



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,  
Education and Research EAER

**State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO**

Economic Cooperation and Development



Source: Better Work Project, Vietnam

## **Biannual Report 2017-2018**

# Performance of SECO's Economic Cooperation and Development

# Acknowledgments

This report was prepared by the Evaluation Function of SECO’s Division for Economic Cooperation and Development (thereafter 'SECO WE') with support from various colleagues of the Division. The Evaluation Function remains fully responsible for the report.

## Foreword

### *How are SECO’s development projects assessed and independently evaluated?*

In order to draw lessons, disseminate knowledge and strengthen the effectiveness of SECO WE’s development assistance, the Evaluation Function produces a biannual report<sup>1</sup> that assesses the performance of SECO WE’s interventions. This assessment is based on the findings and recommendations of a) *external evaluations*, b) *internal reviews* commissioned by the operational sectors and c) *independent thematic evaluations*, which are approved and supervised by the External Evaluation Committee, a board of independent representatives from academia, parliament, private sector and civil society.

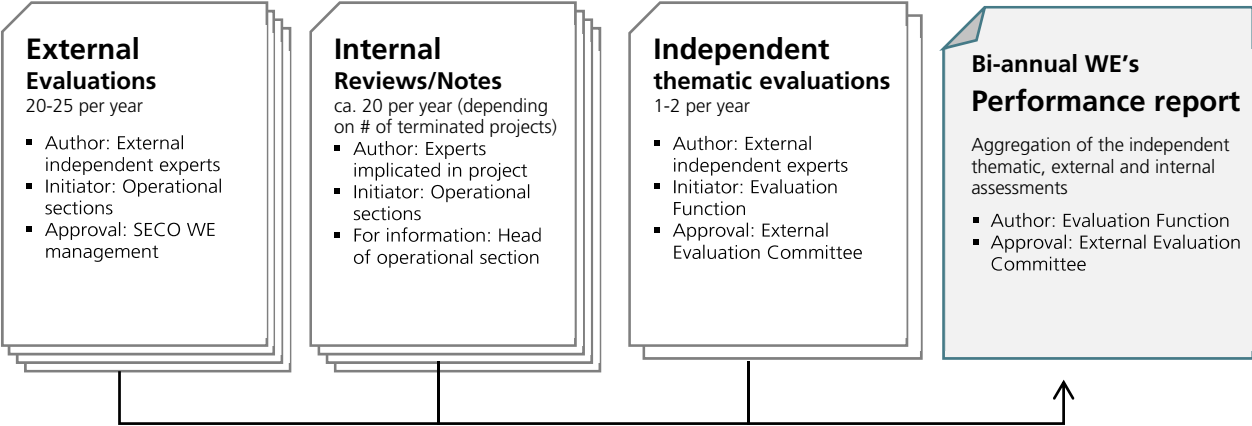


Figure 1: Categories of assessments

The conclusions and recommendations of this report are based on a systematic and retrospective analysis of the results of evaluations and reviews conducted in 2017 and 2018, put in perspective with results of the preceding 12 years, from 2005 to 2016. To ensure an impartial and balanced assessment of its portfolio, SECO WE conducts evaluations based on international standards as defined by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC)<sup>2</sup>.

For the first time, a study was externally mandated to analyse the content of the lessons learned and recommendations of all external evaluations, going beyond the purely quantitative analysis of the DAC criteria ratings (see chapter 1.3). The objective of this qualitative content analysis is to provide further insights into project success factors and areas for improvement.

Based on the analysis in this report, the Evaluation Function delivers a set of recommendations (see chapter 3). The report is combined with a response by WE’s management to the conclusions and

<sup>1</sup> In 2017, SECO WE’s management decided to publish this report on a bi-annual instead of an annual basis. Previous editions of this report were called Annual Report on Effectiveness.

<sup>2</sup> DAC is the OECD Committee which brings together 30 of the largest providers of aid. It approves the criteria for evaluating development interventions.

recommendations (see Part II). Both are subsequently discussed with the External Evaluation Committee, which elaborates a position on the key issues discussed in the report (see Part III).

*Governance set-up for external and internal assessments of SECO WE's performance*

Figure 2 presents the governance structure for SECO WE's performance assessment. External evaluations as well as internal reviews of projects are under the responsibility of operational sections. For external evaluations, sections prepare a management response which is shared with the head of operations and the Evaluation Function. The EU enlargement section (WEKO) limits its project assessment to internal reviews. The Evaluation Function is responsible for strategic thematic portfolio evaluations and the synthesis of all evaluation results, which is presented in this report. Reports mandated by the Evaluation Function are discussed with WE's management and approved by the External Evaluation Committee, which reports to the Director of SECO. The section countries and global portfolio (WELG) is responsible for internal reviews by cooperation offices, such as country strategy implementation reports or the monitoring of changes relevant to development. These country assessments are however not considered in the present report.

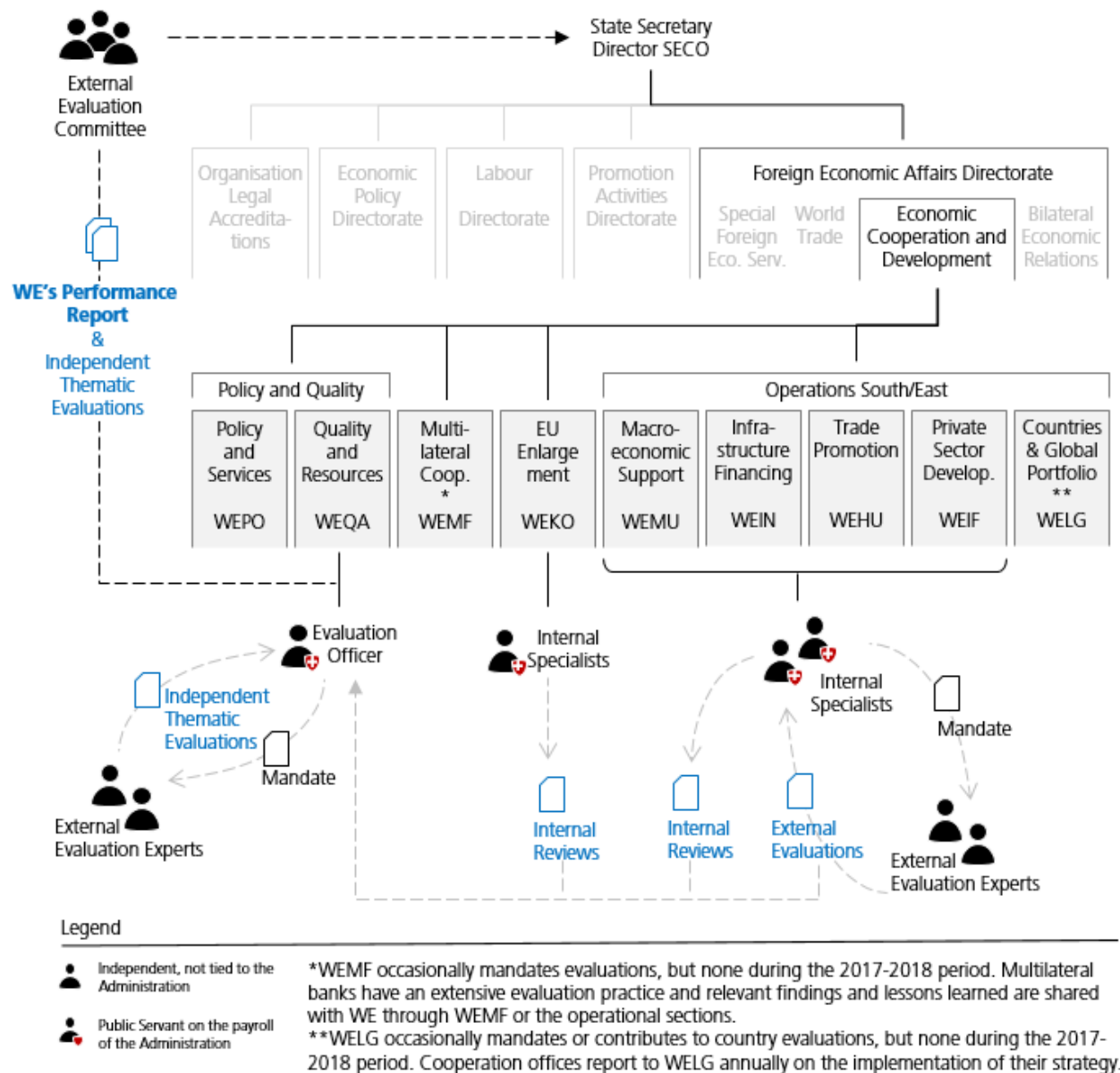


Figure 2: Governance of and responsibilities for evaluations at SECO WE

This report is primarily intended for operational sections and SECO WE's management, which are responsible for the selection and adequate implementation of WE's interventions. It is also relevant for a broader public interested in SECO WE's performance and learning culture.

## List of acronyms

CN	Completion note
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EU	European Union
IFI	International financial institutions
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCM	Project cycle management
PIDG	Private Infrastructure Development Group
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SECO	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs
SECO WE	Economic Cooperation and Development Division of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs
SIFEM	Swiss Investment Fund for Emerging Markets
TO	Target objective (of the Dispatch on International Cooperation 2017-2020)
UN	United Nations
WEHU	Trade promotion section
WEIF	Private sector development section
WEIN	Infrastructure financing section
WEKO	Contribution to EU enlargement section
WELG	Countries and global portfolio section
WEMU	Macro-economic support section
WEOP	South and East Cooperation, i.e. WEHU, WEIF, WEIN, WELG and WEMU

# Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	vi
Part I. WE's Performance in 2017-2018.....	1
1. Main findings and lessons learned from project assessments in 2017-2018 .....	1
1.1. Assessment types and analysed portfolio.....	1
1.2. Results of project evaluations according to the OECD DAC criteria (South and East Cooperation).....	5
1.3. Common lessons learned and recommendations in external project evaluations (South and East Cooperation).....	12
1.4. Contribution to the EU enlargement: Results of internal project reviews based on the OECD DAC criteria .....	15
2. Main findings and lessons learned from independent portfolio evaluations.....	15
3. Recommendations .....	19
Part II. Management Response.....	I
Part III. Position of the External Evaluation Committee .....	II

## Annexes

- A. List of Evaluations
- B. Methodology for measuring project success
- C. Outlook – Evaluation Programme 2019
- D. Selected results from the analysis of lessons learned and recommendations in external project evaluations

## List of figures

Figure 1: Categories of assessments .....	i
Figure 2: Governance of and responsibilities for evaluations at SECO WE .....	ii
Figure 3: Number of assessed projects and assessments in 2017-2018 by operational section .....	1
Figure 4: Number of assessments from 2015 to 2018 .....	2
Figure 5: Timing of assessments [2017-2018].....	2
Figure 6: Description of the assessed portfolio (n = 87 projects) .....	4
Figure 7: Overall performance rate over time.....	6
Figure 8: Average overall performance rate by region.....	7
Figure 9: Average overall performance rate by target outcome (TO) .....	8
Figure 10: Average overall performance rate by implementing partner type .....	8
Figure 11: Average overall performance rate by share of Swiss contribution to project budget .....	8
Figure 12: Relevance rate over time.....	9
Figure 13: Effectiveness rate over time .....	10
Figure 14: Efficiency rate over time .....	10
Figure 15: Sustainability rate over time.....	11
Figure 16: Performance of WEKO projects in 2017-2018.....	15
Figure 17: Heat map identifying key success factors related to project cycle management .....	IV

## List of tables

Table 1: Quality of external projects evaluation reports in 2017-2018 and for the period 2005–2016 .....	4
Table 2: Commitments versus assessed portfolio .....	5
Table 3: Evaluations planned in 2019 (as of April 2019) .....	III
Table 4: Coding-Suggestion for the Classification of Lessons learned, SECO WEQA Evaluations .....	V

# Executive Summary

**Independent project and portfolio evaluations, based on the internationally recognized OECD DAC criteria, confirm the positive results of SECO WE's development cooperation in partner countries.** Challenges identified in previous reports and weaknesses highlighted by external and internal assessments have been addressed, allowing to further improve the performance of projects and SECO WE's aid effectiveness.

**The overall performance of SECO WE's projects has steadily increased over the last few years:** in the reporting period 2017-2018, 89% of all externally evaluated projects were rated as good (i.e. either highly satisfactory (HS) or satisfactory (S) on a scale of four), a considerable increase of 5 percentage points since the reporting period of the previous Dispatch on International Cooperation.

Looking at the OECD DAC criteria in detail, **relevance** continues to be the highest rated criteria, as 95% of externally evaluated projects received a satisfactory or highly satisfactory rating. A high **effectiveness** rating of 86% (S and HS combined) confirms the achievement of the majority of expected results of SECO's projects. **Efficiency** could still be improved in about a sixth of all projects, but the success rate of 84% (S and HS combined) also represents a remarkable increase to the previous observation periods. Even if the **Sustainability** of project results is still ranked lower than the other DAC criteria, it has significantly improved over the last few years: A 74% success rate (S and HS combined) represents a notable increase of +29 percentage points since the previous Dispatch observation period.

**Sustainability of project results** has been a key focus area of SECO WE during the reporting period and the attention enabled SECO to reap first benefits.

An analysis of the **overall project performance by geographic regions** indicates the high ratings of SECO's projects in East and South Asia. It also highlights challenges for successful project implementation in Africa, where project ratings are considerably lower. Similarly, **differences of portfolio performance exist between SECO WE's four target outcomes** under the current Dispatch on International Cooperation: While projects supporting effective institutions excel (93% of S and HS), programmes generating more and better jobs deliver on average lower results (73% of S and HS).

For the first time, **a qualitative content analysis of all lessons learned and recommendations from external project evaluations** was established to provide further insights on operational achievements and areas for improvement in project management. It identifies and ranks top success factors for good project performance, which essentially recommend strong project management.

**This report illustrates SECO WE's strong evaluation practices.** While the target of 20-25 external evaluations per year was reached in both years and as the quality of evaluations continuously increased, the report also highlights the **importance of internal project reviews and their complementarity to external evaluations.** Suggestions are made to further improve the quality and use of evaluations in order to support internal learning from successes and failures. The report also recommends increasing the number of ex-post evaluations, which are considered critical to inform SECO WE about long-term project sustainability.

During the reporting period, **three independent portfolio evaluations confirmed the pertinence of SECO WE's approach** in the areas of employment, energy-efficient cities, as well as market access and competitiveness.

# Part I. WE's Performance in 2017-2018

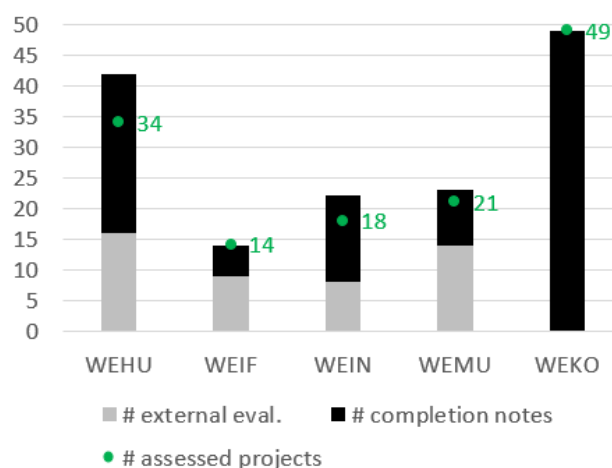
## 1. Main findings and lessons learned from project assessments in 2017-2018

### 1.1. Assessment types and analysed portfolio

Between 2017 and 2018, SECO WE obtained the results of a total of 47 external evaluations. In addition, 103 internal reviews<sup>3</sup> were carried out, providing a broad mix of internal and external assessments of the division's activities<sup>4</sup>. This chapter examines timing, coverage, and complementarity of internal and external assessments.<sup>5</sup>

#### *A stable number of external evaluations and internal reviews support accountability reporting*

Figure 3: Number of assessed projects and assessments in 2017-2018 by operational section



In 2017-2018, a total of 136 projects were either externally or internally assessed.<sup>6</sup> Some projects were covered by both an external evaluation and an internal review. They represent 10% of all evaluated projects and were provided by three sections: WEHU 8 projects, WEIN 4, and WEMU 2. Differences between external and internal assessments are further discussed in chapter 1.2.

