

BACKGROUND

Results in the Belgian development cooperation. Since 2011 there have been many investments into results management not only at Enabel (the Belgian Development Agency) but also at the institutional level of the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD). In this regard, DGD undertook several actions to anchor results management in Belgian law. Furthermore, Enabel invested heavily in organisational and institutional improvement initiatives related to results-oriented management in the last years.

Institutional changes. In 2018 the Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC) was transformed into Enabel to anchor the Belgian Development Agency more strongly in the larger context of Belgian foreign affairs in a “whole-of-government” approach. As a result, an overhaul of the organisational and institutional structures and processes took place, which had strategic and operational implications that also influenced the monitoring and evaluation of Belgian development cooperation.

Function of results management. Results-oriented management in development cooperation in general thereby serves goals beyond the management cycle. While mainstream results-oriented monitoring systems of interventions are a fundamental pillar to improve an intervention’s

results, results-oriented monitoring systems at the organisational level are similarly a means to multiple ends at the organisational and institutional level. These systems should enable development actors to monitor the overall development performance of all interventions in all portfolios and to demonstrate achieved results. Furthermore, these systems should highlight where the development actor needs to invest in adaptation measures and to inform organisational management decisions. On a more basic level, results-oriented management systems should also be used by development actors to acknowledge and take responsibility for successes and failures, to generate knowledge, to systematically develop expertise as well as to continuously improve the development strategies, be it directly through implementation, or indirectly through targeted policy-advice.

PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

Quality and use of results information. Against this background it was viewed as meaningful by Enabel to assess the actual quality of results management and the use of results-oriented information, as well as to understand how the quality of results management can be further improved in the light of current and future needs.

Accountability, decision-making, insights & learning. As a consequence, Syspons was commissioned by Enabel to conduct the “Evaluation of Results in the Management Cycle” in order to

provide evidence on the overall quality of results-oriented management in the management cycle and practical guidance on how to improve results-oriented management in line with current and future needs. Hence, the objectives of this evaluation were threefold: (1) hold the organisation accountable for the quality of results-oriented management in the management cycle, (2) identify changes that are needed in order to improve results-oriented management and (3) build understanding across the relevant stakeholders and support learning.

In this regard the evaluation answered the following four overarching evaluation questions:

- **Evaluation Question 1:** What is the quality (and quantity) of results products?
- **Evaluation Question 2:** What is the quality of the results processes and how well is results-oriented information used?
- **Evaluation Question 3:** Which factors – at individual, organisational and institutional level - determine the quality of results products and their use for accountability, learning, adaptive management purposes?
- **Evaluation Question 4:** To what extent is the results-oriented management system ‘fit-for-future’?

Scope. The scope of the evaluation covered the results products of the development interventions implemented by Enabel in the years 2012 to 2016 as well as the current normative framework for results-oriented management at Enabel. Furthermore, for analysing the use of the interventions' results-oriented information for accountability, adaptive management and learning purposes, the following aspects were within the scope of this evaluation: existing information streams, reporting lines, roles and responsibilities as well as management/steering bodies at the intervention, country and headquarter level.

Users. The direct users of this evaluation within Enabel are the board of directors, the management committee, middle management, country directors, as well as headquarter and intervention staff. Furthermore, the evaluation is also of use for external stakeholders such as the Directorate General for Development Cooperation and partner countries. Moreover, it can be of potential interest for the Special Evaluation Office and the cabinet of the minister in charge of development cooperation.

The evaluation took place between July 2018 and December 2018. During this period, Syspons GmbH conducted an analysis of all relevant documents and data, exploratory interviews, an online survey of Enabel staff, a case study in Uganda and three vertical case studies.

LIMITATIONS OF THE EVALUATION

Corporate needs of Enabel. In general, it must be stressed that the evaluation approach is itself limited, as the evaluation questions primarily address the corporate needs of Enabel and not specifically Enabel's institutional dimensions.

