

The 2024–2026 Evaluation Programme of the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEVal)

Thematic focuses, ongoing and planned evaluations

January 2024

The evaluations conducted by DEVal are laid down in a **multi-year and rolling evaluation programme**, which is updated annually. The overview of the institute's ongoing and planned evaluations presented in the attached tables is divided into three parts. Part I comprises an overview of the ongoing evaluations from previous evaluation programmes. Part II provides an overview of the evaluations from the 2024-2026 evaluation programme that will begin in 2024. Finally, part III lists potential topics from previous consultation processes, which after the usual consultation process may become part of the subsequent evaluation programme.

The consultation and planning process for the DEVal evaluation programme

The multi-year evaluation programme serves as a medium-term strategic framework for DEVal's core activity. To increase the relevance and legitimacy of DEVal's evaluations, and make the evaluation process more reliable, every year the institute conducts a structured consultation process before completing the annual update of the evaluation programme. DEVal first of all invites representatives of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the members of the institute's Advisory Board to make proposals. It then supplements these proposals with its own ideas for evaluations. The proposals collected are assessed using standard evaluation criteria, and their coherence with the selected thematic focuses is examined. An appropriate balance of different types of evaluation is also required. The planning process culminates in a programme proposal drawn up by DEVal, which is presented to the institute's Advisory Board and requires the approval of the BMZ.

The Advisory Board of the German Institute for Development Evaluation comprises Members of the German Bundestag, academics, civil society stakeholders and representatives of the official implementing organisations of development cooperation.

To boost the impact and synergy of its evaluation work, since 2015 DEVal has made multi-year thematic focuses part of its evaluation programme. Most DEVal evaluations fall within these priority areas or are closely linked to them. As of 2024 DEVal's thematic focuses, which hitherto have been organised sequentially, will be replaced by a broader set of parallel thematic focuses.¹ These priorities will reflect the broad positioning of German development cooperation, and the broad demand for

¹ Previous thematic focuses were 1) Sustainability of German development cooperation, 2) State fragility, conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and 3) Private sector engagement. One thematic focus that will remain permanent is "Instruments and structures of German development cooperation".

evaluation topics within the BMZ and the DEval Advisory Board which this entails. The three thematic focuses listed below will remain valid at least for DEval's current strategy cycle to 2026.

1. State fragility, conflict prevention and good governance
2. Climate change, environment and sustainable economic development
3. Human rights, gender equality and poverty reduction

The existing thematic focus "instruments and structures of German development cooperation" will be continued as a fourth thematic focus. This is because engaging with structures and instruments of German development cooperation is among the cross-sectoral themes of overarching importance for the institute and the achievement of its goals.

Since 2023, when conducting thematic evaluations and studies, during the preliminary clarification and clarification phase DEval has examined to what extent the topic and foreseeable focus of the evaluation indicate that it would make sense to perform a joint ministerial evaluation.

Ongoing and planned evaluations for 2024–2026

Part I: Ongoing evaluations from previous evaluation programmes

Part II: Evaluations from the 2024–2026 evaluation programme that will begin in 2024

Part III: Potential themes from previous consultation processes that may be evaluated from 2025 onwards

PART I: Ongoing evaluations from previous evaluation programmes

Topic	Background and object of the evaluation	Thematic focus
Evaluation of the BMZ's Promotion of Protected Areas	<p>Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) supports biodiversity to the tune of 400 million euros annually, making it one of the largest bilateral donors worldwide in this field. Protected areas are an especially important part of biodiversity conservation. The global goals for biodiversity envisage the protection of 30 per cent of the world's land and ocean by 2030. As a member of the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, Germany supports this goal. German development cooperation's promotion of protected areas in developing countries encompasses environmental, social and economic aspects. This evaluation of the BMZ's promotion of protected areas is of major political importance, particularly in light of the debate concerning the risks of interventions.</p> <p>Based on a modern understanding of sustainability, this evaluation focuses on both the desired and the undesired effects of the promotion of selected protected areas in partner countries of German development cooperation, and the linkages between the two. Besides the environmental aspects, the evaluation therefore also places a special focus on the local population's opportunities for participation and development, and on respect for human rights.</p> <p>Status: in progress</p>	Instruments and structures of German development cooperation
Evaluation of the BMZ's Emergency COVID-19 Support Programme/Interventions	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic also poses an enormous challenge for development cooperation. Faced by the massive financial and economic impacts of the pandemic on developing and emerging countries, the BMZ responded swiftly by setting up an emergency support programme totalling EUR 4.7 billion.</p> <p>The emergency programme is an extensive, thematically broad package involving a wide range of actors (particularly within the BMZ). It focuses on health, food and nutrition security, and the strengthening of international cooperation. The evaluation analyses the use of the Emergency COVID-19 Support Programme's funds, and assesses the appropriateness of spending based on the OECD-DAC criteria.</p>	Instruments and structures of German development cooperation

