

Real-Time Evaluation

Mali Country Programme 2017-2022

Terms of Reference

1. Background

Denmark's engagement in Mali dates from 2006 when Mali became a priority country for Danish long-term development assistance. Since then, Danida has provided sector support, including support to private sector development, agriculture, water and governance. Following the political and security crisis from 2012, Denmark has provided regional stabilisation efforts and humanitarian assistance, and Denmark is also providing considerable support to the UN peace keeping MINUSMA contingent in Mali.

Denmark's relation with Mali is guided by a country policy adopted in February 2016. The country policy states that the overall vision of Denmark's partnership with Mali is *peace, an inclusive and legitimate state, reduced poverty and strengthened human rights*. On this basis, the country policy defines three strategic objectives:

- Peaceful co-existence, stability and security;
- Democratic and inclusive governance, and
- Inclusive and sustainable growth.

The Mali-Denmark Country Programme 2017-2021 will establish a framework for the operationalisation of these overall objectives. The Danish Embassy in Mali is in the process of formulating the country programme which is envisaged to be approved early 2017. A concept note for the country programme has been adopted in April 2016, which forms the basis for the formulation process. A draft country programme document is available.

The following development engagements are envisaged as part for the country programme within a budget frame of DKK 975 million over five years:

1. Peaceful coexistence thematic programme

- Fund for Drivers of Change (FAMOC).
Support to civil society initiatives aiming involving marginalised groups in the reconciliation and promotion of active citizenship and community resilience.
- United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).
Support to community peace dividend projects in conflict-affected areas.

- Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.
Addresses the capacity of actors of the conflict in Mali to resolve conflicts successfully through an approach of inclusivity, participation and negotiation has improved.
- UNWOMEN.
Promoting women's role in peace-building.

2. Decentralisation thematic Programme

- Support to the Decentralisation Reform through the Ministry for Decentralisation and State Reform (MATDRE).
Capacity development of MATDRE and financial support to local development plans through National Fund for Support to Local Governments, FNACT.
- Support to the regional council in Sikasso.
Strengthening the capacity of the Regional Council.
- Support to the Civil Society Network for Budget Monitoring.
Promoting greater transparency, accountability and civil society involvement in the preparation and execution of government budgets through Groupe Suivi Budgetaire.

3. Private Sector Development Thematic Programme

The present thematic programme is continued until 2018/2019 with a focus on the following components:

- Strengthening the competitiveness of private sector actors in an enabling environment
- Developing economic infrastructures to promote production and access to markets
- Enhancing competitiveness of selected economic sectors through vocational training and the generation of employment

It is envisaged that a new phase of the Private Sector Development Thematic Programme will be initiated from 2018/2019.

The monitoring system of the country programme will to the extent possible be based on the partners' own systems; but it is planned to include an M&E Team under the country programme aimed at strengthening partner planning, monitoring and reporting capacity in relation to the Danish supported interventions. The specific level of support will be agreed with each partner organisation. Initially, the M&E Team will work with partners on strengthening the theory of change, the results framework and establishing baseline data where necessary. Furthermore, value-for-money studies will be undertaken. The M&E Team assignment will be contracted by the embassy, and it should be noted that due to the principles of independence and impartiality, the consulting company undertaking the RTE and the M&E Team should not be the same.

Within this context, the Evaluation Department of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (EVAL) wishes to undertake a Real-Time Evaluation (RTE) of the Danish Mali Country Programme.

2. Scope and Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of the RTE is to provide independent evidence regarding the achievement of outcomes and regarding relevant changes in the programme context in relation to key engagement areas. This assessment is primarily intended for the country programme management (the embassy and the national authorities in Mali) and should allow them to revise the theory of change and adapt the interventions accordingly.

The real-time evaluation is distinguished from the programme monitoring work (including the work of the M&E team) primarily by being external to the programme management and in having a focus on assessing higher level results (outcomes and outcome to objective levels), and in assessing developments in selected risk factors and assumptions for the programme.