Figure 4 indicates a stable number of external evaluations which remains within WE's own annual target of 20-25 evaluations. The distribution between operational sections was noticeably more equal in 2018 than in previous years. The peak of internal reviews in 2017 is due

to the particularly high number of concluded projects from the first Swiss contribution to EU enlargement. A notable increase is also observed in 2018 for internal reviews on projects from the South and East cooperation.

<sup>3</sup> All internal reviews are completion notes, except for two: one is an internal project review prepared by WEHU's strategic partner (Better Gold Initiative phase 2, 2018\_WEHU F) and the other a mission report (Regional Biotrade Programme Vietnam, 2018\_WEHU I). Both reviews do not contain ratings of the DAC criteria, but provide useful lessons learned. All mentioned project assessments are listed in Annex A.

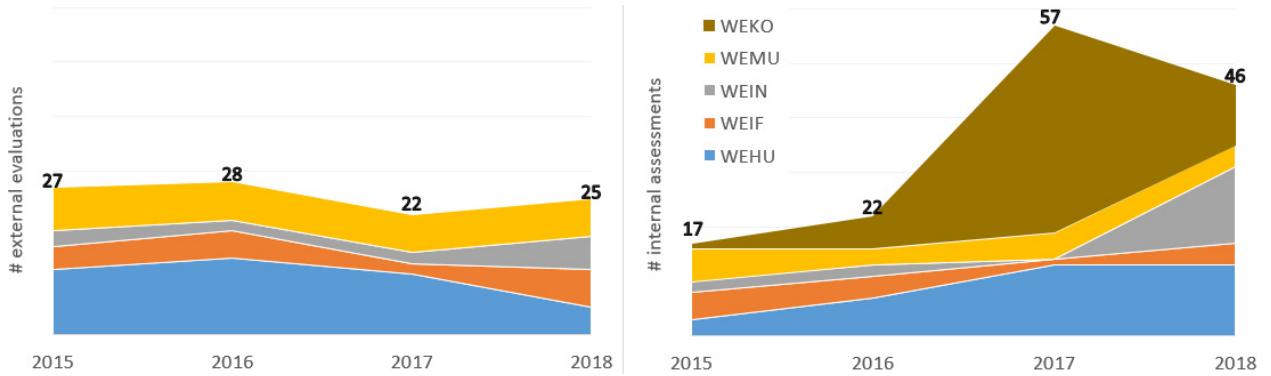
<sup>4</sup> WEKO's internal reviews are fully integrated in this analysis. As previously indicated, WEKO does not mandate external evaluations.

<sup>5</sup> The word 'assessment' comprises external evaluations as well as internal reviews.

<sup>6</sup> 87 projects under the mandate of the South and East Cooperation and 49 under the first Swiss contribution to enlarged EU; see list of projects in Annex A.



Figure 4: Number of assessments from 2015 to 2018 (left: external evaluations, right: internal reviews)



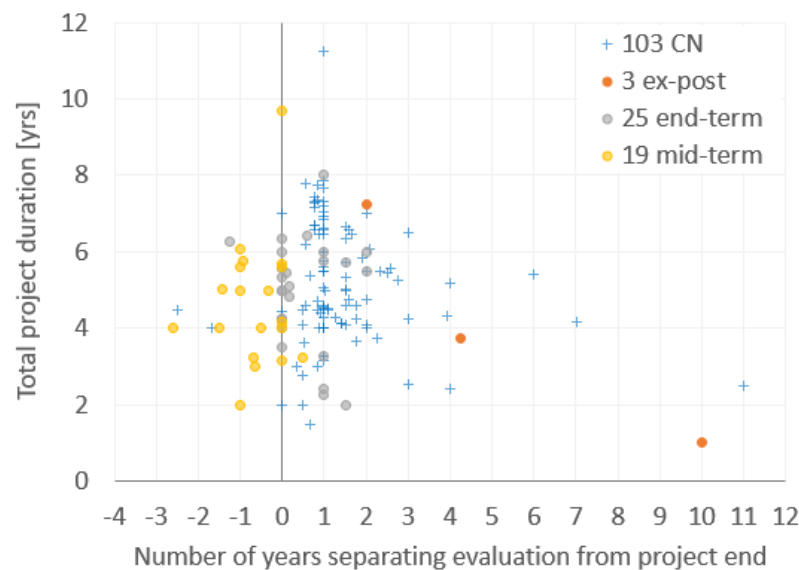
### Demarcation between different types of evaluations can be blurred

External evaluations have a higher level of independence and are generally considered to be more critical than internal reviews. However, this is not necessarily the case, as the comparison of results in chapter 1.2 indicates. In practice, the dividing line between external and internal assessments is also not always clear-cut: On the one hand, some operational sections work with strategic partners, supporting them in various tasks such as project preparation as well as project evaluation. On the other hand, internal reviews can be based on the assessment of an independent external evaluation of a supported project.

The typology of external evaluations is based on a temporal approach along the project-cycle: a) *mid-term* evaluations during a project, b) *end-term* evaluations at the end of a project and c) *ex-post* evaluations, usually several years after project completion.

Timing of an evaluation typically determines the level of assessment and the use of its results. Mid-term evaluations usually assess intermediate results, predict the likelihood of sustainability and are generally more useful for steering, whereas ex-post evaluations scrutinise which results are still observable several years after project completion, an important information for accountability. As a common denominator, all types of assessments are useful to draw lessons learned for a project or portfolio.

Figure 5: Timing of assessments [2017-2018]



In the analysed sample of external evaluations, 41% are indicated as mid-term evaluations, 53% as end-term evaluations and 6% as ex-post evaluations. Figure 5 shows the timing of the assessments, highlighting the number of years separating the assessment from the end of a project. It indicates that 84% of mid-term evaluations are performed during the last two years of a project, while 77% of all completion notes and 88% of end-term evaluations are executed within two years after project completion. The three reported ex-post evaluations were carried out respectively 2, 4, and 10 years after project-end. It also appears

that mid- and end-term evaluations on the one hand and, end-term and ex-post evaluations, on the other, can overlap. Furthermore, one evaluation covering several phases could be simultaneously considered as a mid-term, an end-term and potentially an ex-post evaluation<sup>7</sup>. Finally, two end-term evaluations were carried out 2 years after project end, thus after the same lapse of time as SECO WE's earliest ex-post evaluation.

### *Ex-post evaluations are an interesting way to inform about project sustainability*

In 2017, SECO WE's management introduced an internal target of two ex-post evaluations per year to encourage the analysis of long-term project results with a focus on the sustainability of SECO WE's interventions.<sup>8</sup> The target could not be reached, as no ex-post evaluation was planned in 2017 and only three were delivered in 2018.<sup>9</sup> Considering the very small sample of ex-post evaluations, it remains difficult to deduce a conclusion on WE's performance based on the timing of evaluations<sup>10</sup>. As the three ex-post evaluated projects had previously not been evaluated, it was also impossible to assess the evolution of ratings for these projects in particular.

For accountability purposes, a limited but constant number of ex-post evaluations is considered important.

### *The quality of evaluations determines their usefulness*

High-quality evaluations allow to maximise their added value for the different purposes they serve, from project steering to accountability reporting. Thus, in addition to the analysis of their results, the Evaluation Function also assesses the quality of evaluations.<sup>11</sup> The latter is considerably influenced by the comprehensiveness of the terms of references, the available time and financial resources, but also by data availability and quality and the evaluator's competences and engagement. Table 1 shows the perceived quality of external evaluation reports in 2017-2018 compared to the previous 12 years. A stable majority of evaluations were considered as good, with a notable trend to higher quality evaluations in the last two years. This indicates a general increase in awareness of good evaluation practices within SECO WE, which can be linked to the high commitment of operational sections and the advisory services offered by the Evaluation Function. The quality of two evaluations was considered as highly unsatisfactory, as no DAC criteria rating took place.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> For instance, Financial Programming East, Phase 3 or DMF Phase 2 (WEMU 76).

<sup>8</sup> WE Annual Report on Effectiveness 2016, Bern 2017

<sup>9</sup> These ex-post evaluations are: UN Trade Cluster Laos Phase I and II (WEHU 169); Pisco Water Supply Rehabilitation (WEIN 52); SAI Development Phase I-III (WEMU 80). The results from the ex-post evaluation of Pisco Water Supply Rehabilitation could not be considered for WE's performance statistics as it contained little to no information about WE's contribution to the project.

<sup>10</sup> A meta-evaluation of sustainability in German development cooperation from 2018 suggests that project sustainability tends to be lower in ex-post evaluations compared to earlier evaluations: <https://www.deval.org/en/evaluation-reports.html>

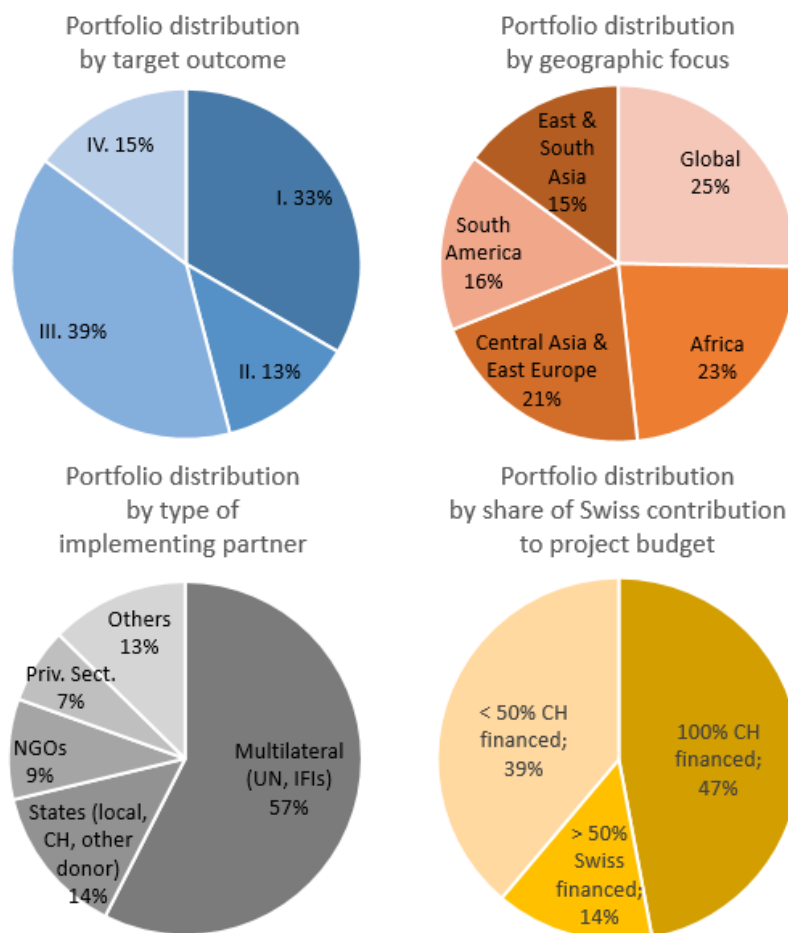
<sup>11</sup> The assessment looks at the following elements: evaluation process, methodology, application of evaluation standards, responses to evaluation questions and criteria, as well as the general quality of the report.

<sup>12</sup> In the case of a third project, Pisco Water Supply Rehabilitation project (WEIN 52), the ratings did not cover WE's contribution, the evaluation was therefore also classified as 'unsatisfactory'.

Table 1: Quality of external projects evaluation reports in 2017-2018 and for the period 2005–2016

	Highly satisfactory		Satisfactory		Unsatisfactory		Highly unsatisfactory		TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
2017-2018	18	38%	21	45%	5	11%	3	6%	47
2005-2016	53	21%	158	61%	42	16%	5	2%	258

Assessed projects are fairly representative for SECO WE's portfolio <sup>13</sup>



Considering the number of externally evaluated or internally reviewed projects, target outcomes I. *Effective institutions* and III. *Favourable frame-work conditions for sustainable trade* are overrepresented compared to the two others target outcomes, II. *More and better jobs*, and IV. *Low emission and climate-resilient economies*. This partially reflects the financial commitment for each target outcome<sup>14</sup> and explains the unequal distribution of assessments between operational sections in 2017 (see Figure 4).

However, all geographic regions are well represented. Half of the external evaluations cover SECO WE's priority countries<sup>15</sup>. Two evaluations cover countries where SECO implements

<sup>13</sup> The portfolio of the Contribution to EU enlargement originates from a different Dispatch, with different target objectives, and is addressed in a separate report:

<https://www.erweiterungsbeitrag.admin.ch/erweiterungsbeitrag/de/home/news/publikationen.html/content/publikationen/de/eb/eb-jahresbericht-2018.html>

<sup>14</sup> In comparison, the share of each target outcome in terms of commitments is TO I: 44%; TO II: 11%; TO III: 31%; TO IV: 14%.

<sup>15</sup> Priority countries of SECO WE for the Dispatch on International Cooperation 2017-2020 are Albania, Colombia, Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Kirghistan, Peru, South Africa, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Vietnam.

complementary measures to SDC programmes<sup>16</sup>, while more than a third cover global programmes and the rest regional programmes.

Remarkably, more than half of the assessments concern projects implemented by multilateral agencies. Some of these assessments are joint evaluations. This can be seen as a reflection of SECO's strong partnership with multilateral agencies, in particular development banks and specialised UN agencies.

However, there are limits to the comparability of different types of evaluations in view of the aggregation of evaluation results. In some cases the Evaluation Function decides on a trade-off between the number of available assessments and a differentiated analysis by project type.<sup>17</sup>

*This report mainly highlights results of projects started under previous development Dispatches*

Financial data indicate that a third of the total commitments under the Dispatch on International Cooperation covering 2013 to 2016 was assessed either externally or internally during the reporting period of 2017-2018. In the same period, almost a quarter of the framework credit of the Dispatch 2009-2012 was assessed. Only a small proportion of the current Dispatch is already assessed, as many projects are still at early implementation stage.

Table 2: Commitments versus assessed portfolio

		2017-2020	2013-2016	2009-2012
<b>South framework credit</b>				
Total commitments	CHF	652,560,792	1,127,966,307	841,965,914
Commitments of assessed portfolio	CHF	13,161,000	234,520,528	130,989,086
	%	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>20.8%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>
<b>East framework credit</b>				
Total commitments	CHF	151,162,963	345,450,175	353,635,004
Commitments of assessed portfolio	CHF	311,168	43,103,742	30,502,500
	%	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>

## 1.2. Results of project evaluations according to the OECD DAC criteria (South and East Cooperation)

This chapter discusses SECO WE's overall performance and results for the four assessed DAC criteria, based on all 47 external evaluations and 54 internal reviews carried out during 2017-2018 by WEHU, WEIN, WEIF, and WEMU.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Countries where SECO WE has complementary measures are Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia and Uzbekistan.

<sup>17</sup> For instance, the end-term evaluation of the Cities Development Initiative for Asia (WEIN 54) was commissioned in view of transforming a multi-donor initiative into an institutionalised multi-donor trust fund.