PART I: Ongoing evaluations from previous evaluation programmes

Topic	Background and object of the evaluation	Thematic focus
	<p>The evaluation focuses on the instruments and interventions that were financed through the Emergency COVID-19 Support Programme between April 2020 and December 2021. One particular aim is to analyse the available financing instruments. While Module 1 examined the entire portfolio, Module 2 began with an in-depth analysis of the distribution channels and instruments used, especially for social protection.</p> <p>Status: report in preparation</p>	
<p>Meta-Evaluation of Country Portfolio Reviews conducted by DEval</p>	<p>Following the implementation of country portfolio reviews as part of a BMZ-funded project at DEval, a meta-analysis of the country portfolio reviews performed is now being conducted. The focus here is on lessons learned with portfolio design and management issues across countries. Moreover, the BMZ has indicated a major requirement for conceptual input on the design of country portfolio evaluations (CPEs) in German development cooperation. Since country portfolio reviews (CPRs) cover important areas of CPEs, inter alia through the relevance criterion, it seems reasonable to use the meta-evaluation of CPRs to generate findings for the beneficial design of CPEs in German development cooperation. Both relevance and potential for learning and innovation are high; the evidence gap is also considered large, as there is still no systematic evaluation of CPRs.</p> <p>The meta-evaluation is synthesising findings from country portfolio reviews already carried out. The cross-country synthesis will identify overarching findings on structural challenges and areas of potential for German bilateral development cooperation. This includes systematically analysing strategic management issues against the backdrop of the 2030 Agenda, and making these findings available to the policy divisions and decision-makers at the BMZ. The synthesis is expected to add significant value to the evidence generated in the individual CPRs.</p> <p>Status: report in preparation</p>	<p>Instruments and structures of German development cooperation</p>
<p>Pilot Country Portfolio Evaluation (CPE)</p>	<p>Findings from CPEs are of great importance to the BMZ for the strategic management of its country portfolios. Therefore, in addition to evaluations and studies with a strong thematic, instrumental or strategic focus, DEval will in the future conduct CPEs on a regular basis. In a first phase, DEval has begun a pilot evaluation (Peru).</p> <p>The relevance and potential for innovation and learning are considered high. Country portfolio evaluations (CPEs) analyse all bilateral development cooperation in a partner country as comprehensively as possible</p>	<p>Instruments and structures of German development cooperation</p>

