

**Evaluation of development assistance:
Report concerning activities concluded in 2010
and the 2011-2012 Evaluation Programme**

1. Introduction

This document contains a report of Danida's evaluation activity in 2010 together with an overview of plans for evaluations in 2011-12. The intention behind presenting both the report and the programme in the one document is to enable the Board to discuss the activities that have been implemented together with the forward looking plans for the evaluation of development assistance. A number of evaluations have either been launched or are in preparation within the prioritised areas identified in the 2010-11 evaluation programme (new focus areas — Regions of Origin activities, The Wider Middle East Initiative and the Neighbourhood Programme — and evaluations with a gender equality perspective). Evaluations of Danish assistance to fragile states will be a prioritised area in the programme for 2012. In addition, the evaluation programme will focus in particular on public financial management and budget support and on economic development. In the course of 2011 and 2012, the general orientation can be supplemented by discussions of individual evaluations that are of special interest to the Board. Since January 2011 the Board has had the possibility to comment on the draft of Danida's response to the individual evaluations before publication.

2. Key trends in evaluation activity in 2010

The evaluation department (EVAL) concluded six actual evaluations in 2010. The reason that this is fewer evaluations than planned at the beginning of the year is because it has taken longer than anticipated to complete three evaluations ("Women in Africa", "Southern Sudan" og "Anti-corruption efforts"). These three evaluations will be published in the coming months. The department has, in addition, published two evaluation studies and an international peer review of UNIDO's evaluation function. The six evaluations comprise three at country level (evaluation of the Danish-Bhutanese Country Programme 2000-09, a joint evaluation of cooperation with five donors and Niger between 2000 and 2008 and a joint evaluation of joint assistance strategy for cooperation with Zambia), two sector evaluations (transport infrastructure in Nicaragua and environment sector support in Africa), and a multilateral evaluation (UNHCR's support for a durable solution for Burundian refugees in Tanzania).

In accordance with the principles of the Paris Declaration concerning alignment and harmonisation, EVAL attaches importance to conducting evaluations with partner countries, where relevant. Three of the six evaluations were carried out with the evaluation departments of other donors, and to varying degrees partner countries have been involved in all the evaluations with the exception of the UNHCR evaluation. Simultaneously, there is a need to conduct evaluations that focus on specific Danish efforts or approaches to development assistance. The evaluation of the Danish model for support to transport infrastructure in selected rural areas in Nicaragua and the evaluation of programmatic approaches to support for the environment in selected African programme countries are examples of this.

One of the strengths of the joint evaluations is that they provide a broader basis of experience on which to draw. There are, however, many things to be considered in joint evaluations and many parties to be consulted and to reach agreement with, and there is a risk of the evaluations becoming so broad in their analysis and recommendations that they are not sufficiently practicable and operational.

For this reason, EVAL wishes to continue to maintain an appropriate balance between the number of joint evaluations and the number of evaluations focusing on Danish-supported activities. It is anticipated that approximately half of all evaluations will be implemented as joint evaluations in the future also.

Great importance is attached to ensuring the applicability of all evaluations. Thus, the evaluation of country programme cooperation with Bhutan has contributed to phasing out cooperation with the country and the strategic choices that had to be made in this context. Similarly, the evaluation of the joint assistance strategy supported by 16 bilateral and multilateral donors in Zambia has provided a starting point for the discussions concerning a new strategy for the donors' support to Zambia's upcoming 6th development plan. The evaluation of assistance to Niger has been discussed in the EU working group on development and is expected to be utilised in the forthcoming discussions with the government in Niger on future assistance to the country. The evaluation of Danish support to secondary roads in Nicaragua has contributed solid documentation of the extremely important results achieved by means of the effort. It has also contributed to discussions concerning spreading "the Danish model" to national level in the country. Lessons learnt from the evaluation of the programmatic approach to support for the environment in Africa will be applied in developing the new strategy/action plan for environment, climate and energy and in reviewing the guidelines for Danish development assistance. Finally, both the UNHCR evaluation and other evaluations of support to solving protracted refugee situations will be applied when UNHCR's future work is being organised.

At international level, work continues on the development and dissemination of improved methods for measuring the impact of development assistance, *inter alia* through the two international networks in the area, 3ie and NONIE, both of which receive financial support from EVAL. In this context, together with 3ie and the University of Copenhagen EVAL organised an international conference in Copenhagen in March 2010 on impact evaluations in the area of support to infrastructure. The evaluation of Danish support to transport infrastructure in Nicaragua was presented at the conference. The conference emphasised the methodological problems and challenges involved in impact evaluations. The methods make great demands on the data basis, including documentation in the partner countries.