The RTE allows for early feedback and reflection on the course towards achieving outcomes thereby providing an opportunity to revisit the programme intervention logic, assumptions and risks. The RTE is particularly relevant when the intervention logic for the engagement is complex (i.e. not easily predicted), when the engagement is of a pilot nature or when the engagement takes place in an uncertain context, which is likely to change during implementation.

It is envisaged that the RTE will particularly relate to the thematic programmes for peaceful coexistence and for decentralisation and focus on the following engagements:

- The Fund for Reconciliation and Resilience of Civil Society (FAMOC),
- The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and
- Decentralisation in Sikasso.

During the last year of the programme (2022), the RTE Team will provide a summative assessment related to the RTE focus areas of the programme.

3. Outputs

During the implementation of the country programme 2017-2022, the RTE will undertake six visits to Mali, each of at least two weeks' duration.

An inception visit is envisaged in 3rd quarter of 2017 in order to prepare a comprehensive methodology for the RTE. A short field mission preparation note (including a visit programme and an activity plan) will be submitted for approval by EVAL and the embassy at least two weeks before the field visit. Subsequently, an RTE inception report will be submitted by the consultants, which will include:

- Description of the theory of change for the engagements under evaluation;
- A description of the baseline situation regarding the parameters selected for the baseline study;
- an evaluation matrix indicating evaluation questions, judgement criteria and data sources;
- a detailed methodology for the field work of the remaining field missions;

- a detailed work plan;
- suggested outline of the annual report to be submitted following each visit.

The draft inception report should be submitted to Danida Evaluation Department as well as the Evaluation Reference Group for comments, based on which a final version will be prepared for approval.

For each subsequent field visit in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022, the following outputs are envisaged:

- A field mission preparation note indicating the planning of the mission to be shared and discussed with the Evaluation Reference Group,
- Within three weeks of the mission, a short field visit report addressing the relevant evaluation questions.

The timing of the field visits will be agreed between the evaluation team and the ERG. Each of these visits will be of at least two weeks' duration. Each visit of the RTE team include an initial briefing by the Danish embassy in Bamako and a debriefing before departure.

Reporting will be done in French.

4. Evaluation Criteria and Evaluation Questions

On an overall level, the evaluation will apply OECD/DAC's five criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and – to the degree possible – impact. Specific evaluation questions will be formulated in the inception phase with an emphasis on the aspects of relevance, effectiveness and impact.

The evaluation questions will relate to the specific aspects of the outcomes and overall objectives planned for each of the focus engagements. Furthermore, evaluation questions will be determined relating to the relevant issues in the context of the programme, especially in relation to decentralisation and the peace and reconciliation process.

5. Approach and Methodology

The RTE will rely on the following sources for data:

- National statistics, national livelihood survey data and other data being produced in Mali,
- Monitoring data from the relevant development engagements, which are expected to cover input, activity, output level and limited data on outcomes,
- Primary data collected by the RTE-Team, mostly of a qualitative nature.

The RTE is expected to apply a theory-based approach and work on the basis of the theory of change at engagement and thematic programme level. In order to assess progress towards engagement outcomes and objectives, the RTE should identify interim outcomes or milestones that provide

indications that the Danish supported activities are contributing to the targeted outcomes. The RTE will furthermore gather information regarding implementation processes of the programme and assess its consistency with programme objectives and Danida policies, including the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA). The RTE may also assess unintended consequences of the Danish supported activities at various levels. Specifically, in relation to the focus areas of the RTE, the rationale has been: FAMOC youth fund will support a number of projects with their separate objectives. Monitoring will be undertaken by the contracted fund manager and the RTE will supplement the quantitative outcome indicators in the results matrix by qualitative assessment of higher level outcomes. This could for instance involve an assessment of young people's engagement in decision making at community level, their place in local media and how they exercise their rights, in particular the capacity of youth to advocate for and organise themselves around a political agenda representative for youth and marginalised groups.

In relation to the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue the RTE should focus on the capacity development in relation to local conflict management and the contribution to the reconciliation process. Outcome mapping could be relevant in this context.