PART I: Ongoing evaluations from previous evaluation programmes

Topic	Background and object of the evaluation	Thematic focus
	<p>using standard evaluation criteria, in order to reach conclusions and recommendations for the future orientation of the joint work. In implementing this evaluation DEval is building on its existing experiences with country portfolio reviews (CPRs) and other country-based evaluations.</p> <p>Status: in progress</p>	
<p>Evaluating the Effectiveness and Impact of Decentralisation Projects in Africa</p>	<p>The evaluation of decentralisation projects in Africa is highly relevant given the BMZ's large, broad and long-standing portfolio in this area. The topic also remains visible as an area of intervention for governance within the BMZ 2030 core area of "peaceful and inclusive societies". Given the large evidence gap and the expected learning potential, the evaluation is highly compatible with the other selection criteria and the ongoing thematic focus "instruments and structures of German development cooperation".</p> <p>The information requirements include in particular lessons learned at the strategic and conceptual level (e.g. which approaches worked?). Can country categories be defined for which different approaches are then suitable? Which aggregatable standard indicators for measuring effectiveness and impact are appropriate? What is the role of coordination with other donors, especially regarding the interlinkage of Technical and Financial Cooperation? There are also numerous detailed questions regarding the design, effectiveness and impact of the projects. Both the contextual conditions, and the design and objectives of decentralisation projects in Africa, are highly heterogeneous. The evaluation will therefore cover a wide range of questions and cases in order to generate useful evidence.</p> <p>At the same time, the evaluation aims to shed light on the extent to which German development cooperation has incorporated new evidence, findings and perspectives on the topic during its many years of engagement. It will also explore which factors can be identified that promote or inhibit the "learning system" of development cooperation in this area.</p> <p>Status: in progress</p>	<p>Fragile states, instruments and structures of German development cooperation</p>
<p>Thematic Focus Report on "Private Sector Engagement"</p>	<p>As laid down in the guidelines for designing the multi-year evaluation programme, DEval's thematic focuses must be concluded with a thematic focus report. The thematic focus report on private sector engagement will synthesise knowledge from DEval evaluations and other sources. It is aimed at the wider specialist public and will synthesise primarily existing knowledge.</p>	<p>Private sector engagement</p>

PART I: Ongoing evaluations from previous evaluation programmes

Topic	Background and object of the evaluation	Thematic focus
	<p>This focus report will include content on the topic of private sector engagement, e.g. in the areas of supply chain promotion, structured funds/blended finance and development partnerships with the private sector (e.g. the develoPPP programme), from publications by DEval and other actors. Existing findings may be supplemented with in-depth analyses. To this end, research work to "map" the various approaches and instruments used for private sector engagement will be continued.</p> <p>Status: report in preparation</p>	
<p>Evaluative Study on the Effects of German/ International Contributions to the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Developing and Emerging Countries</p>	<p>In light of the growing climate crisis, it is becoming increasingly important for development cooperation to make an effective contribution to climate protection in the countries of the Global South. DEval aims to provide decision-makers in German development cooperation, and in other donor countries, with relevant knowledge to guide them and to support evidence-based policy-making. To achieve this it is conducting a macro-quantitative study in the field of climate change mitigation. In doing so it is building on its work in the field of adaptation to climate change, some of which is still ongoing. The extent to which German (and international) development cooperation have made effective contributions to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in developing countries is of overarching interest in the field of climate change mitigation. To this end, DEval is conducting a primarily statistically based evaluative study across countries. Besides the contributions of German and international development cooperation, this study also takes into account important local contextual factors such as the size, income level or political constitution of a country.</p> <p>The study focuses on the energy sector, for three reasons. Firstly, the energy sector has particularly high potential for mitigation. Secondly, the majority of climate-related development cooperation falls within this sector. Finally, the global energy system is the most significant source of GHG emissions, and the majority of the needs for mitigation measures articulated by developing countries involve the energy sector.</p> <p>This approach therefore covers a significant part of the German portfolio in the area of climate protection, and fits well thematically with the new core area strategy "Responsibility for our Planet – Climate and Energy".</p> <p>Status: report in preparation</p>	<p>Instruments and structures of German development cooperation</p>