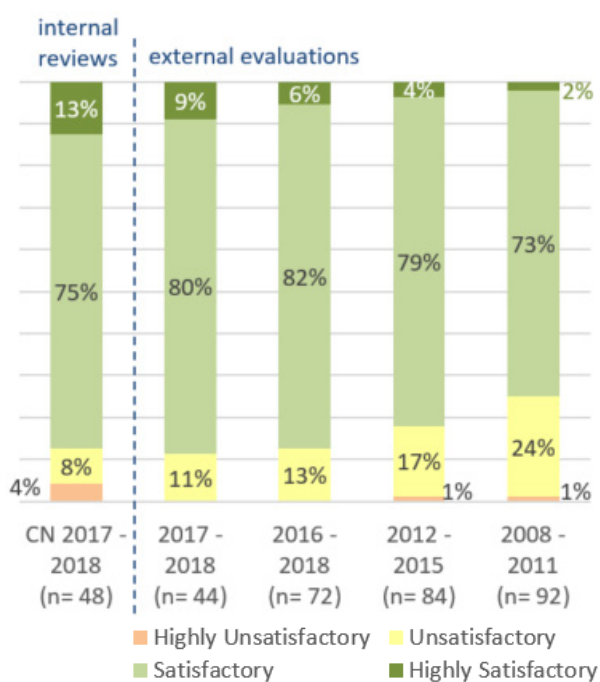
<sup>18</sup> WEKO's projects are separately mentioned in Chapter 1.4, as they are not part of the Dispatch on International Cooperation 2017-2018.

### The overall performance of SECO WE's projects has steadily increased over the last decade

89% of externally evaluated projects were considered to be either highly satisfactory or satisfactory in 2017-2018.<sup>19</sup> Since the reporting period of the previous Dispatch on International Cooperation (2012-2015), this overall performance rate increased by 5 percentage points. While this notable improvement is a positive sign for the implementation of WE's projects, it can also raise questions related to a certain project selection bias, the critical mindset of external evaluators, and SECO WE's risk appetite. The latter is further illustrated in the box below.

The overall performance assessment by internal reviews is just slightly lower, with 88% of satisfactory or highly satisfactory projects. Two internal reviews rated a project as highly unsatisfactory, whereas the lowest rating was never attributed by external evaluators. On the available data basis, the Evaluation Function has no indication to conclude that internal assessments could be less critical than external evaluations.

Figure 7: Overall performance rate over time



The overall performance assessment tends to be slightly more positive than the arithmetic average of the four DAC criteria.<sup>20</sup> In fact, SECO WE's overall performance corresponds to a judgment

### Calculated risk-taking partially explains the good performance of SECO WE's projects

From a risk perspective, the assessed 2017-2018 portfolio is representative of the totality of WE's ongoing projects in 2018: the distribution of risk categories as well as the share of projects on the internal watch list for higher risk projects is quite similar between evaluated and non-evaluated projects. The assessed projects have slightly lower risks than the average of all projects. Out of the assessed sample, only 3% of projects were rated with an overall high risk, compared to 5% of all ongoing projects in 2018. A closer analysis shows that around 40% of assessed projects are on the internal watch list for higher risk projects as they were considered particularly innovative at project approval, or because high risks were identified from the outset. For the other 60%, difficulties such as delays, loss of commitment, or minor irregularities were encountered during project implementation. The risk categorisation of SECO WE's projects can partially explain the good overall performance rate: According to the most recent annual internal risk analysis, WE is not only adequately managing risks, but also implements only few projects falling into the high risk category.

<sup>19</sup> Based on 44 evaluations, the overall assessment of 3 evaluations could not be determined, as the low quality of these reports did not allow for their classification (see Table 1).

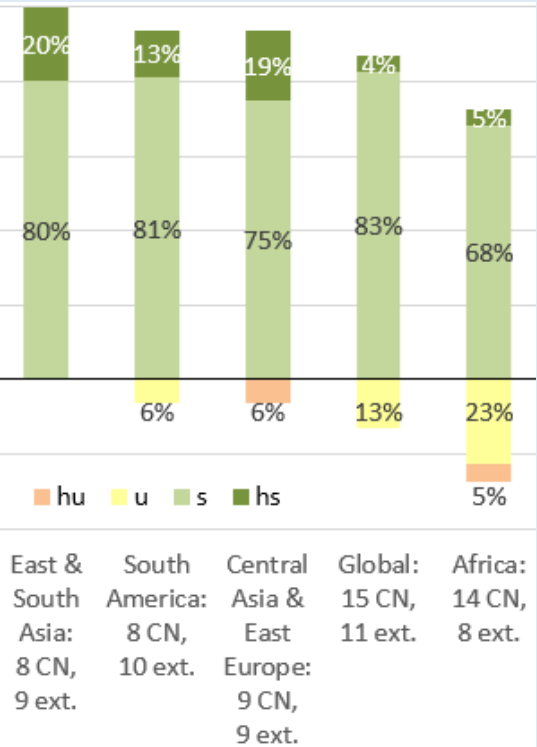
<sup>20</sup> Considering external evaluations in 2017-2018, 89% of projects are either satisfactory or highly satisfactory overall, whereas the average of the DAC criteria from these evaluations equals to 85% of satisfactory or highly satisfactory projects.

call of the Evaluation Function, which also considers the evaluator’s opinion, if provided, and the position of the operational section, where a management response is available.<sup>21</sup> Although this methodological approach introduces a certain degree of subjectivity, it allows for a weighing between the significance of each DAC criteria and the timing of the evaluation.

**Detailed analysis of the average overall performance rate**

For the first time, the Evaluation Function jointly presents the results from external evaluations and internal reviews, covering a total of 101 assessments.<sup>22</sup> This box briefly analyses the average overall performance in 2017-2018 of all assessed projects from WEHU, WEIF, WEIN and WEMU. The broader data basis allows to provide more details on the overall performance of the analysed projects based on specific characteristics, such as target outcome, geographic focus or implementing partner. This analysis aims to support strategic steering of SECO WE’s portfolio.

Figure 8: Average overall performance rate by region



The **analysis by geographic region** (Figure 8) indicates that the East & South Asia portfolio is the best performing as it has 20% of highly satisfactory projects and no single unsatisfactory project. South America and Central Asia & East Europe have also a large proportion of satisfactory and highly satisfactory projects (94% in total), however with one unsatisfactory and one highly unsatisfactory project respectively. Global Initiatives are overall well performing, despite three projects assessed as unsatisfactory. Projects in Africa tend to be less successful with 23% of unsatisfactory and 5% of highly unsatisfactory projects. Available data for Africa is limited and does not suggest a different success rate for projects implemented in North Africa or Sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>23</sup>

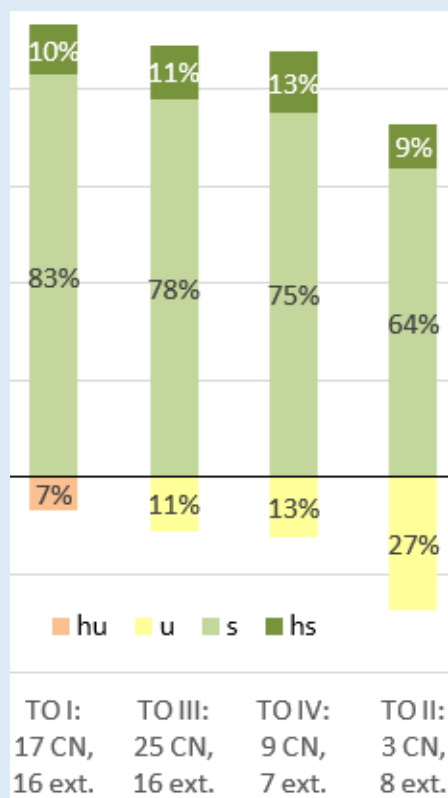
This geographic analysis should not be construed as a suggestion to favour or reduce exposure in some regions. It rather reflects the particular challenges linked to implementing projects in specific regions.

<sup>21</sup> This is a methodological difference with SDC, which currently applies the arithmetic average of the four DAC criteria. Discussions are on-going to harmonise SDC’s and SECO WE’s methodological approaches.

<sup>22</sup> Out of the 87 assessed projects under the mandate of the South and East Cooperation, 14 projects were both externally and internally assessed,, adding up to a total number of 101 assessments considered for this report.

<sup>23</sup> External evaluations indicate 2 projects with an overall unsatisfactory performance (one in Egypt, the other in South Africa). Internal reviews indicate 2 unsatisfactory projects in South Africa, as well as 2 unsatisfactory projects in the MENA region and 1 highly unsatisfactory project in Egypt.

Figure 9: Average overall performance rate by target outcome (TO)



Regarding **overall performance rate of SECO WE's current four target outcomes** (Figure 9), the analysis indicates that all four target outcomes range between 73% (*target outcome II: More and better jobs*) and 93% (*target outcome I: Effective institutions and services*) of satisfactory to highly satisfactory projects. Both highly unsatisfactory projects fall under target outcome I. The three other target outcomes, including target outcomes *III. Enhanced trade and competitiveness* and *IV. Low-emission and climate-resilient economies* contain two and four unsatisfactory projects respectively.

No strong correlation is observed between the average overall performance rate and the modalities of implementation, such as the type of implementing partner<sup>24</sup> (Figure 10) or the proportion of WE's contribution to the overall project budget<sup>25</sup> (Figure 11). In both cases, 11 assessments attributed an unsatisfactory or highly unsatisfactory rating, but these negative ratings are well distributed among all categories.

Notably, all recent assessments rated the performance of projects implemented by "other" types of partners, such as the Swiss academic sector, as successful.

Figure 10: Average overall performance rate by implementing partner type

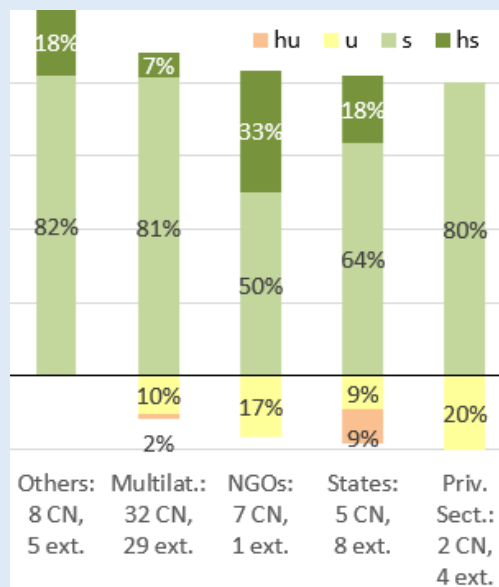
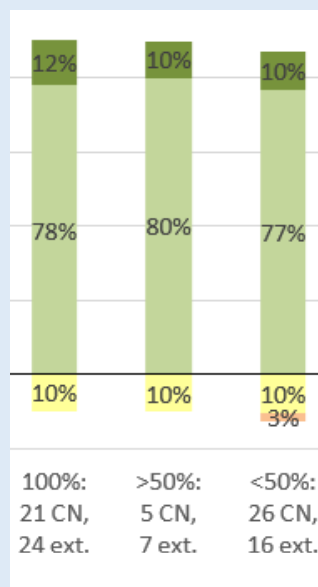


Figure 11: Average overall performance rate by share of Swiss contribution to project budget



<sup>24</sup> Five main categories were considered: Multilateral (UN, IFIs); States (local, CH, other donor); Private sector; NGOs (Swiss and international); Others (incl. PPP, Academia, etc.).

<sup>25</sup> Four main categories were considered: 100% of Swiss contribution; >50%; <50%; not determined (ND).

In the following sections, the results over time for each DAC criteria are briefly presented, linked to some areas for improvement.<sup>26</sup>

*Relevance is always the highest rated criteria*



Figure 12: Relevance rate over time

In 2017-2018, 95% of externally evaluated projects which received a relevance rating were considered to be relevant or highly relevant. While this result is in line with the previous observation periods, a remarkable increase of the share of highly relevant projects can be observed in the observation period of the current Dispatch (2016-2018) compared to the previous periods. The results from internal reviews are slightly higher with 98% of relevant to highly relevant projects.

These results indicate a high level of attention to partner countries’ needs and priorities, to an adequate context analysis and sufficient flexibility to adjust operations to evolving circumstances.

The two projects with questionable relevance suffered from:

- lack of scoping on the demand side and inaccurate assessment of programme risks;
- too static/top-down approach and lack of flexibility to adjust to evolving project needs;
- issues related to design of the intervention logic and contextual constraints during implementation.

<sup>26</sup> Results as well as indications for improvement will be further discussed by the Evaluation Function with operational sections.



### Effectiveness ratings confirm: the majority of expected results are achieved

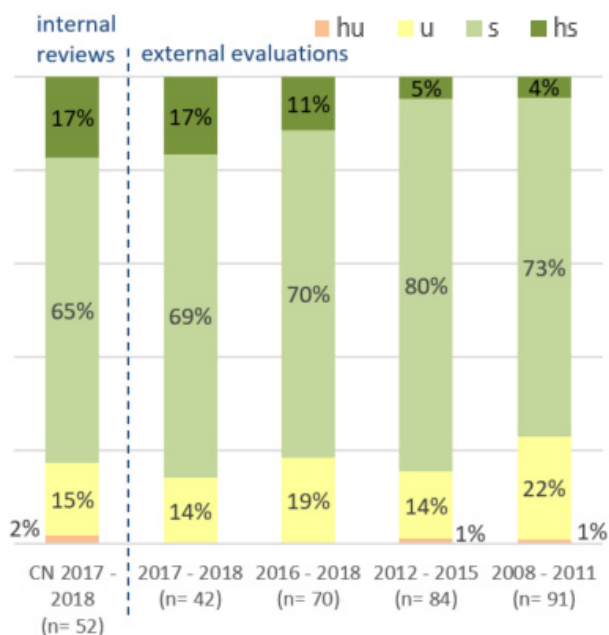


Figure 13: Effectiveness rate over time

During 2017-2018, 86% of the externally evaluated projects with an effectiveness rating were considered to achieve all or the majority of intended results. This rating is approximately on the level of previous observation periods. However, here as well, the share of highly effective projects increased over the last few years. The results from internal reviews are comparable, with 82% of all projects delivering expected results, while one project was rated as highly unsatisfactory.

The achievement of results reflects a realistic definition of objectives and close collaboration with implementing partners during project implementation, depending on their level of capacity. Further unexpected positive results can be achieved by projects, yet remain unaccounted for, as effectiveness is measured based on the pre-

defined objectives

The effectiveness of six externally evaluated projects (14%) was considered as insufficient, amongst them the previously mentioned two projects with questionable relevance. These projects suffered from:

- lack of focus on key stakeholders;
- lack of coordination between the project components;
- weaknesses at the outcome level, although the output objectives were reached;
- gridlock due to external political factors.

### Higher efficiency than in the past with room for further improvement

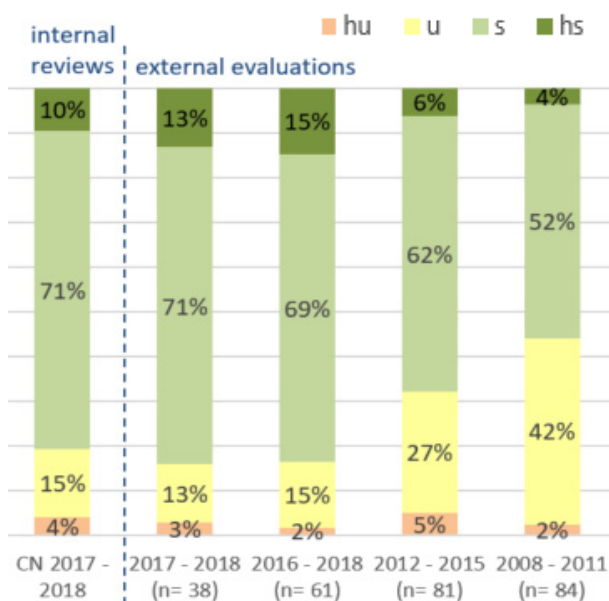


Figure 14: Efficiency rate over time

Only 38 of all 47 external evaluations assessed project efficiency. Of this sample, 84% were considered to be efficient or highly efficient. This is a notably higher score compared to the previous observation periods (+16% since 2012-2015). The results from internal reviews, based on a much larger sample, are almost equal, with 81% of efficient or highly efficient projects.

In the context of development cooperation, these results are considered as positive, as delays in project implementation are common, yet do not have a major impact on SECO WE's efficiency score.