Enabel's institutional dimensions were outside the scope of this evaluation. Hence, the perspective of DGD has also been integrated solely from an organisational perspective. Thus, a future dialogue with DGD and other donors will need further attention when moving beyond the recommendations provided by this evaluation.

Monitoring & evaluation system. Furthermore, the scope of this evaluation was set by the *MoRe Results* system (the corporate name of the system for monitoring and evaluating results) and not by the overall organisational functions of learning, accountability and steering in general. These organisational functions are larger than *MoRe Results*. While the evaluation came across elements that indicated that learning and steering also takes place outside *More Results*' processes and structures, the analysis of these elements was beyond the scope of this evaluation.

KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Results information insufficiently supports the functions of accountability, learning & steering. In theory, Enabel possesses a well-developed and thought through results-oriented monitoring system. The results-oriented monitoring system is described comprehensively and detailed in established guidelines. Furthermore, the processes for results-oriented management are well described and responsibilities and roles are clearly defined. In addition, it covers all essential elements of a results-oriented monitoring system starting with the baseline process via Mid-Term Reviews to Final Results Reports and End-Term Reviews. However, the implementation of the results-oriented monitoring system is currently experiencing several

challenges at Enabel. In this regard, it can be concluded that the results-oriented management system often does not deliver the needed quality and/ or quantity of results-oriented information to facilitate the results-oriented management system's functions of accountability, learning and steering (**evaluation question 1**). As a result, the current results-oriented monitoring system at Enabel does not systematically contribute to the core organisational functions of Enabel, such as knowledge management, organisational learning or quality in implementation.

Organisational factors influence a smooth operation of the results management system and the systematic use of results information. The challenges in the implementation of the results-oriented management system at Enabel can be attributed to several factors that inhibit the smooth operation of the results-oriented management system and the systematic use of results-oriented information at Enabel, leading to a weak linkage to the core organisational functions of Enabel (**evaluation question 2 and 3**). In this regard, it could be observed that the existing **organisational culture** mainly promotes **learning** within the individual sphere of influence and not on a systematic level. In addition, a perceived organisational culture in which **failures and challenges** are viewed as leading to more work or negative consequences to Enabel's reputation also inhibits an adaptive and results-oriented management culture in which learning is seen as a priority. This in turn also reduces the overall quality of information reported in the results products. This is compounded by missing capacities at the level of headquarters to **systematise and**

analyse results-oriented information in a systematic way as well as missing external **incentive structures** to facilitate the use of results-oriented information. With regard to the latter, in particular missing **feedback** on results products, non-existent objectives about learning in human resource processes as well as a perceived reluctance of using results-oriented information at headquarters function as disincentives towards the systematic use of results-oriented information at Enabel. Moreover, **leadership** is perceived as not actively engaging in results-oriented management and using results-oriented information, also resulting in hindering the use of results-oriented information particularly at headquarters level.

Divergent understanding of the use & users of results information, hampering the use of results information beyond the micro-level (interventions). Next to these hindering factors for results-oriented management and the use of results-oriented information at Enabel, the evaluation could show that there also exists a divergent understanding among Enabel staff regarding the purpose of the steering and learning function of *MoRe Results* (**evaluation question 2**). Here, the majority of Enabel staff are not certain where steering should occur in the organisation and for what purpose and for whom learning should occur beyond the intervention level. As a result, of this divergent understanding, the quality of information provided in the results products regarding both these functions is low and steering as well as learning takes place mainly at the intervention level and in an unsystematic way in other processes, such as backstopping or capitalisation processes. Moreover, capacities at

intervention level are sometimes missing to conceptualise and set-up data collection systems for proposed monitoring systems due to missing internal and external support structures; thus, affecting the quality of the results-oriented information for steering.

Consequently, the use of results-oriented information currently takes place mainly at the intervention level and the provided information is seldom used in a systematised way on other organisational levels of Enabel (**evaluation question 2**). Hence, available data for accountability purposes is not used for the core function of transparency and accountability on an overall organisational level at Enabel, while information regarding learning and steering is often missing in the results products and thus also cannot be used to inform core organisational functions of Enabel, such as knowledge management or quality in implementation.