PART I: Ongoing evaluations from previous evaluation programmes

Topic	Background and object of the evaluation	Thematic focus
<p>BMZ support for Voluntary Return and Reintegration</p>	<p>Since 2017, the BMZ has greatly increased its support for the voluntary return and reintegration of migrants who lack the right of abode or any prospects for remaining in Germany. The counselling centres in the countries of origin play an important role here as focal points for migrants. These are designed to support the sustainable reintegration of returnees, but are also increasingly providing advice on regular migration routes.</p> <p>This evaluation focuses on the impact of the interventions for return and reintegration. In particular, it aims to analyse their relevance, effectiveness and impact in promoting sustainable reintegration in the country of origin.</p> <p>Status: in progress</p>	<p>Fragile states, peacebuilding and conflict prevention; instruments and structures of German development cooperation</p>
<p>Public Attitudes towards Development Policy and Sustainable Development – Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2024</p>	<p>Every two years the DEval Opinion Monitor for Development Policy provides civil society and governmental actors with well-researched feedback and knowledge on the attitudes and behaviour of citizens in the development policy field. This supports those actors in their strategy, education and communication work for development. The study thus helps to ensure that the debate on public opinion of development policy can be conducted on the basis of sound empirical evidence, and that the risk of misperceptions is minimised.</p> <p>The DEval Opinion Monitor Development Policy 2024 will update the analysis of public attitudes in Germany towards development policy, sustainable development and global challenges. It will focus on attitudes to development cooperation in the context of international wars and conflicts, and to feminist development policy.</p> <p>Status: in progress</p>	<p>Links to all thematic focuses</p>
<p>Meta-Evaluation of Efficiency in German Development Cooperation</p>	<p>High-quality project evaluations by development organisations are hugely important for accountability and learning processes in development cooperation. With this in mind, meta-evaluations examine the quality of project or programme evaluations and make recommendations for their improvement. Evaluation syntheses assess the findings of project evaluations on an aggregate level, and thus provide strategically relevant insights for decision-makers.</p> <p>The object of the meta-evaluation (which may be supplemented by an evaluation synthesis) is to analyse</p>	<p>Instruments and structures of German development cooperation</p>

PART I: Ongoing evaluations from previous evaluation programmes

Topic	Background and object of the evaluation	Thematic focus
	<p>the assessment of efficiency in project evaluations of the two major organisations of official German development cooperation (GIZ and KfW). The meta-evaluation would focus on examining efficiency assessment practices and possible ways of enhancing them, as well as changes needed to enable their enhancement. The evaluation synthesis will focus on the cross-organisational efficiency of German development cooperation and the factors affecting it.</p> <p>Status: under preparation</p>	
Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights	<p>Global crises have led to a worldwide decline in the fight against maternal and child mortality, teenage pregnancies and gender-based violence – especially among disadvantaged groups. This deficit in the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of people in partner countries is being addressed by German development cooperation through a dedicated area of intervention for SRHR.</p> <p>The object of the evaluation is the SRHR area of intervention plus corresponding relevant development cooperation interventions to promote SRHR in partner countries. The evaluation should help further develop the thematic area – for example, by analysing the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of German development cooperation for rights holders in partner countries.</p> <p>Status: in progress</p>	Human rights, gender equality and poverty reduction
German Development Cooperation Interventions to Promote the Circular economy	<p>The concept of a sustainable circular economy goes beyond traditional approaches based on waste avoidance and recycling. Instead, it attempts to shift away from linear economic processes by organising self-contained ones in which energy and raw materials are kept in circulation. Raw materials management is becoming even more important for environmentally sustainable development. The question therefore arises as to the significance and effectiveness of this increasingly relevant area for German development cooperation.</p> <p>Besides a review of the German portfolio, the object of the evaluation will involve primarily conceptual findings, analyses of effectiveness and impact, and their synthesis. The evaluation will support further development of this thematic area in German development cooperation.</p> <p>Status: in progress</p>	Private sector engagement

PART I: Ongoing evaluations from previous evaluation programmes

Topic	Background and object of the evaluation	Thematic focus
<p>Evaluation of German Development Cooperation Partnerships and Projects for Access to (Green) Energy in (Rural) Africa</p>	<p>This evaluation will focus on interventions from the "Green People's Energy for Africa" initiative and "Energising Development (EnDev)", in order to generate findings on which approaches have proven promising for inclusion in the future bilateral development cooperation portfolio.</p> <p>The object of the evaluation is the German development cooperation portfolio to promote energy supply in rural Africa, with a particular focus on (affordable) access to (green) energy. Besides analyses across countries, DEval has conducted 3 country case studies (Benin, Senegal and Uganda). In these case studies, the focus is on approaches that have been applied in Green People's Energy or in EnDev, as well as on comparable approaches and projects. Only two reference group meetings are planned for this evaluation, which is piloting the approach of a case study-based rapid assessment for DEval. The evaluation is expected to present an initial draft report for comment after approximately 12 months.</p> <p>Status: report in preparation</p>	<p>Climate change, environment and sustainable economic development</p>
<p>Analysis of German Development Cooperation's Multilateral Engagement</p>	<p>The multilateral engagement of German development cooperation is of major strategic relevance. The BMZ's multilateral contributions include core funding for selected international organisations (assessed contributions and shareholdings, as well as untied, voluntary contributions), which are designed to ensure that these organisations are able to work and fulfil their mandates. Furthermore, earmarked contributions to international organisations support specific development policy issues or institutional goals of the BMZ. To review the effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability of multilateral engagement, both the BMZ's Evaluation Policy and the new DEval Strategy envisage gradually closing the current evidence gap. DEval's initial examination of this topic will focus on the existing portfolio and the evidence available in the national and international domain on the effectiveness and impact of tied and untied contributions to multilateral development cooperation. (synthesis)</p> <p>Status: in progress</p>	<p>Instruments and structures of German development cooperation</p>

Part II: Evaluations from the 2024-2026 evaluation programme that will begin in 2024

Topic	Background and object of the evaluation	Thematic focus
CPEs Malawi and Jordan	Two further CPES are scheduled to begin in 2024. The BMZ has proposed Jordan and Malawi. The implementation of both evaluations will be based on the development status of the instrument and standards at that point, and the lessons learned from the pilot evaluation. The aim will be to further strengthen the partner orientation of the instrument and, where possible, to incorporate selected ECD components. DEval will develop a process for the future selection of countries for CPEs.	Instruments and structures of German development cooperation
Impact of Development Cooperation in the Area of Food and Nutrition Security	The number of people going hungry worldwide has been rising again for several years, partly due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. To strengthen the crisis resilience of agricultural and food systems and counteract problems such as climate change and biodiversity loss, a reorganisation of agricultural and food systems is also needed. This was initiated at global level with the UN Food Systems Summit (2021). In the area of agriculture/food and nutrition security, Germany is the second largest bilateral donor after the USA. By reorganising its special initiative "ONE WORLD – No Hunger", which has been in existence for over 10 years, into the special initiative "Transformation of Agricultural and Food Systems", the BMZ wishes to help make food systems more effective, efficient and resilient, and at the same time support its just transition approach. The long-standing and comprehensive engagement of German and international development cooperation in the area of food and nutrition security, and the increased relevance of the topic, have brought the question of the impact of national and international development cooperation interventions to the fore. In light of the evidence already available in this area, a synthesis study will focus in particular on the effectiveness and impact of interventions, and the associated challenges. To this end, the specific causal pathways of various interventions might be traced based on the existing evidence, and analysed as regards their economic, social and environmental effectiveness, impact and sustainability.	Climate change, environment and sustainable economic development
Evaluation of the Instrument of Fiduciary Investment Funds	Given the financing gap for achieving the SDGs, leveraging private funds in order to implement development policy goals has become much more important. However, it also involves considerable challenges. The BMZ is therefore continuing its efforts to develop and implement innovative solutions for mobilising private capital. Funds play a major role here. For example, around 70 funds, mostly investment funds/fiduciary investments, worth a total of around EUR 300 million are being financed through the budget item "Cooperation with Regions" (FC-R). One of the challenges of the impactful use of funds as FC	Climate change, environment and sustainable economic development; instruments and structures of

Part II: Evaluations from the 2024-2026 evaluation programme that will begin in 2024

Topic	Background and object of the evaluation	Thematic focus
	<p>instruments is their financial additionality, combined with the technical and methodological difficulties of measuring them and their potential impact. The object of the evaluation will be fiduciary investment funds. The questions guiding the evaluation are designed to provide answers concerning the extent to which private capital can actually be leveraged, and what evidence is available for the expected effects at various levels. The evaluation will therefore focus on a portfolio analysis of the fiduciary investment funds under departmental budget 23, and their additionality and impact.</p>	<p>development cooperation</p>
<p>Evaluation of the BMZ's Engagement in Ukraine since 2022</p>	<p>In light of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, German development cooperation is investing considerable resources in supporting the country's reconstruction. The plan is therefore to support the BMZ's engagement in Ukraine since 2022 through a formative evaluation. This is designed to ensure that lessons can be learnt early on in the process from evidence on the effectiveness and impact of the engagement, as well as from evidence on the activities of other actors and other contexts (e.g. Iraq, Afghanistan). Furthermore, the evaluation can provide timely support for the accountability of the BMZ's engagement, which is highly relevant. The precise definition of the object and approach must be made dependent on further developments in Ukraine up to the planned start of the evaluation. Moreover, the involvement of Ukrainian evaluators should be considered, possibly also as an ECD component and to ensure appropriate partner orientation in the evaluation.</p>	<p>State fragility, conflict prevention and good governance</p>

