



Comments from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) on the DEval Evaluation Report

“Human Rights in German Development Policy”

The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) welcomes the reports on *Human rights in German development policy, Part 1: The human rights strategy and its implementation and Part 2: The implementation and effectiveness of the human rights-based approach in the area of intervention ‘Private sector and financial system development’* presented by the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval). Reference is made here to the comprehensive comments by the BMZ on module 1 already published in May 2021.

In its two parts, the evaluation looked at the BMZ Human Rights Strategy (2011) and its human rights-based approach (HRBA) as well as the implementation of the HRBA using the example of private sector and financial system development. The reports serve two purposes: accountability and realising the aim of adapting the strategic content, effectiveness and implementation of the HRBA. For this they analyse the relevance of the human rights strategy and of the HRBA for German development policy and describe the implementation of the HRBA both in general and using the example of one of the relevant areas of intervention of German development policy, i.e. sustainable economic development.

Relevance of the subject of the evaluation

The BMZ sees human rights as a guiding principle of its development policy. In its human rights strategy, the Ministry describes the human rights-

based approach as a key instrument for implementing its human rights policy.

The reports presented by DEval are strategically highly relevant for the BMZ because they are an essential basis for the current revision of the Ministry’s human rights strategy. Formulating the quality criteria strategy for the quality criterion “human rights, gender equality and disability inclusion” is crucially important for this.

Findings of the evaluation

According to the evaluation reports, the BMZ’s human rights strategy is still fundamentally relevant. However, the human rights standards and obligations arising from the strategy have not yet been adequately put into practice.

The reports clearly show where action is needed and that will be addressed by the BMZ in the course of its strategic work.

Consequences deriving from the evaluation

Based on the DEval reports and the need for action set out in them, the BMZ will focus in its further development of the HRBA on the following:

1) Upholding and strengthening the aspiration of the human rights-based approach

As suggested in the reports, the BMZ will strengthen both the holistic nature of the HRBA and its essential elements. In this connection it is important to the BMZ that by further developing the HRBA the implementation of strategic tasks is also furthered. These are tasks, for example, resulting from the BMZ’s feminist development policy, the German government’s LGBTI inclusion strategy and the BMZ’s Strategy for the inclusion of individuals with disabilities. The aim here is always to enforce the legal right to a decent life regardless of the personal traits and characteristics that are the basis for the (multiple) discrimination that a person experiences or are the reason for someone being denied their rights. Because of this, these strategic objectives are interwoven with the overarching HRBA, so that their successful implementation is mutually reinforcing.

2) Putting a focus on implementation

The DEval reports are an important basis and guideline for the BMZ when it comes to making the HRBA more operational following the formulation of the quality criteria strategy “human rights, gender equality and disability inclusion”, with a view to closing the gaps that have been revealed between strategic aspirations and concrete development cooperation. Efforts will be made here to find out which of the numerous measures will be necessary in order to establish the HRBA even more firmly as a cross-cutting task in development cooperation measures and in bilateral and multilateral policy dialogues. The

DEval recommendations offer important suggestions in this regard, such as suggestions for better combining political programming and practical implementation.

The BMZ will thus optimise its own work and also adjust the instructions given to the implementing organisations – including those outlined in the human rights guideline. The BMZ will pay special attention here to the points made by the DEval reports with regard to deficits in knowledge management – especially at the BMZ.

The BMZ will examine the recommendation that the number of specifically human rights projects should be increased, with a solid data base for the existing portfolio as a starting point.

3) Implementing a monitoring system

The DEval reports criticise existing monitoring capacities. The BMZ takes this criticism very seriously and agrees with the recommendation that a monitoring system be developed in order to enable better management and more transparent communication. In this connection, the BMZ will take specific steps so as to be able to examine both the quality criteria “human rights, gender equality and disability inclusion” and the implementation of the HRBA.

The DEval report on *Human rights in German development policy, Part 1: The human rights strategy and its implementation and Part 2: The implementation and effectiveness of the human rights-based approach in the area of intervention ‘Private sector and financial system development’* can be downloaded at www.deval.org/de/evaluierungsberichte.html.

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