Momentum for improving results management. Nevertheless, Enabel currently also has the opportunity to generally improve the results-oriented management system and specifically its contribution to the core functions of Enabel considerably under the new management contract, as the new management contract demands a new reporting structure and a new management philosophy to achieve development results (**evaluation question 4**). A prerequisite hereby is an open dialogue between the established structures in the field, the Operation Department, the Expertise Department and Human Resources to develop a fitting adaptive management strategy. Moreover, it requires courage to discuss failures

openly and constructively, as well as investment in people and transparency.

Hereby, Enabel can build upon an organisational culture in which learning is prioritised and thus conducive for results-oriented management and the use of results-oriented information. Furthermore, its highly intrinsically-motivated employees as well as its perceived knowledgeable and supportive leadership form another asset for this change management process (**evaluation question 4**). In addition, Enabel already started and almost finished an overhaul of its IT-systems – among which is a new system for results-oriented management, called PILOT – can provide a backbone for the future results-oriented management system as it possesses the potential to allow Enabel to more easily systematise, aggregate and analyse results-oriented information on different organisational levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS

At the same time further requirements have to be met in order to successfully make Enabel's current results-oriented management system fit-for-purpose. In this regard, the evaluation results show that the current results-oriented management system at Enabel exhibits particular strengths and weaknesses. To strengthen the identified strengths and to weaken the weaknesses as well as to make the results-oriented management system fit-for-purpose under the new framework conditions, the following ten recommendations are put forward (**evaluation question 4**). They are clustered into recommendations for the results-oriented management system, for supportive organisational structures and processes as well as for organisational incentives.

Results management system

1. In a consultation process Enabel should define in detail the purpose of the three functions accountability, learning and steering of the results-oriented management as well as the subsequent purpose and target group of its results products in order to enhance the quality and use of results-oriented information in the organisation.
2. Enabel should focus its results products on specific functions of the results-oriented monitoring system and streamline them towards the newly adopted portfolio approach.
3. Enabel should build and expand on its well-developed MONOP system and introduce one digital system for results-oriented monitoring, management, risk management, procurement planning, reporting and finances to make processes leaner and to facilitate the aggregation of data on different organisational levels.

Organisational factors

4. Enabel should establish organisational capacities to aggregate, systematise and analyse provided results-oriented information for different organisational levels to enable organisational learning, knowledge management and strategic evidence-informed decision-making.
5. Enabel should strengthen organisational capacities in the field of transversal themes to guarantee a high and consistent quality of provided results-oriented information in this area.
6. Enabel should introduce a central quality assurance mechanism for the results products at headquarter level to guarantee a consistent high quality of its results products.
7. Enabel should introduce internal and/ or external support systems for the conceptualisation and set-up of monitoring frameworks and its related data collection

methods to guarantee a high quality of results-oriented information in the organisation.

8. Enabel should introduce reflection processes in which a dialogue about results-oriented information between the leadership and the operational management can take place to foster strategic decision-making beyond the intervention level.
9. Enabel should introduce strategic objectives for learning that also translate into different operational objectives on the department, country and individual level in order to incentivise Enabel staff to use results-oriented information in their daily work.
10. Leadership at Enabel should proactively engage in the implementation of results-oriented management and the use of results-oriented management by adopting an active feedback culture regarding results products and by using results-oriented information for their decision-making.

Evaluation commissioned on behalf of the Board of Directors of Enabel and managed by the Evaluation Office - contact : myriam.vanparijs@enabel.be.
 Evaluation carried out by the evaluation team of Syspons GmbH with Lennart Raetzell as evaluation team leader. The responsibility for the findings, analysis and conclusions rests with the evaluation team. The findings, analysis and conclusions do not necessarily reflect the views of the Evaluation Office, the Board of Directors or the Management Committee of Enabel.

Enabel – the Belgian Development Agency.
 Rue Haute, 147, 1000 Brussels, Belgium
www.enabel.be