Furthermore, the RTE should follow the achievements in relation to strengthening the capacity of the Sikasso regional council. The outcome indicators on budget execution could in this way be supplemented with more qualitative information on the performance of the regional council, in particular in relation to facilitating public participation in planning and budgeting processes. In order to be successful, it would be important that the regional council is involved and has ownership of this aspect of the RTE.

One of the overall assumptions for this decentralisation thematic area – and for the context of the entire country programme – is that the decentralisation process is pursued by increasing competence levels with local government and that decentralisation is not captured by local vested interests. RTE should be involved in assessing the 'state of decentralisation' with a special focus on Sikasso both to monitor this important assumption, but also to track programme effects at local level. Various tools for doing this could be considered, including the establishment of local panels of citizens who are particularly exposed to experience changes in public service delivery at local levels. Through interviews and focus group discussions, the local panel of citizens could provide information of both the development in concrete service delivery at local level and of the perceptions of the decentralisation process. The groups could also be used for information regarding the development of other parameters in local society, including aspects such as reconciliation and trust, security, etc.

6. Organisation of the Evaluation

The Real-Time Evaluation for the Mali country programme will be managed by the Danida Evaluation Department. Management of the evaluation will follow the Danida Evaluation Guidelines (2012) and OECD-DAC quality standards (2010). There are three sets of roles in the evaluation process: a) the Evaluation Management b) the Evaluation Team (Consultant) and c) the Evaluation Reference Group.

Role of the Evaluation Management

The tasks of the Evaluation Management are to:

- Participate in the selection of Evaluation Team based on received tenders. The MFA contract office chairs the tender committee, assisted by an independent tender consultant.
- Coordinate with all relevant evaluation stakeholders.
- Ensure that quality control is carried out throughout the evaluation process. In so doing, EVAL may make use of external peer reviewers.
- Provide feedback to the Evaluation Team. Comment on draft versions of the inception report, work plan, annual field visit reports and the summative evaluation report. Approve final reports.
- Organise and chair meetings of the Evaluation Reference Group.
- Facilitate and participate in evaluation workshops, including possibly an open dissemination workshop towards the end of the evaluation.
- Organise presentation of evaluation results and follow-up on the evaluation to internal Danida Programme Committee and the Minister for Foreign Affairs.
- Advise relevant stakeholders on matters related to the evaluation (reference is made to the Codes of Conduct, which form part of the Danida Evaluation Guidelines, and which can be found at <http://evaluation.um.dk>).

Role of the Evaluation Team (the Consultant)

The DAC evaluation principles of independence of the Evaluation Team will be applied. The Evaluation Team will carry out the evaluation based on a contract between MFA and the incumbent company/institution. The Evaluation Team will:

- Prepare and carry out the evaluation according to the ToR, the approved Inception Report, the DAC Evaluation Quality Standards and the Danida Evaluation Guidelines.
- Be responsible to the Evaluation Management for the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation.
- Ensure that quality assurance is carried out and documented throughout the evaluation process according to the Consultant's own Quality Assurance Plan as described in the proposal.
- Report to the Evaluation Management regularly about progress of the evaluation.
- Organise and coordinate meetings and field visits, and other key events, including debriefing session and/or validation workshops in the field visit countries.
- The Team Leader is responsible for the team's reporting, proper quality assurance, and for the organisation of the work of the team. The evaluation Team Leader will participate in the Evaluation Reference Groups' meetings and other meetings as required and upon request. It is envisaged to have participation of the Team Leader in approximately four meetings in Copenhagen during the whole evaluation.

Role of the Evaluation Reference Group

An Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) will be established and chaired by EVAL. Other members of the ERG will include the Danish Embassy in Bamako and possible other units within the MFA. The

mandate of the ERG is to provide advisory support and inputs to the evaluation, e.g. through comments to draft reports. The reference group will work with direct meetings, e-mail communication and video-conferencing.

The tasks of the ERG are to:

- Comment on the field mission preparation notes, draft inception report, draft annual field visit reports and draft evaluation report with a view to ensure that the evaluation is based on factual knowledge about the engagement and how it has been implemented.
- Support the implementation of the evaluation and promote the dissemination of the evaluation conclusions and recommendations.
- Other key stakeholders may be consulted at strategic points in time of the evaluation either through mail correspondence or through participation in stakeholder meetings/workshops.

