

Stocktaking of Strategic Evaluations/Reviews of Country/Regional Strategies within Austrian Development Cooperation

Terms of Reference

October 2022

1. Background

The Austrian Development Agency (ADA) was founded in 2004 as the operational unit of the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC)¹. The Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (FMEIA) is responsible for the strategic planning and alignment of Austrian Development Cooperation.

The Evaluation Policy of the Austrian development cooperation (2019)² (hereinafter “the Policy”) sets out the overall quality standards and guiding principles for development evaluation conducted or commissioned by actors of the Austrian development cooperation. The Policy is modular in nature, meaning that it is successively being complemented by stand-alone evaluation modules covering specific areas of interest pertaining to the different actors involved. The first two modules developed under the Policy are the ADA Guidelines for Programme and Project (PP) Evaluations (2020) and the Guidance Document for Evaluability Assessments in Austrian development cooperation (2022). A third technical module on Country/Regional Portfolio Evaluations/Reviews (CSE/R and RSE/R) is foreseen next.

The Policy uses the term “Cooperation Strategy Evaluations” to describe Country/Regional Portfolio Evaluations/Reviews and defines them as evaluations of the entirety of development interventions taken by one or several donors or development organisations in a partner country and/or partner region and the underlying development cooperation strategy. These can also be conducted in a ‘review’ format (FMEIA 2019:6)³. Recent examples of Evaluations/Reviews of ADC Cooperation Strategies include the Strategic Mid-Term Evaluation of ADC’s Albania Country Strategy 2015-2020 (2020), the Strategic Evaluation of Austrian Development Cooperation’s Engagement in Mozambique 1992-2018 (2020), the Mid-Term Review of the Armenia and Georgia Country Strategies 2012-2020 (2018), the Mid-Term Review of the Kosovo Country Strategy 2013-2020 (2018) and the Strategic Evaluation of the ADC Country Strategy for Bhutan 2015-2018 (2017). Along with other strategic evaluations in ADC, Country/Regional Portfolio Evaluations/Reviews (CPE/R and RPE/R) are managed by the ADA Executive Unit Evaluation and Statistics and the FMEIA Division VII.4. A list of all strategic evaluations conducted since 1999 is available [here](#). A list of current ADC priority countries and regions is accessible [here](#) and [here](#).

ADC has published Guidelines for Country and Regional Strategy Evaluations & Reviews of the Austrian Development Cooperation in 2016.⁴ These Guidelines, while useful at the time also in terms of providing a timeline for implementation of CPE/R and RPE/R, provide little guidance on methodological aspects and certain elements (e.g. criteria) are now covered in the ADC Evaluation Policy. Some aspects of the guidelines are outdated (e.g. now there are six instead of five OECD DAC criteria), while others are no longer being implemented in practice (e.g. prescribing of evaluation questions). Furthermore, valuable experiences have been gathered from conducting ADC Country/Regional Portfolio Evaluations/Reviews over recent years. These developments call for the revision and update of the guidelines on the basis of the learnings and experiences as well as of state-of-the-art guidelines from other bilateral and multilateral development actors. To establish an evidence-base for the development of new

¹ Note: the present document draws a distinction between the terms ‘Austrian Development Cooperation’ (ADC) on the one hand, and ‘Austrian development cooperation’ on the other. ‘ADC’ is used as an institutional term, comprising the two development actors FMEIA and ADA, whereas the term, ‘Austrian development cooperation’, denotes the entirety of Austrian ODA actors and contents and therefore extends beyond ADC (MFA and ADA).

² FMEIA (2019). Evaluation Policy of the Austrian Development Cooperation. https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Aussenpolitik/Entwicklungszusammenarbeit/Web_Evaluierungspolicy_EN.PDF

³ See FN 2

⁴ https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Evaluierungsberichte/Guidelines_for_Country_and_Regional_Strategy_Evaluations.pdf

guidelines for CPE/R and RPE/R, a stocktaking exercise will be carried out (i) to review available tools and guidelines for CPE/R and RPE/R from other bilateral and multilateral development actors along with good practices and lessons learned from their implementation; (ii) to assess the strengths and weaknesses pertaining to the planning, implementation and use of recent ADC cooperation strategy evaluations, as well as (iii) to identify common challenges and mitigation measures while conducting these evaluations.

Envisaged users and structure of the guidelines

As intended users of the new guidelines, three groups can be identified: (i) The evaluation units at FMEIA and ADA, as those are responsible for the management and quality assurance of CPE/R and RPE/R; (ii) independent evaluators commissioned with evaluations of cooperation strategies, as the guidelines shall provide orientation on practical and methodological requirements as well as on the institutional framework in which CPE/R and RPE/R are conducted in ADC; and (iii) ADC staff at headquarters and in coordination offices involved in the management of programme and project portfolios, as the guidelines shall clarify their involvement in the evaluation/review process.