At the lower end, five externally evaluated projects (13%) were considered inefficient, and one project highly inefficient (3%). The picture is similar for internal reviews, where also 3% of

projects, corresponding to three projects, were rated as highly inefficient. Over all observation periods, a sizeable reduction of unsatisfactory projects can be noticed, while the very small share of highly unsatisfactory projects remains stable. Unsatisfactory projects suffered from one of the following weaknesses:

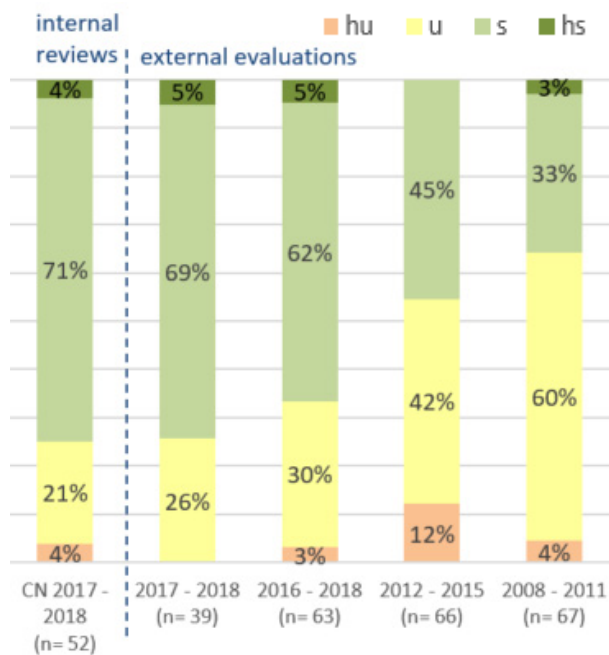
- project delays and slow disbursement processes;
- insufficient financial oversight or lack of implementation resources of the implementing agency;
- too large geographic scope;
- low benefit-cost ratio.

*Sustainability is still ranked lower than other criteria, yet has significantly improved*

Over the last two years, 74% of the externally evaluated projects with a rating on sustainability were considered as having achieved a satisfactory to highly satisfactory likelihood for sustainable results (74%). This is a significantly higher score than in previous observation periods, with a 29 percentage points hike compared to the previous Dispatch. The improvement of ratings is observed since 2015<sup>27</sup> and can be explained by the significant attention and targeted measures taken by SECO WE to ensure higher sustainability of project results.

The results from internal reviews are on a similar level with 75% of successful projects, although, contrary

Figure 15: Sustainability rate over time



Preliminary results of the forthcoming Sustainability Review

Among the four DAC criteria assessed, external evaluators on average rated the sustainability of SECO’s projects considerably lowest during the last three Dispatch observation periods. Although these ratings have gradually improved since 2008, the Evaluation Function mandated an analysis in 2018 to assess underlying factors for the particular challenges faced by SECO’s projects to ensure the sustainability of their results after SECO’s withdrawal and to learn more about the implemented operational measures which led to recent improvements. An initial set of learnings and draft recommendations was presented to an internal ad-hoc working group in March 2019 and has since been discussed with the authors and all the involved operational sections. These discussions allowed to better capitalise on the practices supporting project sustainability of each section and to target the report’s recommendations to respond to the needs of SECO-WE. The report will also inform SECO about the definition practices of other donors regarding sustainability and address the issue of comparability of sustainability ratings across donors. The report is due for publication in late 2019.

<sup>27</sup> 2015: 42% (n=19), 2016: 54% (n=24), 2017: 67% (n=18), 2018: 81% (n=21).

to external evaluators, project managers rated three projects as highly unsatisfactory.

At the lower end, ten externally evaluated projects (26%) did not score well on the sustainability criteria (9 evaluated at end-term and 1 ex-post). These projects mostly suffered from one of the following weaknesses:

- lack of visibility of the project at the moment of assessment;
- lack of political will and impetus from the local political leadership;
- limited contribution by the programme to the high-level policy dialogue;

#### *Results from external evaluations and internal reviews are comparable across all DAC criteria*

14 projects were both externally and internally assessed and partially allow to compare the internal and external perspective on project success. In most cases, the ratings by independent evaluators and internal project managers are exactly the same. In the few cases where they differ on a specific criteria (9 cases of a total of 42), internal reviews are usually slightly more positive than external evaluations (8 ratings are higher, 1 is lower). For all these cases, rating differences however never go beyond one notch on the scale used for rating the DAC criteria and are based on an assessment at a different point of time in the project's life-cycle.

### 1.3. Common lessons learned and recommendations in external project evaluations (South and East Cooperation)

This chapter presents a summary of an external study carried out for the first time. Its overall objective was to gather more insights on key success factors and areas of improvements identified in the lessons learned and recommendations of all external evaluations.<sup>28</sup>

#### *Objective and scope of the content analysis*

Evaluation reports are a primary source for information concerning the achievements and the performance of projects. While findings are usually project-specific, this chapter aims to elevate findings from individual projects to an aggregated level, to distil learnings at the portfolio level. It systematically analyses lessons learned and recommendations mentioned in the reports and provides an overview of improvements that are repeatedly suggested.

A suitable method was established to answer the following three questions:

1. Is there a correlation between the project ratings and the recommendations made?
2. What do the recommendations and lessons learned focus on and are there any blind spots?
3. What can we learn on a meta-level to improve the performance of projects and programs regarding the four DAC criteria?

---

<sup>28</sup> The analysis is based on 45 evaluation reports (22 from 2017 and 23 from 2018) commissioned by WEHU, WEIN, WEIF and WEMU. The study is available upon request.

### *Key principles of the applied approach*

The selected approach combines a quantitative and a qualitative content analysis of the lessons learned and recommendations. A total of 482 text segments were coded in a text analysis software (maxQDA). The quantitative analysis first identified clusters of lessons learned and recommendations based on their attribution to pre-defined PCM sequences\* and the DAC criteria. It resulted in a heatmap that allows to answer the first two questions (correlation between ratings and recommendations; focus of recommendations). Subsequently, a qualitative analysis supported the identification of a common denominator within the most numerous clusters of lessons learned and recommendations to answer the third question. The cells in the heatmap with very few or no statements can be considered as 'blind spots': for instance, few statements can either indicate an area where little or no challenges exist in all the evaluated projects or an area which is usually not assessed by evaluations.

In most cases, both the lessons learned and recommendations address the same aspects of a project. For this analysis, no distinction is therefore made between lessons learned and recommendations. Furthermore, the analysis suggests a correlation between ratings and the number of lessons learned and recommendations: the lower the performance of a specific DAC criteria, the more lessons learned and recommendations are dedicated to issues related to this DAC criteria.

Further information about this external analysis, including the heatmap, is available in Annex D.

\*project design, intervention logic, management and steering, ownership, collaboration, capacity development, monitoring and evaluation, others

### *Most recommendations concern the achievement of results (effectiveness)*

With 51% of all coded segments, the over-representation of the effectiveness criteria is notable. This can be explained to some extent, as effectiveness is considered to be a prerequisite for efficiency and sustainability. Also, a specific focus of evaluations on results of development interventions is self-explanatory. Relevance is the least addressed DAC criteria (5.5% of all coded segments), as relatively many evaluations do not formulate any lessons learned or recommendations related to this aspect. This can be linked to the fact that most projects achieve the highest rating on this level. Relevance needs to be fulfilled at the outset of a project, thus evaluators might focus less on it unless they observe substantial context changes that put project outcomes at risk. In the case of efficiency (13.5% of all coded segments) and sustainability (14.8%), the under-representation is more difficult to explain, as project performance is generally lower for these two criteria compared to relevance. Possible reasons are the lack of simple assessment methods, as executing in-depth assessments and drawing lessons learned can be cumbersome. In addition, for sustainability and to some extent for efficiency, available data is usually more limited compared to effectiveness.

To summarise, the analysis suggests that the effectiveness of SECO's projects is mainly dependent on the project design, the intervention logic, as well as the management and steering and to a lesser extent on collaboration between SECO and the implementing partners. Relevance is best achieved through a proper project design and context analysis. Efficiency can be increased with a good project

design, an appropriate intervention logic and the good use of monitoring and evaluation practices. No clear pattern is recognisable for sustainability based on the data analysed.

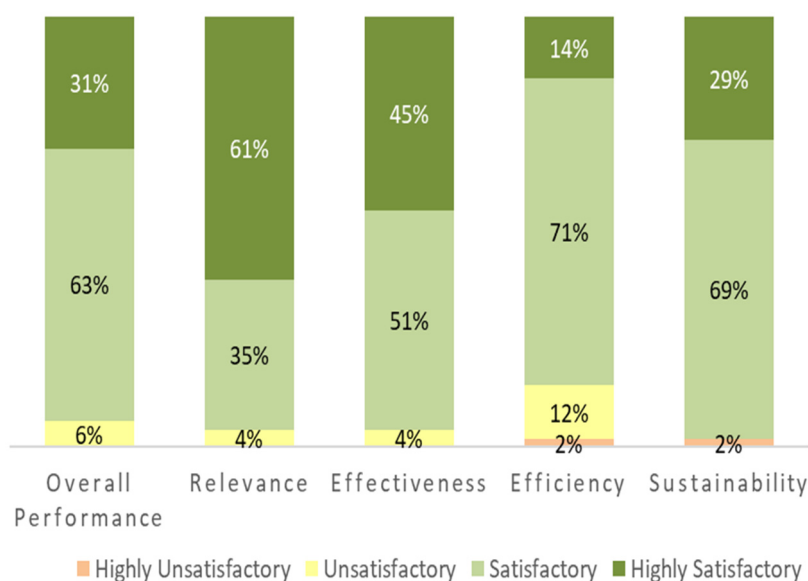
### *Good project management remains the key to successful projects*

The qualitative analysis illustrates that recommendations are often project-specific and only allows to draw general conclusions regarding success factors. Based on the frequency in evaluation reports of similar lessons learned and recommendations, the following ten factors were identified to be most decisive for a successful project (listed by decreasing frequency):

- 1. Good planning from the beginning** includes clear impact hypothesis translated into results-oriented frameworks. Clear strategies, including exit strategies, need to be part of the planning.
- 2. Alignment of the project design to the specific needs of partners** requires careful, sound context and stakeholder analysis, involvement of local partners from the early stages of planning. It includes a clear articulation of possible conflicts of interest.
- 3. Synergies within projects and programs and with other stakeholders** need to be exploited as much as possible.
- 4. Solutions and concepts need to be adapted** to acknowledge technical and social aspects, which are specific to local context.
- 5. Building strong partnerships** with capable partners who can be further strengthened through capacity building.
- 6. Testing and piloting approaches** are valuable and imply phased approaches.
- 7. Competent and committed staff** in all involved agencies and at all levels are crucial for delivering expected results.
- 8. Good leadership and strategic steering** by committed steering committees has a positive influence on the entire project.
- 9. A supportive monitoring and evaluation system** should inform the various levels of objectives (the selected indicators should define the success of a project) and facilitate evaluations.
- 10. A manageable monitoring and evaluation system** should be based on well targeted indicators and designed to facilitate implementation by partners and cooperation offices.

## 1.4. Contribution to the EU enlargement: Results of internal project reviews based on the OECD DAC criteria

Figure 16: Performance of WEKO projects in 2017-2018



Out of the 49 internal reviews carried out by WEKO in 2017-2018, 94% are rated as an overall success (satisfactory or highly satisfactory). This result is slightly higher for the relevance and effectiveness criteria, with a particularly high sustainability rating of 98%. Six projects were rated as inefficient and one as highly inefficient. The Evaluation Function is not involved in WEKO's project assessment.<sup>29</sup>

## 2. Main findings and lessons learned from independent portfolio evaluations

The Dispatch on International Cooperation 2017-2020 defined that each target outcome should be independently evaluated. Between 2017 and 2018, the SECO WE commissioned three independent portfolio evaluations. Independent portfolio evaluations are initiated and managed by the Evaluation Function and validated by the External Evaluation Committee. They also benefit from substantial involvement of the operational sections. These evaluations assess a large portfolio of projects and therefore contribute to identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the division's activities in a particular domain. SECO addresses the recommendations of an independent evaluation in a management response and reports on a regular basis to the External Evaluation Committee, jointly tracking progress on the implementation of recommendations. Common recommendations of these studies are summarised at the end of this sub-chapter.

**Report on effectiveness in the field of employment<sup>30</sup>:** Supporting private sector development in partner countries is of paramount importance, as 9 out of 10 new jobs are created by the private sector. Support by SECO and SDC contributes to strengthening the private sector in developing countries and reducing poverty through job creation.

<sup>29</sup> These results are discussed in the report 'Switzerland's contribution to the enlarged EU: 2017 Annual Report and results of the country programmes completed in the EU-10 countries'.

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch/secocoop/en/home/documentation/reports/accountability-and-effectiveness.html>

Scope	In 2017, an independent team assessed the effectiveness of 72 projects and programs out of an initial portfolio of 279 cooperation projects financed by both SECO and SDC between 2005 and 2014, covering a total project budget size of CHF 2.2 billion. The interventions – 33 SDC projects, 38 SECO projects and 1 joint intervention – were selected through random stratified sampling in order to obtain a representative portfolio.
Results	<p>Almost 85 per cent of interventions across the employment portfolio were considered effective and successfully attained their employment objectives. Interventions in vocational training, agricultural value chain development, and decent work were most successful, while achieving employment targets in trade value chains and SME promotion proved to be more challenging. Several factors influence the success in terms of employment: Is employment a direct objective of these interventions? How many employment dimensions were targeted? Moreover, interventions in Asia and Latin America achieved higher ratings compared to projects implemented in Africa and the Middle East, which likely reflects the particular challenges facing the labour markets in these regions in a context of weak institutions and fragile states. The report highlights the high contribution to job creation notably through the following two projects: SECO-financed SIFEM has contributed to the creation of 46,000 jobs and supported 222,000 jobs between 2003 and 2011, while PIDG reports the creation or maintenance of roughly 190,000 long-term and 12'000 short-term jobs between 2002 and 2015.</p> <p>However, the evaluators also acknowledged the difficulty to achieve job creation through development interventions and to directly link a project to the created impact on employment, as some effects are indirect or may occur years later. Yet, decent work projects, such as those implemented by SECO with ILO, are found to deliver immediate benefits on working conditions for poor people and women in particular, as well as beneficial effects for private industry and society.</p>
Recom.	Interventions in areas or sectors with unfavourable conditions need more thorough planning and higher resources for implementation to be successful, while value chain interventions need to be based on a market and value chain analysis to tackle all critical issues at stake.

*Independent evaluation on energy-efficient cities (WEIN)*<sup>31</sup>: More than half of the world's population currently live in cities, a proportion that will rise to 65% in the coming decades. As this growth mainly takes place in developing countries, cities in partner countries face particular development challenges, from lack of infrastructure to environmental issues and high income inequality. At the same time, the potential for reducing poverty is particularly high in urban centres, through access to education, jobs and basic services. Cities also offer a high potential for reducing GHG emissions through integrated urban planning, better public transport and energy-efficiency measures.

Scope	In 2018, an independent evaluation analysed a portfolio of 14 projects for a total value of CHF 120 million. It covered three business lines, in which SECO's infrastructure section is active, that are related to energy-efficient cities: integrated urban development, sustainable energy supply, as well as reliable basic public services.
Results	The evaluation attests SECO a high visibility as a major international player in the field of energy-efficient cities, in particular in bilateral projects, while participation in global

<sup>31</sup> Forthcoming (summer 2019)

	<p>initiatives provides a precious opportunity to steer international energy-efficiency efforts. Projects are deemed fully relevant in light of the challenges identified at the country and regional level and with its approach SECO can fill a unique intervention niche. Also, the financial leverage effect of this portfolio was relatively high. Moreover, the intended results were achieved while impacts were hard to assess, given that the evaluators considered an ongoing portfolio with some projects still at early implementation stage.</p> <p>The evaluation critically assessed the variable depth of the monitoring and evaluation system and the partially inconsistent use of quantitative indicators. At the time of evaluation, the likelihood of sustainability is considered satisfactory only for those projects which will require limited maintenance after completion or where grantees ensure themselves a viable source of income.</p>
Recommendations	<p>The evaluators recommend, amongst others, that SECO should expand assessments on the added value of the selected technological and methodological approaches and focus on 'lighthouse projects' with multiplication potential or able to achieve short-term successes. Moreover, SECO should increase projects tackling the demand-side, such as installing meters or rehabilitation of buildings. Lastly, sufficient financial resources must be available for implementing measures, for instance by creating long-term financing mechanisms for the European Energy Award to increase sustainability of interventions.</p>

*Independent evaluation on market access and competitiveness (WEHU)*<sup>32</sup>: Participation in international trade and facilitated market access are key drivers for development in SECO partner countries. Next to the establishment of favourable framework conditions for sustainable trade and the support to an efficient business environment, SECO strengthens the capacities of SMEs to benefit from trade and supports the set-up of specific value chains for soft and hard commodities as well as for sustainable tourism.

Scope	<p>In 2018, an independent team evaluated SECO's trade promotion division projects running under the label of 'Greater International Competitiveness of SMEs and Facilitated Market Access'. The evaluation covered 22 bilateral/multi-country programs and 3 global programs in order to draw strategic conclusions at the portfolio level.</p>
Results	<p>According to the evaluation, "SECO positively contributed to the integration of producers and SMEs into global value chains such as cocoa, cotton, gold, textiles and natural ingredients. The sustainability of these results looks promising as (i) the underlying economics make sense and (ii) the producers / SMEs are invested and have a stake in their success." The evaluation recognises that SECO's interventions are implemented by small and competent teams within a functioning governance structure. However, trade volumes associated with the successful integration of producers and SMEs into the global value chains remain small compared to the total trade in a specific commodity, which may be explained by the niche role of SECO. The evaluators also noted the crucial role of partnerships with business support organisations and the private sector, in particular large national and international companies, to attain SECO's development objectives in this area.</p>
Recommendations	<p>Supporting a select number of international value chains and adopting an even more comprehensive and programmatic approach to the integration of producers and SMEs into international value chains are considered as success factors. The evaluators recommend to</p>

<sup>32</sup> Forthcoming (autumn 2019)



	further include big national and international companies in SECO's value chain interventions, as a key success factor is establishing direct links between producers and large international buyers. SECO should also meticulously select its project partners and further exploit meaningful synergies between programs.
--	---

### *Common recommendations to the three independent portfolio evaluations*

A common denominator of all independent evaluations' recommendations is the enhancement of accountability reporting and programme monitoring and steering, related to the following intertwined issues:

- **Better use of SECO standard indicators (SI):** Use fewer but targeted and meaningful SIs for which data is easier to collect and report, providing a clear link between projects and the overarching goals of the Dispatch on International Cooperation.
- **Adopting a consistent Monitoring & Evaluation framework** which better allows to assess the success of projects, using the DAC criteria, against clear baseline and outcome data, which should be collected by the implementing agencies. This will facilitate external project evaluation and comparability across projects, for instance on cost-effectiveness, but also provide valuable data for evidence-based decision making.
- **An explicit intervention logic / theory of change** across portfolios and single projects demonstrates what SECO interventions are expected to achieve and facilitates the analytical assessment of the contribution by projects to the overarching objectives.

### 3. Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the 2017-2018 external evaluations and the internal reviews, the independent portfolio evaluations, as well as the experience of the Evaluation Function in the last two years and the follow-up of the recommendations from the 2016 WE Effectiveness Report (see Annex 2 of the Management Response), the Evaluation Function has identified areas of improvement and suggests a set of related recommendations. Following each recommendation, the practical implications for the operational sections on the one hand and the Evaluation Function on the other are clarified.

#### **1) Formulate from the outset an impact hypothesis considering all relevant stakeholders, and containing clear criteria for measuring project success, while allowing space for adaptive management during project implementation.**

- Implications for operational sections<sup>33</sup>
  - a) Formulate from the outset (concept note) an explicit impact hypothesis of a project (e.g. with a theory of change), indicating complementarity of the project's components and the causal links between output and outcome levels. Indicate where appropriate the link to political dialogue.
  - b) Carefully select criteria defining success, considering SECO WE's standard indicators and including baseline and targets. The latter can be refined during inception and implementation phases if necessary. Changes should be documented.
  - c) Allocate sufficient time and resources for project preparation (stakeholder and market analysis to assess capacities, needs and demands), highlighting the added-value of the selected approach and the comparative advantage of SECO WE.
  - d) Identify and briefly explain in the logframe all relevant assumptions, i.e. external factors that may influence the project, explicit the concrete implications on the project and link these assumptions to the implementation of WE's risk management policy.
- Implications for the Evaluation Function
  - a) Elaborate with operational sections the impact hypothesis/theory of change and associated list of standard indicators for the business lines of the next Dispatch on International Cooperation.
  - b) Continue to provide results-based management (RBM) advisory services and trainings for project officers.

#### **2) Optimise the use of existing human and financial resources for steering and accountability by developing an adequate monitoring and evaluation system for each project**

- Implications for operational sections
  - a) Define a supportive and manageable monitoring framework from the outset of a project, including responsibilities, methods and frequency of data collection, which responds to WE's accountability and steering needs.
  - b) On a portfolio-level, carefully monitor the distribution of evaluations between operational units for reasons of accountability, and maintain a reasonable

---

<sup>33</sup> "Operational sections" for this purpose comprise SECO WE's Management and cooperation offices.

balance between different types of evaluations to best address the needs for steering.

- c) Strengthen the focus on ex-post assessments for reasons of accountability: the target of 2 annual ex-post evaluations should at least be maintained, if not increased, and targeted ex-post monitoring should be further considered, building on existing practices within SECO WE.
- d) Capitalize on the knowledge and experience of Cooperation Offices: involve the latter in the set-up and implementation of the M&E system and further encourage the use of the DAC criteria for internal reviews executed by Cooperation Offices.

➤ Implications for the Evaluation Function

- a) Monitor and influence evaluation planning at project approval stage.
- b) Discuss with WEOP how to integrate non-project evaluations in future accountability reports, such as institutional evaluations.
- c) Consider to carry out additional types of evaluations, such as impact studies or country evaluations
- d) Consider with SECO WE's Management to combine results from external and internal assessments to distill SECO WE's overall performance on a more comprehensive and representative basis.
- e) Consider with SDC to develop a common or better comparable methodology for assessing overall performance.

**3) Formulate terms of references for external evaluations in a more targeted way in view of maximizing the usability of evaluations for steering, learning, and accountability.**

➤ Implications for operational sections

- a) Ensure the key elements of the ToR-template are considered also in joint evaluations to increase the usefulness of evaluations for SECO WE's steering and accountability purposes.
- b) Systematically elaborate a management response to all external evaluations mandated by SECO. For joint evaluations, if a joint management response is established, key implications for the operational section and its position on the evaluations' results and recommendations should be recorded.

➤ Implications for the Evaluation Function

- a) Update the ToR-template for external evaluations by providing more guidance and clearer expectations for external evaluators to address weaknesses recognized in current evaluations.<sup>34</sup> Also, integrate relevant changes from the ongoing revision of the OECD DAC evaluation criteria.
- b) Refine the SECO Scoring Chart once the revised DAC criteria and relevant recommendations from the Sustainability Review are available.

**4) Improve internal dissemination and external communication of evaluation results in a user-friendly and targeted manner**

---

<sup>34</sup> For instance, clear indication on the purpose of an evaluation, the number of phases evaluated, and an increased focus in mid-term evaluations on project sustainability. Clear request for an assessment of all DAC criteria and an overall assessment, and to address where possible a transversal theme (e.g. gender, climate change). This update could also address indications on evaluations carried out by strategic partners.

- Implications for operational sections
  - a) Consider innovative communication for project evaluations building on existing practices (e.g. short films)
  - b) Continue to ensure internal learning from external evaluations by disseminating and discussing lessons learned and recommendations within the operational section and beyond.
- Implications for the Evaluation Function
  - a) Further refine the content analysis of recommendations, lessons learned and success stories for future accountability reports.
  - b) Consider targeted and/or innovative communication about portfolio evaluations (e.g. factsheets, short movie, blog).

## **5) Continue efforts to ensure the sustainability of SECO's projects**

- Implications for operational sections
  - a) Capitalise the lessons learned from the forthcoming Sustainability Review through internal learning sessions and implement relevant recommendations of the forthcoming Sustainability Review
  - b) Continue to ensure a particular focus on project sustainability in the ToRs of evaluations and internal reviews (see recommendation 3)
- Implications for the Evaluation Function
  - a) Support the operational units in disseminating the lessons learned from the forthcoming Sustainability Review.
  - b) Ensure coordination with other evaluation units on best practices to support and assess project sustainability.

# Annex A: List of Evaluations

#	Evaluation ID	WBS	Project title	Eval. type	Overall	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	Quality	Geography	Target outcome	Contract Partner	CH contribut
1	2018_WEHU B	UR-00043.15.0	TCP TJ, Component IV	CN	s	s	hs	s	s	ND	Central Asia & East Europe	III (sustainable trade)	Others	100%
2	2018_WEHU 170	UR-00111.02.0	Trade Support Services for Vietnam SMEs	End-Term	s	hs	u	s	u	s	East & South Asia	III (sustainable trade)	States	100%
3	2017_WEHU 158	UR-00111.06.0	ONUDI: Egypt (MAP-Project), USD	End-Term	u	s	u	u	u	hs	Africa	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	100%
4	2017_WEHU M	UR-00111.06.0	ONUDI: Egypt (MAP-Project), USD	CN	s	hs	s	s	u	ND	Africa	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	100%
5	2017_WEHU 159	UR-00111.07.0	Textile Value chain Project	Mid-Term	s	hs	s	ND	ND	u	Africa	III (sustainable trade)	Others	100%
6	2018_WEHU D	UR-00111.07.0	Textile Value chain Project	CN	s	hs	s	s	s	ND	Africa	III (sustainable trade)	Others	100%
7	2017_WEHU 155	UR-00111.12.0	PAMPAT TUN	Mid-Term	s	hs	s	hs	s	s	Africa	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	100%
8	2018_WEHU C	UR-00112.02.1	KG: Trade promotion, Phase II T&C, RK4	CN	s	hs	hs	s	s	ND	Central Asia & East Europe	III (sustainable trade)	Others	100%
9	2017_WEHU H	UR-00164.03.0	Organic Cotton Consolidation, BF	CN	s	u	s	s	s	ND	Africa	III (sustainable trade)	NGOs	100%
10	2017_WEHU K	UR-00171.04.0	Allanblackia, Ghana Phase II	CN	s	s	s	s	u	ND	Africa	III (sustainable trade)	Others	>50%
11	2017_WEHU C	UR-00289.02.0	Commodity Risk Management (Aufst.),USD	CN	s	hs	s	s	u	ND	Global	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	<50%
12	2017_WEHU 160	UR-00319.02.0	Protection of Children in Tourism, USD	End-Term	u	u	u	s	u	hs	Global	III (sustainable trade)	Private	100%
13	2017_WEHU 165	UR-00340.02.0	RECP Globalprogramm UNIDO	Mid-Term	u	s	s	u	s	hs	Global	IV (climate resilience)	Multilat.	<50%
14	2018_WEHU K	UR-00340.02.0	RECP Globalprogramm UNIDO	CN	u	s	s	s	s	ND	Global	IV (climate resilience)	Multilat.	<50%
15	2017_WEHU G	UR-00399.01.0	ZA Industrial Energy Efficiency, EUR	CN	u	hs	s	u	u	ND	Africa	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	<50%
16	2018_WEHU G	UR-00401.02.0	DMO Indonesia, Wisata II	CN	s	s	s	s	s	ND	East & South Asia	III (sustainable trade)	NGOs	100%
17	2018_WEHU 169	UR-00424.03.0	UN Trade Cluster Laos, USD	Ex-Post	s	Not Requi	hs	Not Requi	u	s	East & South Asia	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	100%
18	2018_WEHU M	UR-00424.03.0	UN Trade Cluster Laos, USD	CN	s	hs	s	s	s	ND	East & South Asia	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	100%
19	2017_WEHU L	UR-00428.02.0	Scaling up Fair Trade Travel	CN	u	s	u	u	u	ND	Africa	III (sustainable trade)	NGOs	>50%
20	2017_WEHU 157	UR-00535.02.0	Sustainable Recycling Industries, RKVIII	End-Term	s	s	s	s	s	hs	Global	III (sustainable trade)	Others	100%
21	2018_WEHU J	UR-00535.02.0	Sustainable Recycling Industries, RKVIII	CN	s	s	s	s	s	ND	Global	III (sustainable trade)	Others	100%
22	2017_WEHU B	UR-00554.01.0	Sustainable Cocoa Production Program I	CN	hs	hs	hs	hs	s	ND	East & South Asia	III (sustainable trade)	NGOs	100%
23	2017_WEHU E	UR-00559.01.0	Better Gold Initiative	CN	s	hs	s	s	s	ND	South America	III (sustainable trade)	Private	100%
24	2018_WEHU F	UR-00559.02.0	BGI for ASM, Phase II	CN	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	South America	III (sustainable trade)	Private	100%
25	2017_WEHU A	UR-00560.01.0	CSR Reporting (GRI/UNGC); EUR	CN	ND	hs	s	s	u	ND	Global	III (sustainable trade)	NGOs	100%
26	2017_WEHU D	UR-00576.03.0	IFC: Sustainable Business Advisory, USD	CN	s	s	s	hs	s	ND	Global	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	<50%
27	2018_WEHU 168	UR-00642.20.0	Better Work Phase III, Global	End-Term	s	hs	s	s	s	hs	East & South Asia	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	<50%
28	2017_WEHU I	UR-00642.20.0	Better Work Phase III, Global	CN	ND	hs	s	hs	s	ND	East & South Asia	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	<50%
29	2017_WEHU 161	UR-00644.10.0	SCORE Phase II, Global	End-Term	s	s	s	s	s	s	Global	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	<50%
30	2018_WEHU L	UR-00644.10.0	SCORE Phase II, Global	CN	s	hs	s	s	s	ND	Global	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	<50%
31	2017_WEHU 162	UR-00644.10.0	SCORE Phase II, Chine	End-Term	hs	hs	hs	hs	s	hs	East & South Asia	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	<50%
32	2018_WEHU 166	UR-00704.10.0	COLIPRI I	End-Term	u	hs	u	s	u	u	South America	II (More & better jobs)	States	100%
33	2018_WEHU E	UR-00742.10.0	COMPAL III (USD)	CN	s	s	hs	s	s	ND	South America	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	>50%
34	2017_WEHU J	UR-00765.10.0	BTFP III	CN	s	s	s	s	s	ND	Global	IV (climate resilience)	Multilat.	100%
35	2018_WEHU 167	UR-00817.10.0	UNIDO Standards Colombia, USD	End-Term	hs	hs	hs	hs	hs	s	South America	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	>50%
36	2017_WEHU 163	UR-00831.10.0	secompetitivo.pe - WEHU	End-Term	s	hs	s	s	s	u	South America	III (sustainable trade)	NGOs	>50%
37	2017_WEHU 156	UR-00847.10.0	UNDP Nat. Commodities Platforms Indonesi	Mid-Term	s	hs	s	s	s	s	East & South Asia	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	<50%
38	2018_WEHU H	UR-00847.10.0	UNDP Nat. Commodities Platforms Indonesi	CN	s	hs	s	s	s	ND	East & South Asia	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	<50%
39	2017_WEHU F	UR-00850.10.0	PAGE	CN	s	hs	s	s	s	ND	Global	IV (climate resilience)	Multilat.	<50%
40	2018_WEHU A	UR-00877.10.0	Responsible Mining Index, EUR	CN	hs	hs	hs	hs	s	ND	Global	III (sustainable trade)	NGOs	<50%
41	2018_WEHU I	UR-00997.10.0	Regional Biotrade Programme VN	CN	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	East & South Asia	III (sustainable trade)	NGOs	100%
42	2017_WEHU 164	UR-00999.10.0	Sustainability Standards	Mid-Term	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	hu	Global	III (sustainable trade)	Others	<50%
43	2017_WEIF 105	UR-00263.13.0	IFC: PEP Africa CIPA ZA, USD	End-Term	u	u	u	ND	u	u	Africa	II (More & better jobs)	Multilat.	100%
44	2017_WEIF A	UR-00591.01.0	IFC: Innov. Retail Payments Facility	CN	s	s	u	s	s	ND	Africa	II (More & better jobs)	Multilat.	<50%