7. Composition and Qualification of the Evaluation Team

The evaluation team should possess substantial experience and knowledge in the following areas:

- Approaches for assessing credible contribution and attribution of results, including use of Theory of Change for programming
- The methodologies used for the RTE, i.e. research or evaluative work at both overall programme level and qualitative field appraisal techniques;
- The sector issues related to the country programme with special emphasis on peace and reconciliation, human rights and decentralisation
- Country experience from Mali and the region.

The Evaluation Team is expected to consist of two international and two national/regional experts.

The Tenderer can decide to include personnel for additional functions, e.g. research assistants, although this person will not be assessed on an individual basis but as part of the overall team composition and backup. The team members are expected to complement each other.

It is expected that the Team Leader is participating in the field work and is in charge of the report writing. The Tenderers should clearly state who of the proposed team members cover which qualification criteria. The team must include experience with all methodologies and tools suggested in the tender. The following CV's shall be included in the tender proposal:

- Team Leader
- one international expert
- two national experts
- quality Assurance Manager

The organisation of the team's work is the responsibility of the consultant and should be specified and explained clearly in the tender. It is expected that the team leader is closely involved in the elaboration of the tender. The team leader is responsible for the team's reporting to and communication with EVAL, and for the organisation of the work of the team. The team leader will participate in meetings

with EVAL as well as with the ERG meetings as requested by EVAL. The CVs will be assessed on an individual basis. A personnel assignment chart must be included in the technical proposal with the exact input of person days proposed. The entire proposed team will be assessed as a whole as part of the 'organisation and staffing'.

Qualifications of the Team Leader:

General experience:

- Higher academic degree, preferably Ph.D.
- A profile with major emphasis on development issues, with 15 years or more of relevant international experience from development cooperation in multiple countries and regions.
- Experience as team leader of evaluations of similar nature/size.

Adequacy for the Assignment:

- International experience from research or evaluation-related work on programme/policy level in subject-matters related to the evaluation.
- International experience from designing and undertaking research or evaluation work applying qualitative assessment approaches, including extensive field experience.
- Other experience or analytical work in subject-matters related to the evaluation.

Country experience and language:

- Broad international experience, with substantial experience from the region, preferably also from Mali.
- Proficiency in spoken and written French.
- Proficiency in spoken and written English.

Qualifications of the International Expert:

General experience:

- Higher academic degree in a field relevant to the assignment.
- A profile with major emphasis on development issues, with 15 years or more of relevant professional experience from international development cooperation.
- Experience as team member for evaluations of a comparable level.

Adequacy for the Assignment:

- Experience from programme design or implementation in subject-matters related to the evaluation.
- Experience from research or evaluation-related work.
- Other analytical work in in subject-matters related to the evaluation.

Country experience and language:

- International experience, including from the region, preferably from Mali.
- Proficiency in spoken and written French, preferably also in English.

Qualifications of national/regional experts:

General experience:

- Higher academic degree in a field relevant to the assignment.
- At least ten years' experience within a field relevant to the assignment.

Adequacy for the Assignment:

- Experience from research, consulting, public administration in in subject-matters related to the evaluation.
- Experience from evaluation-related work in one or more of the relevant thematic areas of the evaluation.
- Possibly other analytical work in subject-matters related to the evaluation.

Country experience and language:

- Experience from Mali
- Preferably some regional experience
- Proficiency in spoken and written French, preferably also in English.

8. Eligibility

The DAC evaluation principles of independence of the Evaluation Team will be applied. In situations where conflict of interest occurs, candidates may be excluded from participation, if their participation may question the independence and impartiality of the evaluation. Any firm or individual consultant that has participated in the preparation or implementation of the evaluated Danida engagement will be excluded from participation in the tender.

Tenderers are obliged to carefully consider issues of eligibility for individual consultants and inform the Client of any potential issues relating to a possible conflict of interest (cf. Danida Evaluation Guidelines).

9. Inputs

The budget for the evaluation is DKK 3.4 million.

10. Documents

Draft Country Programme Document, October 2016.