



## Comments from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development on the DEval Evaluation Report: „Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2018“

The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) welcomes the evaluation study conducted by the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval). Findings from representative surveys to discover what the German population thinks about development “aid”, such as the EU’s Eurobarometer, have been available for many years now. The Allensbach Study (Global Perspectives Initiative 2017) also provides important insights. In-depth studies or evaluations like this study, however, are rare.

In the interest of ensuring efficiency and comparability, for its study DEval used data from a survey that has been carried out twice a year in four OECD countries since the end of 2013, and evaluated the most recently available data from the survey conducted in 2017. The evaluation outcomes combined with an innovative typology, which enable more targeted communication on development cooperation, provide important knowledge that can guide public relations work and development education.

### Relevance of findings

The findings show that, for many years now, the proportion of the public who sees “development aid” as important has remained constant at around 90%. There are 40% who would like to see more funding provided for poverty reduction, and approximately 30% would even be in favour of Germany providing more ODA (official development assistance), this despite the fact that the level of ODA currently provided by the German government is greatly overestimated. