be balanced with the resources available for follow-up so as to enhance evaluability and should be appropriately related to the size of the project/programme.

Evaluation management

- Evaluation management covers the **steering** of the following evaluation phases: preparation, conduct of the evaluation, development of evaluation products, use of evaluation results and communication. Guidelines for each phase of the evaluation are detailed in the processes and

guides that complement the Policy for application purposes.

- Evaluations at Enabel's are organised in a **collaborative and participatory way** in order to take into account the needs of the various stakeholders and thus optimise the use of the evaluations.
- For each evaluation, Enabel sets up an evaluation **reference committee** at the appropriate level, whose role is to accompany the evaluation and the decision-making processes related to the conduct of the evaluation. In order to strengthen ownership and use of the evaluation results by the various stakeholders, evaluation management is an **open and inclusive** process, involving the various stakeholders from the beginning.
- Enabel uses **teams of external evaluators** either through public contracts specific to certain evaluations or by using a framework contract for evaluations. Each contractor is informed in advance of the policies, processes and principles used by Enabel in conducting evaluations.
- Managing evaluations is a process that requires **adequate** evaluation **knowledge competences** and coordination, facilitation and management **capacity**. Enabel provides the necessary capacities and competence for this exercise by allocating the necessary human resources as well as training and coaching of the evaluation managers.

Use

- For Enabel it is of **key importance** that its evaluations are useful and can be used to contribute to continuous improvement. The impact of evaluations depends heavily on how the results are shared, disseminated and used. To improve the usefulness of evaluation results, they should be presented in a clear, concise, timely and easily accessible manner; recommendations should be attributed to the appropriate level of implementation.
- The evaluation process itself should be a useful means of clarifying objectives, improving communication, enhancing knowledge and learning and setting the stage for further action.

- At the **most relevant level a management response** is prepared to address the recommendations of each evaluation. It outlines Enabel's position and a plan for implementing the recommendations. Internal processes are planned to discuss the findings and recommendations at the various levels of the organisation, to decide on concrete actions with collective intelligence, to formalise the management responses and to ensure regular follow-up of the implementation of the recommendations at each corresponding level.
- Following up on the implementation of the recommendations concerns not only the internal evaluations of Enabel but also covers external evaluations implemented by the SEO, which have an implication for Enabel. This also contributes to the search for complementarity of evaluations in the development cooperation realm.
- Annually, a summary of the recommendations and actions taken at each level (project, country, organisation) is produced in order to monitor the progress made in addressing the recommendations.
- Beyond the recommendations, the lessons learned from the evaluations are consolidated in Enabel's knowledge management tools and used to capitalise on the various strategic learning areas.
- Enabel's evaluation reports are made available to the public. Transparent publication of evaluation reports and products on the Enabel website builds trust, enhances ownership by all participants and improves accountability to the various stakeholders in the evaluation. Where possible, reports are also integrated into the Partner's sharing platforms and M&E systems.
- Each year, the Internal Evaluation Office produces a report that includes all the evaluations organised by Enabel during the year and summarises the key lessons learned. This report is produced and distributed in collaboration with Enabel's Communication service.

Communication

- The results of the evaluations are disseminated during feedback workshops organised by Enabel in which the various stakeholders of the evaluation take part. The evaluations can be presented on several occasions, as needed, in different locations, face-to-face or remotely, and to various audiences inside and outside Enabel.
- The Enabel Representation in the countries of intervention transmit the final reports and products of each programme/project evaluation concerning their jurisdiction to the Embassy and to the Partner. The evaluation reports are also transmitted to the SEO and DGD to feed into the overall strategic learning of the Belgian Development Cooperation.

Roles and responsibilities

This chapter describes the key roles and responsibilities of the organisational entities involved in evaluations. Enabel's internal evaluation system includes evaluations under the responsibility of Enabel's Management Team (evaluations of cooperation programmes and projects) and evaluations under the responsibility of the Internal Evaluation Office (strategic evaluations and quality assessments).

The second-level framework of reference (process description) describes in more detail the roles and responsibilities at each stage of the evaluation processes at Enabel's.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is, together with the Management Team, the sponsor of Enabel's strategic and quality evaluations.

The Board of Directors approves the multi-year planning of strategic and quality evaluations proposed by the Internal Evaluation Office. It may propose topics for strategic evaluations to be conducted, approves the planning of the Office's activities, the budget for strategic and quality evaluations and the annual reporting of the Internal Evaluation Office.

- Ensure that the evaluation Policy is applied consistently by the teams;
- Communicate strategic evaluation priorities in line with organisational priorities;
- Empower individuals to participate in the reference committees of internal evaluations and external evaluations organised by the SEO that are of strategic interest to Enabel;
- Prepare management responses to recommendations it is concerned by and follow up on their implementation;
- Contribute to the culture of evaluation within the organisation and to the use of evaluation results to guide decision-making.