The structure of the new guidelines will be informed by the present assignment, which includes a review of state-of-the art guidelines from other bilateral and multilateral development actors (as for example the Guidance on Country Portfolio Evaluations in UN Women, 2016⁵) as well as by good practices and lessons learned from conducting ADC Country/Regional Portfolio Evaluations/Reviews.

2. Purpose of the consultancy

The purpose of the consultancy is to obtain concrete recommendations for the development of the guidelines. This way, a bridge between the present assignment and the later development if the guidelines shall be ensured.

3. Objectives

The main objectives of the consultancy are:

1. To provide an overview of other other bilateral and multilateral development actors' tools and guidelines on CPE/R and RPE/R and lessons learned from their implementation;
2. To assess
 - a. strengths and weaknesses of previous ADC cooperation strategy evaluations in terms of (i) process and (ii) methodological approaches;
 - b. common challenges faced - and mitigation measures taken when conducting ADC cooperation strategy evaluations/reviews;
3. On basis of the assessments outlined above,
 - a. To propose a draft structure for the new guidelines on CPE/R and RPE/R;
 - b. To extrapolate concrete recommendations regarding content of the new guidelines on CPE/R and RPE/R.

4. Scope and approach of the consultancy

The consultancy will be largely desk-based. It will consist of literature review of (i) ADC and other institution's guidelines on CPE/R and RPE/R; (ii) documents related to the institutional setup and the processes of commissioning and implementing strategic evaluations in ADC; (iii) main documents related to the five most recent ADC Strategic Evaluations/Reviews of Cooperation Strategies⁶ (including

⁵ UNWomen (2016). Guidance on Country Portfolio Evaluations in UN Women. <https://genderevaluation.unwomen.org/en/evaluation-handbook/country-portfolio-evaluation-guidance>.

⁶ The five most recent ADC cooperation strategy evaluations are the Strategic Mid-Term Evaluation of ADC's Albania Country Strategy 2015-2020 (2020), the Strategic Evaluation of Austrian Development Cooperation's Engagement in Mozambique 1992-2018 (2020), the Mid-Term Review of the Armenia and Georgia Country Strategies 2012-2020 (2018), the Mid-Term Review of the Kosovo Country Strategy 2013-2020 (2018) and the Strategic Evaluation of the ADC Country Strategy for Bhutan 2015-2018 (2017). Accessible under: <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/evaluation/evaluation-reports/evaluation-reports-2017-2022>

One-Pager on the evaluation's scope, ToR, cost estimations, stakeholder mapping, portfolio analysis, kick-off and preliminary findings presentations, inception reports and final reports and feedback matrixes on reports, After-Action Review Documents as well as management response documents). In addition, the consultant(s) is/are expected to gather qualitative information through interviews and focus groups with the evaluation units in both, ADA and FMEIA, with relevant staff in country offices and country and region advisors at ADA and FMEIA and other relevant stakeholders. One trip by the consultant(s) to Vienna is foreseen to enable direct data collection and interaction with stakeholders.

In an inception report, the consultant/s is/are expected to outline the detailed approaches to attain each objective (see above), the manner in which respective data will be collected as well as interview topic guides with different groups of respondents.

5. Envisaged timeline and deliverables

The consultancy should start in November 2022. The final report is envisaged to be shared at the latest by June 2023.

INCEPTION PHASE		Deliverables
Initial desk review of ADC documents, screening of other bi- and multilateral development actors' approaches and key stakeholder interviews	November 2022	
Kick-off meeting	November 2022	Presentation of tentative approach
Further document review, key stakeholder interviews and writing of inception report	November/ December 2022	Draft Inception Report
Integration of Feedback and submission of final inception report	December 2022/ January 2023	Final Inception Report
INQUIRY PHASE		
Desk study	February/March 2023	
Interviews, group discussions, virtual and in person, including during field visit to Vienna	February/March 2023	
REPORTING PHASE		
Analysis and stocktaking report writing	March/April 2023	Draft Report
Integration of Feedback and submission of final stocktaking report	April/May 2023	Final Report

The consultant(s) is/are expected to provide the following deliverables:

- **Draft and final inception report** (should not be longer than 15 pages, excl. annexes) that must contain at least the following points:
 - Analysis of other bilateral and multilateral development actors' approaches and guidelines for CPE/R and RPE/R;
 - Detailed presentation of the refined approach to be applied during data collection and analysis aimed at providing concrete recommendations directed to the content of the planned guidelines;
 - An outline of the final report's structure.
- **Draft and final stocktaking report** (should not be longer than 25-30 pages, excl. annexes). The final report must contain
 - an insightful analysis of
 - strengths and weaknesses of previous ADC country/regional strategy evaluations/reviews in terms of (i) process (planning, implementation and use); (ii) methodological approaches (overall design and specific methods, sampling

- etc.) and (iii) any other aspects the consultants have come across and may like to point out;
- good practices and lessons learned from existing CPE/R and/or RPE/R guidelines and tools from other bi- and multilateral development actors;
- common challenges and mitigation measures when conducting ADC country/regional strategy evaluations/reviews;
- On the basis of the assessments outlined above,
 - a recommended draft structure for the new guidelines on CPE/R and RPE/R;
 - concrete recommendations (whenever possible with specific examples, checklists or references to other institution's documents/tools) regarding content of the new guidelines on CPE/R.