Part II: Evaluations from the 2024-2026 evaluation programme that will begin in 2024

Topic	Background and object of the evaluation	Thematic focus
Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2026	<p>The DEval Opinion Monitor for Development Policy provides civil society and governmental actors with well-researched feedback and knowledge on the attitudes, knowledge and behaviour of citizens in the development policy field. This supports those actors in their strategy, education and communication work for development. The study will thus help to ensure that the debate on public opinion of development policy can be conducted on the basis of sound empirical evidence, and that the risk of misperceptions is minimised.</p> <p>The DEval Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2026 will continue the investigation of selected aspects of development-related attitudes, knowledge and behaviour (including development engagement) among the German public. Thematic focuses will be determined during the design phase of the study by carefully observing the (development) policy opportunities and challenges. Possible topics include the nexus of migration and development, public attitudes to development policy and related behaviours in an increasingly polarised political discourse, the role of development policy in post-conflict contexts, or the promotion of development engagement.</p>	Links to all thematic focuses
Evaluation of the Civil Peace Service	<p>The Civil Peace Service (CPS) is an instrument for civil crisis management. It is characterised by cooperation between peace-oriented civil society in Germany and civil society in partner countries, and the use of specific advisory resources of civil society organisations. The CPS sends around 370 experts to 44 partner countries.</p> <p>Although in financial terms the CPS is a comparatively "minor" instrument for conflict transformation by the BMZ, it does possess relevant unique selling points as an instrument of personnel development cooperation. This is thanks to its strong focus on civil society actors and its long-term and partnership-based approach. It therefore represents a potentially important building block in the overarching thematic area of peace and security – which is continuing to grow in strategic and political importance. The primary object of the evaluation is therefore likely to be the CPS as an instrument of conflict transformation. Institutional issues may also be analysed, however, depending on their relevance and the information requirements.</p>	State fragility, conflict prevention and good governance; instruments and structures of German development cooperation

Part III: Potential topics from previous consultation processes for review in 2025

(to be reviewed again in 2025 prior to definition of the evaluation programme 2025-2027)

- Country portfolio evaluation (CPE)
- Evaluation of interventions to protect and conserve biodiversity
- Evaluation of post-colonial structures and the partner orientation of German development cooperation
- Comparative analysis of the impact of bilateral and multilateral development cooperation (including EU development cooperation), to determine in what areas and under what conditions which of the two forms of development cooperation is the more promising
- Evaluation of the implementation of anti-corruption interventions as a quality criterion in development cooperation
- Climate and energy partnerships: evaluation of existing partnerships to drive the energy transformation worldwide, also with a view to potential improvements for future partnerships to roll out hydrogen in partner countries of development cooperation
- Evaluation of the use of scientific and project-related evidence in the design of German development cooperation projects
- Evaluation of projects to promote digitalisation in partner countries
- Feminist development policy

Annex: Explanation of the assessment criteria

Including a project in the multi-year evaluation programme involves a two-step assessment process.

The decision to include a project in the evaluation programme is based on the following criteria.

1. Relevance

Development-policy and strategic relevance of the object, and associated advisory and decision-making requirements of the intended main users of the evaluation/study

2. Potential for innovation and learning

Potential for addressees of recommendations and other users to learn by closing evidence gaps, thus helping to improve the effectiveness, impact and legitimacy of German development cooperation.

3. Risk

Assessment of the risk to the effectiveness, impact and legitimacy of German development cooperation arising from the object in the event of a continued lack of or insufficient evidence

4. Coverage

Appropriate coverage of the BMZ portfolio over an extended period of time, bearing in mind the relative importance of the object in the BMZ portfolio

DEval also examines the basic feasibility or evaluability of a proposal.