Management Team

The Management Team is the primary client and user of internal evaluations. Together with the Board of Directors, it is the sponsor of the strategic and quality evaluations.

The Management Team entrusts the Internal Evaluation Office with the steering, execution and validation of programme and project evaluations.

In order to enable it to carry out its evaluation mandate, the Management Team provides the Internal Evaluation Office with the resources it needs to function properly and to carry out the strategic and quality evaluations as well as the evaluations of cooperation programmes and projects that it entrusts to the Internal Evaluation Office.

The more specific roles and responsibilities of the Management Team (and the Departments and Services it represents) with respect to evaluation are as follows:

Internal Evaluation Office

The Internal Evaluation Office is the main contact within Enabel for all questions related to evaluations and has the methodological and managerial expertise to deal with strategic and technical questions related to the organisation and conduct of evaluations at Enabel's. It also serves as a contact point for external evaluations that concern Enabel.

The Internal Evaluation Office is the owner of Enabel's evaluation framework of reference. It ensures the management, production and validation (quality assurance) of the evaluations conducted by Enabel. The production involves teams of external evaluators contracted to carry out the evaluations. Where appropriate, the Internal Evaluation Office manages the framework contract set up for the evaluation.

The Internal Evaluation Office is a second-level function within Enabel, separate from the operational implementation of programmes and projects; it reports to the Board of Directors. This organisational

structure ensures its institutional independence in conducting evaluations.

The more detailed mandate and operation of the Internal Evaluation Office is described in the Evaluation Charter.

A key role: evaluation manager

In order to conduct internal evaluations, Enabel provides for sufficient **evaluation management** staff with competences that are in line with the organisation's evaluation ambitions. Evaluation managers are part of the Internal Evaluation Office. Evaluation managers are responsible for managing the evaluation process and all the steps involved. They play a key role in facilitating the use of evaluation results. The description of the responsibilities, specific tasks and competences of evaluation managers is part of the second-level evaluation framework of reference (tools, guides, processes).

Operational departments and teams

Through a **collaborative approach** the Operations and the Sectoral and Technical Expertise departments and the programme and project teams (Brussels level and country of intervention level) work at organising and conducting evaluations at Enabel's.

They ensure that Enabel's programme and project monitoring systems are robust and allow for evaluations of good quality. Designated persons (MEL Officers, Strategic Advisors, others) within the project/programme teams share relevant information and data to organise and conduct evaluations, assist in the practical organisation of evaluation missions, contribute to the review of reports and other evaluation deliverables, etc.

The persons designated at the level of the country of intervention and at the Brussels level, playing a decision-making role in the cooperation programmes and projects (Operations Managers/Resident Representatives/ Programme Managers/Intervention Managers or others) and/or involved in monitoring-evaluation-learning (Strategic Advisors, MEL Officers, others), actively participate in and accompany the entire process of evaluation of the cooperation

programmes and projects, in particular by being involved in the reference and follow-up committees of the evaluations and are responsible for taking into account and implementing the recommendations at each level.

The experts in the countries of intervention and Brussels provide the expertise required for a good understanding of the "content": Theory of Change, intervention logic of the project to be evaluated. They ensure that Enabel's mechanisms for continuous learning in the course of programmes and projects implementation are strengthened. They are also actively involved at every stage of the process in supporting evaluations in the various areas of expertise, by participating in the reference and follow-up committees for evaluations. They facilitate the dissemination of lessons learned and ensure their integration into Enabel's approaches and tools; as the achievement of development results is intrinsically linked to the relevance and quality of change approaches, their role in evaluation is key.

When the topics are of strategic interest to Enabel, designated persons participate in the reference committees of external evaluations organised by the SEO.

Other organisational entities

Evaluations reference groups: For each internal evaluation, Enabel sets up a reference group. The composition of the reference groups varies according to the type of evaluation and the topics. The reference group always includes representatives of the various evaluation stakeholders who accompany the evaluation process from start to finish.

Validation board: This committee is responsible for quality assurance, including the formulation of cooperation programmes and various projects. It ensures that the formulations take into account the Enabel evaluation principles and that the Policy is applied and more particularly ensures that evaluation is included in the formulation and the budget of the cooperation programmes and projects planned by Enabel.

Operational Risk and Delivery Committee:

This committee is responsible for analysing the evolution of Enabel's global portfolio. In terms of evaluation, it consolidates the overall information for the annual planning of evaluations of cooperation programmes and projects and takes decisions specifically on the organisation of mid-term evaluations of projects based on proposals made by Enabel in the countries of intervention.

Results First Circle: In a collaborative governance approach, the Results First Circle implements activities to strengthen the results and evaluation culture within Enabel. It ensures that the evaluation approach is integrated into the Results-based Management projects it carries out.

Strategic learning group: This group is composed of Enabel-DGD-SEO and develops a joint strategic learning plan on a multi-year basis. The strategic learning group may make proposals for strategic evaluation topics.



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