EVAL will continue to implement impact evaluations where this is considered relevant and realistic, but works with a broad range of evaluation types and methods to be able to capture the breadth and variation in development cooperation and its results.

3. Evaluations concluded in 2010

The six evaluations that were concluded in 2010 are briefly described in the following. All the evaluations can be downloaded from www.evaluation.dk or ordered through the website. The website also has brief summaries in Danish which include the comments on the individual evaluation by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.

3.1 Impact evaluation of Danish support to transport infrastructure in Nicaragua

The objective of this evaluation was to assess the social and economic outcomes of support to improved transport infrastructure in three regions in Nicaragua. The evaluation is based on quantitative and qualitative studies that compare the development in areas and for population groups that received support from the transport sector programme PAST with similar areas and groups that were not supported. The evaluation concludes that positive results of Danida support have been achieved at local, municipal and regional level and that PAST has created both economic and social improvements for the local population. The quantitative analysis found a number of statistically significant improvements, *inter alia* when it comes to matters concerning transport, employment, agricultural production, housing conditions and access to the public electricity supply. In the social areas, the evaluation shows that PAST has meant that in general getting to schools and clinics etc. has become quicker and safer and that contact with health personnel, teachers and other external actors has been improved. Overall, the capacity of the local authorities and local communities to plan, implement and maintain infrastructure projects has been enhanced. At the same time, however, there is still a need for technical support and capacity building in some municipalities. Lessons learnt from the evaluation will be published in international scholarly journals in 2011.

3.2 Evaluation of Danish country programme cooperation with Bhutan 2000-09

With its approximately 700,000 inhabitants, Bhutan is the country that has received most Danish support per head of population over the years. The evaluation covers cooperation with Bhutan over the last 10 years, in particular in the areas of education, health, natural resource management, urban development and good governance, and the evaluation concludes that impressive results have been achieved in the sectors supported by Denmark. The evaluation has special focus on the improvements that have taken place in public services and governance, the degree to which Danish assistance has contributed to the improvements and the sustainability of these improvements. The conclusion is that it pays to concentrate efforts on protracted, massive support within a sector. In addition, the results of the Danish development assistance would not have been achieved without considerable use of advisers and large-scale investments in building capacity in Bhutan.

The evaluation recommends that during the phasing out period the environmental sector, where there continues to be a need for capacity building and consolidation, should be prioritised, as should good governance, where there is a special need to strengthen the ongoing decentralisation process.

3.3 Joint evaluation of the joint country strategy for cooperation with Zambia

Sixteen bilateral and multilateral donors are behind a joint assistance strategy for Zambia (JASZ) for the 2007-10 period. The evaluation assesses the lessons learnt from JASZ and contributes to the development of the next JASZ and to Zambia's sixth National Development Plan.

The evaluation concludes that the joint strategy contributed to making development assistance effective to a limited degree only. In particular the joint strategy has improved the division of labour and harmonisation and has boosted the level of information between the donors. However, the government of Zambia never signed the joint strategy or the action plan connected with it. Consequently, the results bear signs of the joint strategy in reality having functioned as a donor initiative with a view to harmonising development assistance rather than as a Zambian led initiative that could create the framework for each individual donor's commitments in terms of implementing Zambia's own development policy and strategy.

3.4 Joint evaluation of cooperation with Niger 2000-2008.

The evaluation focuses on the total and general impact of the support received by Niger between 2000 and 2008 from, respectively, the EU Commission and four bilateral donors: Belgium, France, Luxembourg and Denmark. The evaluation process was led by the Belgian evaluation department. Support from the five donors comprised approximately 55 % of total development assistance to Niger during the period.

The overriding conclusion of the evaluation is that while the support has contributed to meeting concrete needs in health and education, for example, it has not had sufficient focus on creating the necessary economic growth and development in Niger. This should be viewed in the context of the fact that the country is among the most impoverished in the world and had an annual population growth of about 3.5 % during the evaluation period. In terms of the evaluation, a radical reorientation of development assistance to the country is necessary in order to support economic growth to a higher degree as the foundation for long-term, sustainable development.