6. Co-ordination arrangements/management of the evaluation

The assignment is commissioned by the ADA Evaluation Unit which will be responsible for managing the consultancy and providing quality assurance. The ADA Evaluation Unit approves the inception report and the final report.

Both Evaluation Units of ADA and the FMEIA will support the consultant(s) in identifying and contacting relevant staff and facilitating access to relevant documents and information needed to conduct the assignment.

The consultant(s) will be responsible for the rigorous conduct of the assignment and for the timely submission of quality deliverables.

7. Payment modalities

Payment will be based upon deliverables and involve two installments, as follows:

- An advance payment of 40% of the total fee will be transferred upon presentation of the tentative approach in the kick-off meeting;
- A final payment of 60% of the total fee will be transferred upon the presentation and approval of the final report.

8. Qualifications of consultant(s)

The assignment should be conducted of one or two consultant(s) (preferably of mixed gender). The estimated total working days for the assignment are 30-40 working days. In case of two consultants, the team leader will take the lead in designing the approach of the stocktaking and writing the report.

The team should combine the following **qualifications**:

Experience/knowledge:

- Proven extended knowledge of international evaluation standards and methodology;
- Extended experience in managing and/or conducting strategic Country/Regional Portfolio Evaluations/Reviews in the international development cooperation arena proven by at least two evaluations/reviews as a team leader;
- Experience in drafting guidelines for evaluation for bilateral and multinational development agencies is a major asset;
- Experience with evaluation systems of other bilateral donor agencies is a major asset;
- Long-standing professional experience and advanced knowledge of contemporary discourses and developments in the field of strategic evaluations and Country/Regional Portfolio Evaluations/Reviews;
- Proven experience in qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis;
- Familiarity with ADC and its objectives is considered an asset;

Languages:

- Fluency in both oral and written communication in English is a requirement;
- Command of both oral and written communication in German is required.

Other skills:

- Strong analytical skills and ability to work with and as a part of teams;
- Excellent report-writing and editing skills.

9. Contracting and selection process

For the hiring of the evaluation team, ADA will pursue a direct contracting process. Several experts/companies will be invited to submit a proposal. Furthermore, a call for expression of interest (including the Terms of Reference) will be published in a variety of platforms and networks. Interested candidates/firms should provide a technical offer (maximum 10 pages, excluding CVs and annexes) and a cost proposal (in EUR).

The **technical offer** should include the following:

- Brief description of the understanding of the assignment;
- Presentation of a proposed approach;
- Presentation of a detailed work plan including time schedule and division of tasks (if applicable);
- Detailed CV(s) and references of similar assignments.

The **cost proposal** (financial offer) should include

- the **lump sum of the overall costs** – indicating both, the sum **including and excluding VAT**
- and the **following breakdown** (in EUR):
 - Personnel costs: name of experts, estimated number of working days, fee rate per working day, total amount;
 - Travel costs visit to Vienna: Costs for return travel, daily living allowances, accommodation and other travel costs;
 - Other costs, if applicable;
 - VAT (if applicable).

Please note that proposals should be in the range of 20.000 - 30.000 EUR net.

The technical and financial proposals will be weighed 75:25 respectively. Criteria that will be used to assess the proposals include:

- Expertise, relevant experience and suitability of consultant(s);
- Quality and coherence of the proposal, incl. methodology, timeline and work plan;
- Methodological rigor and individuality of approach that matches this assignment's information needs;
- Coherence of financial and technical proposal; efficient use of resources.

Please note that personal data included in the proposals (like CVs) will be stored and used by ADA internally during the review of the proposals.

12. Documentation

- ADC Three-Years Programmes, <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/media-centre/publications/programmes>
- ADC Country and Regional Strategies, <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/media-centre/publications/programmes>

- ADC Strategic Evaluation Reports, <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/evaluation/evaluation-reports>
- OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Austria 2020, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/peer-reviews/oecd-development-co-operation-peer-reviews-austria-2020-03b626d5-en.htm>
- Institutionelle Evaluierung der Austrian Development Agency (ADA) (2019) [https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Aussenpolitik/Entwicklungszusammenarbeit/Institutionelle Evaluierung der Austrian Development Agency ADA DE .pdf](https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Aussenpolitik/Entwicklungszusammenarbeit/Institutionelle_Evaluierung_der_Austrian_Development_Agency_ADA_DE_.pdf)

All additional documents will be shared with successful candidate(s) upon contract conclusion.