#	Evaluation ID	WBS	Project title	Eval. type	Overall	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	Quality	Geography	Target outcome	Contract Partner	CH contribut
45	2018_WEIF B	UR-00603.10.0	UNCTAD: IIA Tech. Ass. 2013-16, USD	CN	s	s	s	u	s	ND	Global	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	<50%
46	2018_WEIF 102	UR-00604.10.0	WB: Competitive Industries (RKVII)	Mid-Term	s	hs	s	s	s	s	Global	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	<50%
47	2018_WEIF 108	UR-00617.20.0	WB/IFC: MSME TA Facility I, USD	End-Term	s	hs	s	s	s	hs	Africa	II (More & better jobs)	Multilat.	<50%
48	2018_WEIF A	UR-00618.10.0	IFC: Investment Climate Project, TN, USD	CN	s	hs	s	s	s	ND	Africa	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	100%
49	2018_WEIF C	UR-00624.10.8	IFC: E4E Program, Saldo, USD	CN	u	hs	u	u	u	ND	Africa	II (More & better jobs)	Multilat.	<50%
50	2018_WEIF D	UR-00625.10.0	IFC: Debt Resolution Program MENA I, USD	CN	s	hs	u	s	u	ND	Africa	II (More & better jobs)	Multilat.	100%
51	2018_WEIF 106	UR-00670.10.0	ILO: Promise Impact, ID, USD	Mid-Term	s	ND	ND	ND	ND	u	East & South Asia	II (More & better jobs)	Multilat.	100%
52	2018_WEIF 107	UR-00718.20.0	IFC: Investment Climate Program, TJ, USD	End-Term	s	hs	s	s	u	s	Central Asia & East Europe	III (sustainable trade)	Multilat.	>50%
53	2017_WEIF 101	UR-00723.10.0	Entrepreneurship Program Albania	Mid-Term	hs	hs	hs	hs	s	hs	Central Asia & East Europe	II (More & better jobs)	Others	100%
54	2018_WEIF 110	UR-00774.10.0	IFC: Crop Receipts Project, UA, USD	Mid-Term	s	s	s	s	s	s	Central Asia & East Europe	II (More & better jobs)	Multilat.	100%
55	2018_WEIF 111	UR-00806.10.0	UNDP: SME Membership Org, UA, USD	Mid-Term	s	hs	s	hs	s	hs	Central Asia & East Europe	II (More & better jobs)	Multilat.	>50%
56	2018_WEIF 109	UR-00873.10.0	IFC: REE Phase II, UA, USD	Mid-Term	s	hs	s	Not Requi	s	s	Central Asia & East Europe	IV (climate resilience)	Multilat.	100%
57	2018_WEIN E	UR-00034.04.0	Egypt-Swiss Radiology Project II-TAP	CN	hs	hs	s	hs	hs	ND	Africa	I (Effective institutions)	Others	100%
58	2018_WEIN I	UR-00040.02.0	TJ: Pamir Private Power Pr.II, Aufst.USD	CN	hs	hs	hs	s	s	ND	Central Asia & East Europe	IV (climate resilience)	Multilat.	<50%
59	2018_WEIN C	UR-00108.06.0	AZ: Kataster, TA WB Cadastre Project	CN	s	s	hs	u	u	ND	Central Asia & East Europe	IV (climate resilience)	Multilat.	nd
60	2018_WEIN J	UR-00109.01.0	AZ: Wasser Ganja/Sheki	CN	hu	s	u	hu	hu	ND	Central Asia & East Europe	I (Effective institutions)	States	nd
61	2017_WEIN 48	UR-00123.04.0	WEIN: Platform Renew. Energies REPIC IV	Mid-Term	s	hs	s	s	s	s	Global	IV (climate resilience)	Private	100%
62	2018_WEIN F	UR-00224.01.0	Electricity Reform and Extension, Ghana	CN	s	hs	s	s	s	ND	Africa	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	<50%
63	2018_WEIN L	UR-00247.01.0	MK: Bregalnica River Basin Management	CN	s	hs	s	s	s	ND	Central Asia & East Europe	I (Effective institutions)	States	>50%
64	2018_WEIN M	UR-00363.01.0	PE: Pisco water supply rehabilitation	CN	s	s	s	s	u	ND	South America	I (Effective institutions)	States	<50%
65	2018_WEIN 52	UR-00363.01.0	PE: Pisco water supply rehabilitation	Ex-post	Not to be	Not to be	Not to be	Not to be	Not to be	hu	South America	I (Effective institutions)	States	<50%
66	2018_WEIN D	UR-00443.01.0	Integrated Sanitation & Sewerage, USD	CN	hu	hs	hu	hu	hu	ND	Africa	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	<50%
67	2018_WEIN K	UR-00461.01.0	AL: Water Supply and Sewerage Lezhë, EUR	CN	hs	hs	hs	s	hs	ND	Central Asia & East Europe	I (Effective institutions)	States	100%
68	2018_WEIN 51	UR-00631.10.0	CO:Strengthening land policies (Tierras)	Mid-Term	s	s	u	s	s	s	South America	IV (climate resilience)	States	>50%
69	2018_WEIN 50	UR-00633.10.0	Kosovo Inter-Min. Water Council, EUR	End-Term	Not to be	ND	ND	Not to be	Not to be	u	Central Asia & East Europe	I (Effective institutions)	States	>50%
70	2018_WEIN G	UR-00705.10.0	IDB: ESCI/ MTF	CN	s	s	s	s	s	ND	Global	IV (climate resilience)	Multilat.	<50%
71	2018_WEIN A	UR-00705.10.0	Cities Alliance Partnership, USD	CN	s	hs	s	s	s	ND	Global	IV (climate resilience)	Multilat.	<50%
72	2018_WEIN 53	UR-00739.10.0	AL: Gas Capacity Building II, EUR	Mid-Term	s	hs	s	s	s	hs	Central Asia & East Europe	IV (climate resilience)	States	100%
73	2018_WEIN 54	UR-00769.10.0	CDIA: Regional Urban Development, USD	End-Term	s	ND	ND	ND	ND	not asses	East & South Asia	IV (climate resilience)	Multilat.	<50%
74	2018_WEIN H	UR-00769.10.0	CDIA: Regional Urban Development, USD	CN	hs	hs	hs	s	s	ND	East & South Asia	IV (climate resilience)	Multilat.	<50%
75	2018_WEIN 55	UR-00770.10.0	IADB SECCI	End-Term	s	s	s	s	s	s	South America	IV (climate resilience)	Multilat.	<50%
76	2018_WEIN N	UR-00770.10.0	IADB SECCI	CN	s	hs	s	s	s	ND	South America	IV (climate resilience)	Multilat.	<50%
77	2017_WEIN 49	UR-00800.10.0	Aquafund II - MTF	Mid-Term	s	s	s	s	s	s	South America	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	<50%
78	2018_WEIN B	UR-00800.10.0	Aquafund II - MTF	CN	s	s	s	s	s	ND	South America	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	<50%
79	2018_WEMU 81	UR-00013.05.0	Contribution PEFA: Phase IV, USD	End-Term	s	hs	s	s	s	s	Global	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	<50%
80	2017_WEMU A	UR-00051.01.0	BF: Aide budgétaire (VIII), 2013-2016	CN	s	hs	u	s	u	ND	Africa	I (Effective institutions)	States	<50%
81	2018_WEMU 75	UR-00155.05.0	GH: West II AFRITAC, USD 10-18	Mid-Term	s	s	s	s	s	s	Africa	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	<50%
82	2018_WEMU D	UR-00332.03.0	PEM-PAL Phase II, 2013-2016	CN	ND	hs	s	s	s	ND	Central Asia & East Europe	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	>50%
83	2018_WEMU 80	UR-00360.01.0	TJ: Support for independ. ext. Audit USD	Ex-post	s	hs	s	s	s	s	Central Asia & East Europe	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	100%
84	2018_WEMU B	UR-00379.01.0	AZ: CAPSAP, USD	CN	s	hs	s	u	s	ND	Central Asia & East Europe	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	<50%
85	2017_WEMU 69	UR-00409.02.0	UNODC, AML / CFT, bilat. VN/Mekong, USD	End-Term	s	hs	hs	hu	u	hs	East & South Asia	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	100%
86	2018_WEMU A	UR-00416.02.0	VN: General Budget Support	CN	s	s	u	s	s	ND	East & South Asia	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	<50%
87	2017_WEMU 72	UR-00425.02.0	VN: Bank Director's Training Phase 2	End-Term	s	hs	s	s	u	hs	East & South Asia	I (Effective institutions)	Others	100%
88	2017_WEMU 74	UR-00519.01.0	PE: Fiscal Risk Management, GDRM, USD	End-Term	s	hs	s	s	s	hs	South America	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	100%

#	Evaluation ID	WBS	Project title	Eval. type	Overall	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	Quality	Geography	Target outcome	Contract Partner	CH contribut
89	2017_WEMU E	UR-00519.01.0	PE: Fiscal Risk Management, GDRM, USD	CN	s	hs	s	s	s	ND	South America	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	100%
90	2017_WEMU 73	UR-00526.01.0	Consumer Prot. & Financial Literacy, USD	End-Term	s	s	s	u	ND	s	Global	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	<50%
91	2017_WEMU D	UR-00526.01.0	Consumer Prot. & Financial Literacy, USD	CN	s	s	s	u	s	ND	Global	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	<50%
92	2017_WEMU 70	UR-00545.01.0	GH: NPRA, 2013-2017, USD	End-Term	s	s	s	u	ND	hs	Africa	I (Effective institutions)	Private	100%
93	2017_WEMU C	UR-00553.01.0	CEMLA, USD	CN	s	s	s	u	s	ND	South America	I (Effective institutions)	Others	100%
94	2018_WEMU 79	UR-00569.03.0	Support to the PFM Reform Process CO,USD	End-Term	s	s	s	s	s	s	South America	I (Effective institutions)	States	100%
95	2018_WEMU 78	UR-00570.01.0	Capacity Building Finan. Regulators, USD	End-Term	hs	hs	hs	s	hs	hs	South America	I (Effective institutions)	States	100%
96	2018_WEMU C	UR-00584.01.0	Bil. Assistance for Central Banks (BCC)	CN	ND	hs	u	s	s	ND	Global	I (Effective institutions)	Others	100%
97	2017_WEMU B	UR-00682.10.0	UNCTAD DMFAS TF, USD	CN	s	hs	s	s	s	ND	Global	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	<50%
98	2017_WEMU 71	UR-00693.10.0	Financial Programming East, Phase 3	End-Term	s	hs	hs	s	u	hs	Global	I (Effective institutions)	Private	100%
99	2018_WEMU 76	UR-00791.10.0	DMF Phase II Aufstockung, USD	Mid-Term	s	hs	s	u	s	hs	Global	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	<50%
##	2017_WEMU 68	UR-00792.10.0	WB: FS Dev. & Reform Program, ZA, USD	Mid-Term	s	hs	s	s	s	s	Africa	II (More & better jobs)	Multilat.	>50%
##	2018_WEMU 77	UR-00883.10.0	Financial Sector Strengthening Albania	Mid-Term	s	hs	s	s	s	hs	Central Asia & East Europe	I (Effective institutions)	Multilat.	100%



#	Evaluation ID	WBS	Project title	Overall	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	Country	Contract Partner
1	2017_WEKO J	UX-00202.01.01	Inostart	u	u	u	s	s	Czech Republic	Others
2	2017_WEKO ZL	UX-00203.01.01	Environment Expertise Fund	s	hs	s	s	s	Czech Republic	Others
3	2017_WEKO ZD	UX-00204.01.01	Multimodal public transport	s	s	s	u	s	Czech Republic	Others
4	2017_WEKO ZB	UX-00205.01.01	Construction Trolley-Bus line	s	s	s	s	s	Czech Republic	Others
5	2017_WEKO ZC	UX-00206.01.01	Improvement tram transport	hs	hs	hs	s	hs	Czech Republic	Others
6	2017_WEKO C	UX-00207.01.01	Nové Sady Tramline in Olomouc	s	s	s	s	hs	Czech Republic	Others
7	2017_WEKO ZE	UX-00208.01.01	Transport terminal stage II	s	hs	hs	u	s	Czech Republic	Others
8	2018_WEKO G	UX-00211.01.01	City of Beroun: Public Transport for All	s	s	hs	u	s	Czech Republic	Others
9	2018_WEKO A	UX-00301.01.01	Development of the Hungarian air quality network and laboratory background	s	s	hs	s	s	Hungary	Others
10	2018_WEKO B	UX-00301.02.01	Fully comprehensive waste control within the territory of cognizance of the Middle Danube Valley	s	s	s	s	s	Hungary	Others
11	2018_WEKO D	UX-00302.01.01	Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County: Change of main lines of drinking water	s	hs	hs	s	s	Hungary	Others
12	2018_WEKO F	UX-00302.02.01	Ózd Town: drinking water supply infrastructure	s	hs	s	s	s	Hungary	Others
13	2018_WEKO C	UX-00302.03.01	Rehabilitation of the drinking water system of the city of Balassagyarmat and its surroundings	s	hs	s	s	s	Hungary	Others
14	2018_WEKO E	UX-00302.04.01	Reconstruction of the Water Supply System of Erd Town of County Rights in order to Improve the Safety	s	s	s	hs	s	Hungary	Others
15	2017_WEKO I	UX-00303.02.01	Healing Regions (Matra)	s	s	s	s	s	Hungary	Others
16	2018_WEKO J	UX-00303.03.01	Development of sustainable tourism based on provincial values	u	u	u	u	hu	Hungary	Others
17	2018_WEKO K	UX-00304.01.01	Euroventures IV Venture Capital Fund	s	hs	hs	s	s	Hungary	Others
18	2018_WEKO H	UX-00305.01.01	Facilities managed by the Office of Immigration and Nationality and the Police	s	s	hs	s	s	Hungary	Others
19	2018_WEKO I	UX-00305.02.01	Equipping court buildings with facilities increasing security and IT applications	s	s	s	s	s	Hungary	Others
20	2017_WEKO F	UX-00403.01.01	Sewer Gemerska Poloma I. and II. construction	s	s	hs	s	s	Slovakia	States
21	2017_WEKO A	UX-00404.01.01	Sewerage System II. Stage, Dlhé n. Cirouchou	s	s	hs	s	s	Slovakia	States
22	2017_WEKO B	UX-00405.01.01	Tusice Nova Ves- Horovce sewer and wastewater treatment plant WWTP - II. Stage	s	s	hs	s	s	Slovakia	States
23	2017_WEKO E	UX-00406.01.01	Velke Ripnany Sewage and Wastewater Treatment Plant II stage	s	s	hs	s	s	Slovakia	States
24	2017_WEKO H	UX-00407.01.01	WWTP and sewerage Dvorniky	s	s	hs	s	s	Slovakia	States
25	2017_WEKO K	UX-00410.01.01	Public sewerage and sewerage planz for the village Casta	s	s	hs	u	s	Slovakia	States
26	2017_WEKO Y	UX-00501.01.01	Energy efficiency public hospitals	hs	hs	hs	s	hs	Lithuania	Others
27	2017_WEKO Z	UX-00600.01.01	Financial reporting project	u	s	s	hu	s	Latvia	Multilat.
28	2017_WEKO ZA	UX-00602.01.01	Remediation historically polluted sites	hs	hs	s	hs	s	Latvia	States
29	2017_WEKO G	UX-00702.01.01	Energy efficiency in public buildings	hs	hs	s	s	hs	Estonia	Others
30	2017_WEKO D	UX-00703.01.01	Public Environmental Monitoring	hs	hs	hs	s	hs	Estonia	States
31	2017_WEKO ZF	UX-01002.01.01	Capacity building for corporate sector financial reporting (KIK05)	s	hs	hs	s	s	Poland	Multilat.
32	2017_WEKO ZK	UX-01004.01.01	Improving the business environment and financing for SMEs	s	hs	s	u	hs	Poland	States
33	2017_WEKO ZG	UX-01005.02.01	Enhancement of regional competitiveness (KIK60)	hs	hs	hs	hs	hs	Poland	Others
34	2017_WEKO M	UX-01006.01.01	Public transport Warsaw (KIK 22 WKD)	s	hs	s	s	s	Poland	States
35	2017_WEKO V	UX-01006.02.01	Procurement of four diesel units to operate railway (KIK 23)	s	hs	s	s	s	Poland	States
36	2017_WEKO W	UX-01006.03.01	Transport centre in Legionowo	s	hs	s	s	hs	Poland	States
37	2017_WEKO ZI	UX-01007.01.01	Pilot asbestos waste management system (KIK39)	hs	hs	s	hs	hs	Poland	States
38	2017_WEKO ZH	UX-01007.02.01	Construction modern waste management system (KIK42)	s	hs	s	s	s	Poland	States
39	2017_WEKO U	UX-01007.04.01	Asbestos Waste Removal (KIK71)	hs	hs	hs	hs	hs	Poland	States
40	2017_WEKO T	UX-01008.02.01	Installation of renewable energy systems public and private (KIK41)	hs	hs	hs	hs	s	Poland	States
41	2017_WEKO O	UX-01008.03.01	Renewable Energy Sources (KIK44)	hs	hs	s	s	hs	Poland	States
42	2017_WEKO P	UX-01008.04.01	Energy Efficiency in Parseta River Basin Area	hs	hs	s	s	hs	Poland	States
43	2017_WEKO ZJ	UX-01008.09.01	Installation renewable energy systems (KIK 46)	s	hs	s	s	s	Poland	States
44	2017_WEKO S	UX-01008.10.01	Renewable Energy Sources in Mszana Dolna	hs	hs	hs	s	s	Poland	States
45	2017_WEKO N	UX-01008.11.01	Heating Substations & Distribution Warsaw (SPEC-Veolia) KIK61	hs	hs	hs	hs	s	Poland	States

#	Evaluation ID	WBS	Project title	Overall	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	Country	Contract Partner
46	2017_WEKO Q	UX-01008.12.01	Solar Collectors in Health Care in Mazowieckie	hs	hs	s	s	hs	Poland	States
47	2017_WEKO X	UX-01008.14.01	Installation of renewable energy systems public utility buildings (KIK66)	hs	hs	hs	s	hs	Poland	States
48	2017_WEKO R	UX-01008.15.01	Biomass Cogeneration Plant Lebork (KIK73)	s	hs	s	s	s	Poland	States
49	2017_WEKO L	UX-01557.10.01	Project Preparation Facility	s	hs	s	s	s	Croatia	States

# Annex B: Methodology for measuring project success

Projects/programmes are reviewed by an external and independent evaluator with respect to the four OECD DAC criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability) on a four-point scale from highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory. To ensure objectivity and reliability, these ratings are validated by a further external consultant and a member of the Evaluation Officer’s team (see Foreword on the Evaluation Set-up). Upon reaching a final agreement, all four criteria scores are consolidated into a performance rating for each programme and an overall success rate.

The sample of external evaluations used provides a good indication of the quality of the division’s interventions at a given time. The analysis of a bi-annual period is mirrored against the aggregated results since 2005 and a long-term success rate is calculated. This gives a more robust overall picture of SECO’s portfolio performance over time.

*The four OECD DAC Criteria<sup>35</sup> and SECO WE’s rating methodology*

<p><b>1) Relevance</b> The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, a country’s needs, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.</p>	<p><b>2) Effectiveness</b> The extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.</p>
<p><b>3) Efficiency</b> A measure of how resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.</p>	<p><b>4) Sustainability</b> The extent to which benefits from a development intervention made after major development assistance persists continue. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit fluctuates over time.</p>

*Rating scale: (1) highly unsatisfactory (2) unsatisfactory (3) satisfactory (4) highly satisfactory*

↓

**Program performance rate:** A project is rated 'satisfactory' if it scores the top two ratings in at least three of four criteria. For projects with only two of four rated at least 'satisfactory' a qualitative judgment is made according to criteria importance in relation to the project goals. A project with three or more criteria scoring the bottom two ratings is considered 'unsatisfactory'.

↓

**Overall success rate:** Percentage of satisfactory projects compared to all externally evaluated projects in the year under review.

**Long-term success rate:** Average of the overall success rates since 2005.

<sup>35</sup> Source: Glossary of key terms in evaluation and results-based management, OECD-DAC, Edition 2002, Reprint 2010

## Annex C: Outlook – Evaluation Programme 2019

In 2019, the operational sectors envision to conduct 27 external evaluations and 17 internal reviews. However, as this program is also influenced by external factors, the evaluation agenda can vary. It is regularly updated and posted online.<sup>36</sup>

*Table 3: Evaluations planned in 2019 (as of April 2019)*

Operational sections	External evaluations	Internal reviews/notes	Independent evaluations	TOTAL
Macroeconomic Support	9	4	1	14
Infrastructure Financing	7	12		19
Trade Promotion	8	8		16
Private Sector Development	3	5		8
Multi-sections evaluations	3	2		5
<b>TOTAL in 2019</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	

<sup>36</sup> [www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch](http://www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch) → Results → Evaluation → Evaluation programme

## Annex D: Selected results from the analysis of lessons learned and recommendations in external project evaluations

Figure 17: Heat map identifying key success factors related to project cycle management

	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	Other	Total
Project design	3.1%	12.2%	4.1%	4.4%	1.7%	25.5%
Intervention logic	0.6%	14.5%	2.3%	2.7%	1.2%	21.3%
Management and steering	0.8%	11.6%	1.9%	1.5%	2.3%	18.1%
Ownership	0.2%	1%	0.2%	1.5%	0.2%	3.1%
Collaboration	0.8%	6.8%	1.5%	1%	1.2%	11.3%
Capacity Development	0%	1%	0.2%	2.3%	0%	3.5%
Monitoring and Evaluation	0%	3.1%	2.9%	0.6%	7.1%	13.7%
Others	0%	0.8%	0.4%	0.8%	1.2%	3.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>13.5%</b>	<b>14.8%</b>	<b>14.9%</b>	<b>100%</b>

SECO Evaluations 2017 and 2018/ roundoff errors may exist / p1 / kek.ch

Table 4: Coding-Suggestion for the Classification of Lessons learned, SECO WEQA Evaluations

<b>Category</b>	<b>... including ...</b>	<b>recommendations and lessons learned with regards to...</b>
<b>Project design (preparation/modality)</b>	Context and objectives	Realistic objectives and project design, well-adapted to the local context, based on a proper context / market analysis, complementarity to other interventions
	Implementation modality	Implementation modalities, incl. financing parties, third parties (e.g. donor harmonisation) and implementing parties
	Project timing	Appropriate phase length, long-term commitment where needed
	Project documents	Quality and clarity of ProDoc and Logframe, according to RBM principles
<b>Intervention logic</b>	Clarity of intervention logic	Clarity with regards to the intervention logic and planned activities
	Instruments	Quality and appropriateness of instruments, implemented activities and services delivered (outputs)
<b>Management and steering (implementation mechanism)</b>	Roles and responsibilities	Regular interaction between donor and implementer, clarity with regards to donor's and implementer's roles, responsibilities and procedures
	Adaptive management	Flexibility in steering, enabling adapting the project to dynamic contexts
	Human resources	Appropriate staffing of the implementer, including strenght and quality of international and local staff
<b>Ownership</b>	Alignment	Alignment of the project with national development objectives, use of country systems
	Local leadership	Promoting local leadership in order to ensure and secure ownership
	Policy dialogue	Active participation in policy dialogue, contributing to positive context changes
<b>Collaboration</b>	Partnerships and participation	Participatory planning, chosing the right partners, creating partnerships with key stakeholders, clarifying collaboration expectations
	Communication and knowledge sharing	Active communication to keep partners involved, sharing knowledge and lessons learned amongst partners and with other stakeholders
<b>Capacity Development</b>	Building of local capacities	Building local capacity and strenghtening stakeholders' capabilities to take over their responsibilities
<b>Monitoring / Evaluation (RBM)</b>	Monitoring system	Appropriate results-based monitoring system, providing informations needed for learning and for accountability
	Data quality	Quality of data, including baseline data
	Follow-up	Regular activities to check if project is on track, including mid-term reviews and/or ROM
<b>Others</b>		Other recommendations and lessons learned

Part II.

# Management Response



# **WE Management Response**

## **to the 2017-2018 Bi-annual Report on the Performance of SECO's Economic Cooperation and Development**

### **1. Introduction**

This is the first year of the revised, bi-annual assessment of WE's performance (thereafter "Performance Report"), which comes with a number of adjustments regarding its content and structure. WE management would like to commend the Evaluation Function of SECO's Division for Economic Cooperation and Development (thereafter "SECO WE") for a substantial and well written document that provides a series of important insights for the operational sections. As a "learning institution", SECO-WE strives for continued improvements regarding its operations. As part of SECO-WE's results and accountability system, the Performance Report is an important element for bringing together the wealth of information and lessons learned from internal and external project and portfolio assessments and it derives recommendations for further improving the design and monitoring of our projects and programmes.

WE Management is aware of the substantial resources that the Evaluation Function as well as operational sections put into evaluating their operations and considers them necessary and most useful. However, we welcome the new, bi-annual frequency of the Performance Report, because it covers a longer time period and thus provides a more solid evidence base and allows to better assess the implementation of past recommendations. WE Management would also like to thank the External Evaluation Committee for its valuable contribution in assessing and discussing, amongst others, the independent portfolio evaluation as well as this report and therefore provides a welcome view from outside, bringing in expertise from academia, Parliament, private sector and civil society.

### **2. Overall Statement**

We are very pleased with the overall outcome of the assessment, which reflects the mature and methodologically sound way SECO WE designs and manages its operations. The outcome of 89% of all externally evaluated projects rated either highly satisfactory or satisfactory (which is equal to "good" on a scale of 4) is a positive and indeed remarkable sign of our continued strive for improvements. Especially so, in an environment that is characterized by a high level of volatility, uncertainty and risk that are often driven by external factors which cannot be (fully) mitigated. Concerning the 11% projects evaluated as unsuccessful, we note that our efforts to steer or salvage a project to achieve a best possible outcome can still lead to (partial) failure. In these cases, we attempt to close or exit a project professionally, maximize (partial) gains and make best use of these experiences to analyse and document potential learnings in an open and transparent way.



WE management is particularly pleased with the notable increase of +29 percentage points since the last dispatch observation period (2012-2015) regarding the sustainability of evaluated projects. The success rate (S and HS combined) of 74% in our view reflects the high attention that was given to this most important dimension of project performance in the past years along the design, approval and implementation stages of our operations. At the same time, efforts need to continue to maintain and further improve this rating in line with internationally coordinated efforts to better understand the drivers and success factors for ensuring the sustainability of project results after the withdrawal of donor support. The (forthcoming) Sustainability Review commissioned by SECO WE will provide further insight into assessing underlying factors for the particular challenges faced by SECO's projects and allows to capitalize on lessons learned and emerging good practices.

### 3. Main Findings

The overall positive trend across all OECD DAC criteria that was observed in the past reports could be continued. Also noteworthy is the trend to higher quality evaluations in the last two years. This is not only important in terms of "value for money", but also for deriving relevant and concrete recommendations from evaluations to fertilize further learning. In this regard, we positively note that the interactions between the Evaluation Function and operational sections have further intensified and are characterized by an open, ongoing, critical and professional exchange. The fact that the inward oriented view ("Innensicht") provided by internal reviews and the results of the external evaluations ("Aussensicht") do not materially differ, is a good indicator of a sound evaluation culture.

The detailed results according to the DAC evaluation criteria state that *relevance* continues to be the highest rated criteria (95% success rate). Adequately taking into account contextual factors, especially constraints, when scoping new interventions and ensuring sufficient/increased flexibility to adjust to evolving circumstances during project implementation are relevant factors to be considered in the future. Regarding *effectiveness*, the positive trend continues (86% success rate). Here, a sound stakeholder analysis and adequate coordination across project components are key. However, the question arises at which cost further improvements can be achieved when some of the external factors negatively affecting project effectiveness (such as the political environment) can be influenced only to a very limited extent by donors. On *efficiency*, the score improved notably compared to the previous observation period (84% success rate, +16% since 2012-2015). While delays in project implementation are a reality in many of the projects, they do not substantially affect efficiency ratings. Allowing sufficient time while keeping objectives at an ambitious (while realistic) level is the way to go. On *sustainability*, the rating is lagging behind the other criteria's. This reflects the challenges, which also other agencies face, to design and accompany projects in a way that they do not only provide positive results during an assigned project period but also beyond, long after donors exited it. It has also to do with an overly high level of ambition that can negatively affect the rating of a number of projects. Therefore, the way SECO WE projects are designed needs to more adequately reflect the quality and capacity of partners as well as the difficult environment in which we operate, e.g. through working with "inception phases" and/or several project phases. The forthcoming Sustainability Review should provide further insight into this critical area.

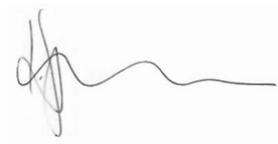
The evaluation function formulates five specific recommendations stemming from these findings. Practical implications for operational sections and the evaluation function are also provided for each recommendation. The evaluation function, who is simultaneously the author and to some extent the addressee of the recommendations, takes full responsibility for the suggested practical implications for the evaluation function, in the sense that it is an engagement

to fulfil the envisaged activities. SECO's management response to the five recommendations in general and the practical implications for the operational sections are outlined in Annex 1<sup>1</sup>.

Bern, May 2019



Raymund Furrer  
Head of Economic Cooperation  
and Development, SECO



Ivo Germann  
Head of Operations, Economic Cooperation  
and Development, SECO

#### Annexes

- 1) Management Response to the Specific Recommendations
- 2) Follow-up to recommendations made in the 2016 WE Effectiveness Report

---

<sup>1</sup> Annex 2 presents the implementation status of recommendations made in the 2016 Annual Report on Effectiveness of SECO's Economic Cooperation and Development.



## Annex 1 to WE's Management Response: Management Response to the Specific Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE	RESPON-SIBILITY	PRIO-RITY
1) Formulate from the outset an impact hypothesis considering all relevant stakeholders, and containing clear criteria for measuring project success, while allowing space for adaptive management during project implementation.	<p><b>WE Management partially agrees with this recommendation.</b> We agree that formulating from the outset (concept note) an explicit impact hypothesis of a project (e.g. with a theory of change) might further improve the performance of SECO WE projects. We also agree with the recommendation to allocate sufficient time and resources for project preparation (stakeholder and market analysis to assess capacities, needs and demands), highlighting the added-value and comparative advantage of SECO WE. We support the view that WE standard indicators should be reviewed in line with the impact hypothesis of the business lines in view of the next Dispatch of International Cooperation.</p> <p>However, we are of the view that criteria for defining success are already to a large extent carefully selected and if necessary quantified and refined during inception and implementation phases. Related efforts will continue. On the suggestion to identify and briefly explain in the logframe all relevant assumptions, i.e. external factors that may influence the project, we propose to further analyse the cost/benefit and resource implications of such a move.</p>	<p>RL WEOP</p> <p>WEQA</p> <p>L WEOP</p>	<p>A</p> <p>B</p> <p>C</p>
2) Optimise the use of existing human and financial resources for steering and accountability by developing an adequate monitoring and evaluation system for each project.	<p><b>WE Management supports the general thrust of this recommendation, but thinks that some of the specific implications for the operational sections reflect current practice.</b> Defining a supportive and manageable monitoring framework from the outset of a project and capitalizing on the knowledge and experience of Cooperation Offices are central elements of solid project design, which have increasingly been taken into account in SECO WE's projects. We see this as one of the reasons for the improved success rates.</p> <p>On the other hand, we support the Evaluation Function's call for a careful monitoring of the distribution of evaluations across operational units, maintaining a reasonable balance between different types of evaluations and strengthening the focus on ex-post assessments for reasons of accountability (confirming the target of at least 2 ex-post evaluations per year).</p> <p>We agree with the identified advantages to develop with SDC a common or better comparable methodology for assessing overall performance.</p>	<p>L WEOP (supported by WEQA)</p> <p>WEQA</p>	<p>A</p> <p>B</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE	RESPON-SIBILITY	PRIO-RITY
3) Formulate terms of references for external evaluations in a more targeted way in view of maximizing the usability of evaluations for steering, learning, and accountability.	<b>WE Management agrees with this recommendation.</b> We see a merit in ensuring that the key elements of SECO WE's ToR-template are considered also in joint evaluations to increase the usefulness of evaluations for SECO WE's steering and accountability purposes. We also support the suggestion to systematically elaborate a management response to all external evaluations mandated by SECO.	RL WEOP	B
4) Improve internal dissemination and external communication of evaluation results in a user-friendly and targeted manner.	<b>WE Management agrees with this recommendation.</b> While we see room for improvement regarding the consideration of innovative communication for project evaluations (e.g. fact-sheets, short films, social media), we would like to highlight that the report recommends to <i>continue</i> to ensure internal learning from external evaluations by disseminating and discussing lessons learned and recommendations within the operational section and beyond. We commend the commitment of all WE sections in this regard and encourage the continuation of such efforts.	WEPO RL WEOP	C B
5) Continue efforts to ensure the sustainability of SECO's projects.	<b>WE Management agrees with this recommendation</b> and encourages the continuation of the efforts to capitalise the lessons learned from the forthcoming Sustainability Review, and in particular the early planning and subsequent implementation of exit strategies. Furthermore, a particular focus on project sustainability in the ToRs of evaluations and internal reviews should be ensured (see response to recommendation 3).  Efforts of the Evaluation Function to ensure coordination with other evaluation units on best practices regarding project sustainability should be continued, at a selective basis also at an international level, taking into account resource constraints.	RL WEOP RL WEOP WEQA	A B B



## **Annex 2 to WE's Management Response: Follow-up to recommendations made in the 2016 WE Effectiveness Report**

In its management response to the annual report on effectiveness 2016, the Division management committed itself to a number of actions linked to the report's recommendations. Several of these follow-up actions are implemented or in the process of being implemented. In the 2016 report as in previous versions, the sustainability of projects was considerably weaker than the project sample's performance on other DAC criteria. Therefore, several follow-up actions implemented by SECO-WE over the last two years addressed this issue.

Recommendations (2016 effectiveness report)	Implementation
<p><b>Continue efforts towards sustainability:</b> Specific efforts by the division's management aiming at improving the sustainability of projects, have a long track record and lead the basis for observed improvements in DAC criteria rating. We recommend that these efforts continue and conclude that recommendations of previous years are still relevant.</p>	<p>The division's management continued its efforts to improve the sustainability of projects, based on the findings highlighted in the 2016 and earlier annual reports on effectiveness. As mentioned in the forthcoming Sustainability Review, these included, amongst others: (i) a more thorough scrutiny of projects proposals in the operational committee (OPK) regarding sustainability issues / exit strategies; (ii) more realistic planning, in terms of objectives / targets, and time required; (iii) more flexible use of log-frames to adjust projects to changing context or requirements; (iv) a stronger programmatic approach and increased involvement in and working through platforms.</p>
<p><b>Make available existing knowledge and experiences to foster sustainability:</b> For many years SECO WE has committed itself to address sustainability concerns. We recommend to invest or direct resources into the collection of knowledge and experiences of successful measures, make it available in a user-friendly and systematic way at SECO WE headquarters and in the field offices. This shall also include the identification of sustainability success factors for specific business lines.</p>	<p>The Sustainability Review has as objective to identify and collect challenges and evidence-based success factors for increasing the sustainability of projects. Also, discussions are taking place based on the final draft of this review to identify in cooperation with the operational sections the specific challenges and success factors for the business lines which their projects cover.</p> <p>Furthermore the approach papers of the portfolio evaluations commissioned since 2017 request to indicate specific challenges and success factors for the sustainability of projects in the analysed portfolio (during 2017/18: WEIN and WEHU were covered by such evaluations across 4 of SECO's 11 business lines).</p> <p>Last but not least, efforts are currently deployed to establish an intranet which would be accessible from the Swiss cooperation offices. It is aimed to provide easily access to information such as guidance and shared experiences.</p>
<p><b>Invest in project design:</b> Sustainability starts with project design. Thus we recommend that operational divisions put special attention on success factors during identification (e.g. required political support at the country level),</p>	<p>These aspects are systematically taken into account in the planning stage of the projects and subsequent approval process (see also response regarding "continued efforts regarding sustainability"). The recent independent evaluation of WEHU's business</p>

Recommendations (2016 effectiveness report)	Implementation
<p>the conceptual phase (e.g. establish together with the project partner a solid theory of change) and operational committee discussions. The questions of a realistic level of ambition and, if the implementation period is adequate to achieve sustainable results, should also receive special emphasis.</p>	<p>lines has been used to elaborate an overarching theory of change, which is then applied and specified on the project level (such as in the context of the “SwissTrade” program in Vietnam). Swiss Cooperation Offices in the field are also playing an important role in project design and are, when opportunity, also associated through videoconference with discussions of the Operational Committee.</p>
<p><b>Compare SECO WE’s sustainability ratings with other aid agencies’:</b> In the absence of wide public information on sustainability rating methodology and targets of other donors, the Evaluation Function is grateful for any relevant material collected during WE’s interaction with other international donors throughout the year. We therefore encourage operational sections to address the question of sustainability targets and methodology in dialogues with other aid agencies and with international project partners, preferably through the DAC EvalNet.</p>	<p>A dedicated chapter of the forthcoming Sustainability Review will address the issue of comparability of SECO WE’s sustainability ratings with other aid agencies.</p> <p>SECO also addressed this issue in international meetings, such as OECD’s Evalnet and the German-speaking evaluation group (DACH). The 2018 meta-evaluation of sustainability in development cooperation of GiZ and KfW enabled a deeper look into the methodology and results of two other aid agencies, learnings which were further deepened in exchanges with these agencies and the authors of the study of DEVal at the DACH meeting.</p>
<p><b>Intensify consultation services regarding RBM within the division:</b> Specific, personal consultations with project managers regarding log-frame, TOR’s for evaluations, commenting draft evaluation reports and many more, has proven to be an efficient way to improve the quality of project and evaluation design und thus contributing to the performance targets of SECO WE’s projects. The Quality and Resources section has experienced an increase in demand for such consultation services and is happy to maintain the current level. But it also encourages project managers to seek advice from experienced staff or the focal points on controlling in each section and that especially new program managers have a mentor for specific questions.</p>	<p>Operational departments have continued to frequently access the consulting services of the Quality and Resources section on issues ranging from log-frame discussion to preparing management responses to external evaluations or deducting lessons learned from challenges and failures in project completion notes.</p> <p>The majority of consultations concern credit proposals (24 times before the operational committee (OPK) discussion and 9 times after these discussions between October 2017 and December 2018, which covers roughly one third of the credit proposals submitted to OPK). Statistics on consultations regarding risk management, evaluations (mainly ToR, but also management response and evaluation results) or monitoring in general do not exist.</p> <p>Also, according to the WE Risk Management Guidelines, sustainability is one of the key factors in risk assessment, which is compulsory for each project. Higher risks have to be mitigated whenever possible and the assessment needs to be updated at least annually. This allows for a regular monitoring of the sustainability risks.</p> <p>Frequent exchanges within sections (incl. with (deputy) RLs, experienced project managers and FPCs) has taken place regarding lessons learned from evaluations and project completion reports, TORs for procurements and evaluations, commenting draft</p>

Recommendations (2016 effectiveness report)	Implementation
	evaluation reports and related Management Responses, etc. Capitalization workshops of independent evaluations, dedicated sessions at mid-year and annual planning workshops as well as bi-weekly thematic discussions have contributed to spur such discussions.
<p><b>Maintain efforts regarding ex-post evaluations:</b> Two ex-post evaluations were conducted in 2016 which is within the range of the set objective of two ex-post evaluations per year. In order to learn more from past experiences the operational sections shall maintain the number of ex-post evaluations at two annually.</p>	<p>Maintaining the level of 2 annual ex-post evaluations has proven challenging, as SECO partially depends on jointly commissioned evaluations (e.g. for trust funds). Over 2017-2018, SECO projects have been the subject of three ex-post evaluations, the results of one evaluation was however not considered for this report as it confused two disparate phases, whereas SECO had only co-financed one.</p>
<p><b>Continue to discuss findings from evaluations with operational sections:</b> The Evaluation Function shall continue to discuss this report with the sections in order to increase the awareness for findings and recommendations of this report (e.g. general performance of the division along DAC criteria and possible actions for further improvement). The discussions shall also be used to underline the importance of a well-balanced evaluation portfolio between the operational sections.</p>	<p>In 2017, WEQA has presented and discussed the 2016 annual report on effectiveness in all operational WE sections. Also, the newly introduced project success statistics for 2017 were discussed with all these sections in 2018. Furthermore, independent portfolio evaluations are used to capitalize learnings in thorough discussions with the concerned sections, combined with follow-up dissemination measures.</p>

Additional comments from the management response to the 2016 effectiveness report	Implementation
<p>“Maintain efforts regarding ex-post evaluations: Two ex-post evaluations were conducted in 2016 which is within the range of the set objective of two ex-post evaluations per year. In order to learn more from past experiences the operational sections shall maintain the number of ex-post evaluations at two annually.”</p> <p>In addition to ex-post evaluations and the assessment of the sustainability criteria, WE’s management enquired” whether the data sample [on sustainability of WE projects] could be enlarged through ex-post monitoring inputs from field offices”.</p>	<p>The Guidelines on Division of Labour between SECO/WE Headquarters and Swiss Cooperation Offices (SCO) mention in chapter 4.1.3 Closure and Evaluation the following:</p> <p>a) Bilateral projects</p> <p>Comments to the end-of-phase reports are drafted by HQ, in consultation with the SCO or on basis of a first draft by the latter. Completion notes as well as potential TOR and management responses of evaluations (mid- and end-of-phase) are finalised by HQ in consultation with SCO, ideally on basis of a first draft by the latter.</p> <p>b) Regional / global projects</p> <p>By their nature, the finalisation of the completion note and possible evaluation of regional / global projects is under the responsibility and lead of HQ. Concerned SCO are consulted and have the possibility to give inputs, where needed.</p>

# Part III. Position of the External Evaluation Committee

on the report (Part I) and the management response (Part III)



**Meyer, Thomas** (Chair, 2017 - 2019)  
Senior Manager, SGS Group (inspection, verification, testing and certification company)



**Thelesklaf, Daniel** (Vice-chair until 31.07.2019)  
Director of the Financial Intelligence Unit, Principality of Liechtenstein



**Moser, Tiana Angelina** Member of the National Council, Swiss Parliament  
Environmental and Political Scientist



**Michaelowa, Katharina**  
Prof. Dr. rer. pol. University of Zurich



**Stöckli, Bruno**  
Entwicklungspolitischer Berater und ehemaliger Mitarbeiter von Alliance Sud



Geneva, 27 September 2019

**Position of the External Committee on Evaluation on the  
Bi-Annual Report 2017-2018:  
Performance of SECO's Economic Cooperation and Development, and  
SECO/WE Management Response**

1. Members of the External Committee on Evaluation (the Committee) discussed on June 24, 2019 in Bern the 'Bi-Annual Report 2017-2018: Performance of SECO's Economic Cooperation and Development' (the 2017-18 Report) as well as the accompanying response by SECO-WE Management (the Management Response) to its main findings and recommendations. The 2017-18 Report is the 13<sup>th</sup> report on the Performance of SECO's Economic Cooperation and Development (SECO-WE) and was prepared by its Evaluation Function. It is also the first bi-annual performance report prepared after the decision was made in 2017 to revise its structure and extend its coverage to two years.
2. The Committee welcomes the new and attractive bi-annual format of the 2017-18 Report, and in particular the measures taken to improve readability of the report. The performance reports are important tools to collect and disseminate lessons learnt on SECO-WE operations, constantly improve the quality of these latter and ensure accountability of the organization. One of the key features of the new format, in addition to the usual quantitative assessment, is a qualitative content analysis of all lessons learned and recommendations from external project evaluations. This analysis ranks the main contributing factors to project and programme success, and concludes that strong project management remains key to successful projects. The Committee commends this insightful analysis, but recommends that this new tool be also used in the future to help better understand and contribute to the sustainability of projects.
3. In addition, it is the Committee's view that beyond its accountability function, the 2017-18 Report is also an important public communication tool on SECO-WE's work and performance, which is published at a right time ahead of the upcoming discussions on the next Disptach to Parliament regarding the next round of financing for the Swiss Development and Cooperation budget. The quality of the Report and the breadth of information and analysis it contains should also be used to feed the public debate in that regard.
4. The Committee is pleased to note that the high performance ratings (defined following the OECD DAC criteria) observed over the past years have continued and even improved over the reporting period. Relevance and effectiveness remain at a very high level and sustainability that raised some concern in earlier reports has now been rated almost 30 percentage points higher than over the previous Dispatch reporting period. This commendable result certainly reflects the constant attention paid by SECO-WE's teams to ensuring higher sustainability of operations. Nevertheless, sustainability has traditionally been, and is still lagging behind the other criteria, which has prompted the Evaluation function to commission a thorough Sustainability Review, the outcome of which will be made public before the end of the year. The Committee is looking forward to discussing such outcome.

5. The 2017-18 Report presents for the first time a regional performance analysis. The Committee welcomes this as an informative element, but nevertheless points out that a detailed interpretation of it can be delicate, from an operational, managerial or political standpoint. In the Committee's view, a lower performance in a specific region should by no means lead to an immediate review of the cooperation with that region's countries – much to the contrary, as a lack of immediate operational success can indeed reveal pervasive needs for continuous assistance, and represent opportunities for more innovative project designs.
6. The Committee notes with satisfaction that the sample of projects under review in the reporting period has doubled with respect to the last period – an assessment is always more solid when based on a larger sample. In addition, it should be stressed that the 2017-18 Report demonstrates a performance of projects evaluated internally at the same level as that of projects evaluated externally. In the Committee's view this underlines the deeply engrained evaluation culture in the organization, as well as the high quality of the Evaluation Function. It encourages this latter to continue analysing performance that way and to better understand correlation between external evaluations and internal reviews.
7. The Committee welcomes the constructive positions and feedbacks included in the Management Response, considers them well justified, and fully understands the careful and responsible stance towards the recommendations made by the Evaluation Function, in view of their practical, budgetary and operational implications.
8. In conclusion, the Committee recommends the disclosure of the Bi-Annual Report 2017-2018: Performance of SECO's Economic Cooperation and Development, as well as the SECO-WE Management Response and the present Position of the Committee on SECO internet website.

The Committee members:

Thomas Meyer (President)

Katharina Michaelowa

Tiana Angelina Moser

Bruno Stöckli

Daniel Thelesklaf

## Publication details

Publisher:

Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research

**State Secretariat for Economic Affairs**

3003 Bern

Switzerland

Download:

<https://www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch/>

(under Documentation / Accountability and effectiveness)

Specialist contact:

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs

**Resources and Quality section**

Holzikofenweg 36

3003 Bern,

Switzerland

Tel.: +41 58 464 09 10

info@seco-cooperation.ch

Bern, September 2019