3.5 Evaluation of sector programme support to the environment in Africa

The evaluation focuses on lessons learnt from sector programme support in the area of the environment in Tanzania, Zambia and Egypt, but it also includes lessons learnt from Kenya, South Africa and Mozambique. It concludes that Danida contributed to the environmental area rising higher on the agenda in the programme countries. Denmark has been a pioneer in the attempt to develop more cohesive programme support in the area of environment, and the reorganisation to programme support has helped reduce the expenses involved in granting development assistance. Specifically, the Danish support has *inter alia* contributed to better environmental legislation and capacity in environmental management. Danish-financed long-term advisers strategically placed in the ministries and institutions of the programme countries have made an effective contribution to capacity building and to strengthening the connections between the political and the practical levels. In some cases, moreover, development assistance has led to the increased involvement of the private sector in waste management and to the development of new models for better management of forest resources.

At the same time the evaluation finds that it has proved difficult to fulfil the high Danish ambitions of providing coherent programme support in the area. This is due partly to the fact that the environment is a very extensive, complex area and partly because of the limited capacity and political will to strengthen the environment in the programme countries. Consequently what is needed is prolonged, focused Danish efforts to create results that are good and durable. The evaluation recommends that Danida should continue its programme support to the environment in Africa but in a more pragmatic

fashion by focusing to a higher degree on specific sub-sectors in the environmental area and by aligning the level of ambition with capacity in the individual country.

3.6 Joint evaluation of UNHCR support to the strategy for a durable solution for Burundian refugees in Tanzania

This evaluation is one of four country evaluations summing up the lessons learnt from the special initiative launched in 2008 by the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees to promote durable solutions to protracted refugee situations. The evaluation was conducted in collaboration with UNHCR and focuses on the 160,000 Burundians who fled to Tanzania in 1972.

A great deal has been achieved in that 53,000 refugees have been repatriated to Burundi and more than 162,000 have been granted Tanzanian citizenship and are now to be moved out of the former refugee villages and dispersed to other places in Tanzania. However, both the refugees who have returned home and those who remain in Tanzania still face great challenges in terms of integration in the previous or new local communities. Similarly, there is uncertainty concerning when the new Tanzanian citizens will receive certificates of citizenship. The evaluation concludes that at local level UNHCR has functioned as an efficient, dynamic catalyst in the tripartite cooperation between UNHCR and the governments in Tanzania and Burundi by formulating and implementing a strategy for the Burundian refugees. UNHCR has played a constructive role and has been in a position to adapt its efforts to the swiftly changing conditions. The evaluation points out that the coordination between UNHCR's country offices in Tanzania and Burundi could have been better, and it concludes that the results could not have been achieved if the two governments themselves had not been motivated and had managed the process.

4. Studies and analyses

EVAL published two "evaluation studies" in 2010. The one study focuses on existing knowledge about the overall impacts of development assistance. This was a follow up to the evaluation study concerning the methodological challenges associated with assessing the overall economic impacts of development assistance (Evaluation Study 2009:1). The focus of the second evaluation study published in 2010 is on value chains and gender and seeks to contribute to consideration of how to support the incorporation of gender perspectives in working with value chains in the private sector in developing countries.

In addition to the two evaluation studies, in 2010 EVAL published the international peer review of UNIDO's evaluation function that was conducted 2009-10. The peer review shows that the evaluation function and the thematic and strategic evaluations in particular carried out by the organisation in recent years are appreciated and are also utilised to a certain extent to improve UNIDO's activities. However, (as in many other organisations) there continue to exist problems of ensuring the application of evaluation-based lessons learnt in the organisation, and not least in ensuring a proper basis for actual evaluations of impact.

All studies and analyses – like the actual evaluations – can be downloaded from www.evaluation.dk

5. Other dissemination activities

Besides the previously mentioned international conference on impact-evaluations in the area of support to infrastructure, in spring 2010 EVAL held an international conference

on support to agricultural development in developing countries in cooperation with Technical Advisory Services - Development Assistance. Together with DIIS, in autumn 2010 EVAL organised a meeting with the resource base concerning the use of case studies in evaluation and research and on upcoming evaluation plans.

One number of EVAL's newsletter (*evalnews*) was published in 2010. The website has been regularly updated with new publications as well as information on arrangements that are forthcoming or have been held. Finally, in connection with the evaluation of the country programme in Bhutan a locally produced film on the programme cooperation was released in 2010.

6. Other international cooperation

In 2010 EVAL also participated actively in the relevant international coordination networks which include OECD/DAC's evaluation group, the Nordic+ network, the Scandinavian network for staff of the evaluation departments in Denmark, Sweden, Norway and the Swedish research institution SADEV, and in the meeting in the European Evaluation Society (EES). In addition, as mentioned above EVAL cooperated with 3ie and NONIE, both of which focus on increased utilisation of impact-evaluations.

7. Ongoing evaluations and studies that will continue in 2011

The following evaluations were ongoing at the beginning of 2011:

- Evaluation of conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Southern Sudan (joint)
- Evaluation of Denmark's development assistance engagement in Somalia
- Evaluation of the Neighbourhood Programme
- Evaluation of "Women in Africa"
- Evaluation of the implementation of the Paris Declaration (phase two) (joint)
- Benin, evaluation of support to education (joint) (restart)
- Evaluation of anti-corruption efforts (joint)

A total of 7 evaluation studies were also in preparation at the beginning of 2010. Three of these focus on support to fragile states, of which one on state-building and living conditions in Afghanistan and two other studies on lessons learnt in general from support to fragile states. The four other studies comprise a study of the utilisation of quantitative methods in evaluation work, a study of support to football schools, a study of HIV/AIDS in Tanzania and a study of the utilisation of input subsidies in agriculture.

8. Plans for new evaluations and evaluation studies (2011-2012)

A specially prioritised area in the evaluation programme for 2011-12 will be the implementation of Danish support to fragile states. Besides the ongoing evaluations of efforts in Southern Sudan and Somalia, it is planned to launch three new evaluations, two in Afghanistan and one in Nepal. In addition, there will be particular focus on support to strengthening public financial management and budget support and on support to economic development. A brief description of the new evaluations expected to be initiated in 2011-12 follows below. Annex 1 contains a complete overview of ongoing and planned evaluations. The evaluation plans may still change – not least in 2012 – because, for example, the need regularly arises to coordinate with other donors' evaluation plans and to adapt the evaluation plans to planned and ongoing strategy work.

8.1 Support to regions of origin activities in Afghanistan

Two evaluations of Danish development assistance to Afghanistan will be launched in 2011. One will cover Danish support to regions of origin activities in Afghanistan. This evaluation is in preparation and the evaluation is expected to be initiated in spring 2011.

8.2 Support to education in Afghanistan

The education sector has been one of the priority areas for Danish support to Afghanistan. The evaluation is in preparation and, like the evaluation of regions of origin activities, it is expected to be initiated in spring 2011.

8.3 The peace programme in Nepal

The third phase of support to the peace process in Nepal is planned to run up to 2012. The evaluation, which is in preparation and is to be launched in 2011, will as far as possible be implemented in cooperation with other donors who have supported the peace process in Nepal.

8.4 Public financial management

An evaluation of donor assistance to strengthen public financial management in developing countries has been in preparation since 2009 and different preparatory studies have been completed. In the first instance, the evaluation, which is to be coordinated with the evaluations concerning fighting corruption and budget support, among other things, will cover Burkina Faso, Ghana and Malawi. The evaluation will be headed by the African Development Bank in cooperation with Sweden, **England? the UK? and Denmark**. A number of other donors will take part in a reference group for the evaluation.

8.5 Budget support, Tanzania

The evaluation of budget support to Tanzania is to be initiated at the beginning of 2011. The evaluation will be implemented in cooperation with the Ministry Finance in Tanzania and it will be headed by the EU Commission in cooperation with Ireland, the Netherlands and Denmark. Other donors granting budget support to Tanzania are to take part in a reference group. The evaluation is to form part of a number of joint international evaluations of budget support to different African countries.

8.6 Agriculture in Bangladesh

As mentioned above, in spring 2010 and in cooperation with Technical Advisory Services – Development Assistance, EVAL held a conference on lessons learnt in connection with support to the agricultural area. In continuation of the conference, EVAL was urged to implement an evaluation of Danish support to the agricultural sector in Bangladesh. The evaluation was initiated at the beginning of 2011.

8.7 Support to fisheries in Vietnam

Denmark has granted support to the fisheries sector in Vietnam for a number of years, and the lessons learnt from the fisheries sector in Vietnam are expected to be relevant in other programme countries. The focus in the evaluation will therefore be on experience gathering, including on the use of different development assistance instruments and the phasing out of Danish development assistance. Before the evaluation is launched a preliminary study will therefore be conducted with a view to establishing a basis for more detailed focusing of the evaluation. The evaluation is expected to be initiated in 2012.

8.8 Thematic NGO evaluation

As a follow up to the 2007 report of the National Audit Office of Denmark on NGO assistance, in 2008-2009 an evaluation was conducted of Danish NGOs' efforts in Ethiopia and Ghana (Evaluation 2009.07). A new thematic evaluation is to be carried in 2011 in cooperation with Sweden and Austria focusing on NGOs' participation in political dialogue in the partner countries. The evaluation is expected to include Mozambique, Uganda and Bangladesh and it will be initiated in the first half of 2011.

8.9 The Wider Middle East Initiative (from 2011 Partnership for Dialogue and Reform)

The Wider Middle East Initiative has been in progress for several years and the National Audit Office of Denmark conducted a review of the initiative in 2010. EVAL subsequently launched a study with a view to identifying the methodological challenges that will be involved when implementing an actual evaluation. The study is expected to be completed in spring 2011, after which a decision will be made on the more detailed delimitation and focusing of an evaluation. The evaluation is expected to be initiated in the second half of 2011.

8.10 Sexual and reproductive health and rights

Since 2006 Denmark has had a special strategy for the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights. The evaluation will examine the results achieved and lessons learnt in granting support to the area through both multilateral and bilateral measures, including support to research and support through NGOs. The evaluation is planned to be initiated in 2012.

8.11 HIV/AIDS, Uganda

Together with the Danish embassy in Tanzania and Tanzania's AIDS commission, EVAL has launched an evaluation study of the economic impacts of different HIV/AIDS interventions. In addition, there are plans to initiate an actual evaluation of the joint HIV/AIDS programme in Uganda. The evaluation is expected to be implemented as a joint evaluation with other donors. The start time for the evaluation has not yet been fixed but is expected to be the second half of 2012.

8.12 Civil society strategy

It is stated in the Civil Society strategy that the implementation of the strategy is to be evaluated in 2012. Preparations for the evaluation will begin in autumn 2011, and the evaluation is expected to be initiated in autumn 2012.

8.13 Multilateral activities

EVAL will continue to monitor the international work – not least under the auspices of OECD-DAC – of ensuring better coordination of evaluation activity in relation to the activities of the multilateral organisations. The lessons learnt from the two pilot studies conducted by ADB and WHO in 2010 will be quite central in this context. The value of these pilot studies and the applicability of the method developed will be more closely evaluated in the first half of 2011.

In addition, in 2011-2012 EVAL will be the European representative in the steering committee for the evaluation of the UN's Delivering as One.

The Netherlands has initiated an evaluation of EDF. Together with the evaluation departments in DFID and Sida, EVAL will constitute an informal reference group for this evaluation.

8.14 Evaluation studies

As mentioned above, a number of evaluation studies are in progress and new evaluations will be regularly initiated, *inter alia* on the basis of demand by embassies and other units in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. Among the areas that may give rise to initiating new evaluation studies are business and labour market development, climate and environment and regional development.

Annex 1: Overview of the evaluation programme 2011-12

	Year/quarter			Status	
	Start		Completion		
Evaluation of development assistance modalities					
	09/3	-	11/3	Ongoing	Paris Declaration – Phase 2(joint)
	11/2	-	12/3		Budget support, Tanzania (joint)
Thematic evaluations					
	09/2	-	11/1	Ongoing	Conflict prevention and peace-building, Southern Sudan (joint)
	10/1	-	11/2	Ongoing	Women in Africa
	07/3	-	11/2	Ongoing	Anti-corruption efforts (joint)
	10/4	-	11/3	Ongoing	Denmark's development assistance engagement in Somalia
	10/4	-	11/2	Ongoing	The Neighbourhood Programme
	11/1	-	12/2	Ongoing	Public financial management (joint)
	11/2	-	11/4		Regions of origin activities in Afghanistan
	11/2	-	12/2		The peace process in Nepal (joint)
	11/2	-	11/4		Thematic NGO evaluation (joint)
	11/4	-	12/4		Partnership for Dialogue and Reform
	12/3	-	13/3		Sexual and reproductive health and rights
	12/3	-	13/3		Civil society strategy
	12/3	-	13/3		HIV/AIDS, Uganda
Sector evaluations					
	10/4	-	11/3	Ongoing	Education, Benin (joint)
	11/1	-	11/3	Ongoing	Agriculture, Bangladesh
	11/2	-	11/4		Education, Afghanistan
	12/3	-	13/2		Fisheries, Vietnam
Evaluation of multilateral activities					
	11/2	-	12/3		Evaluation of UN's Delivering as One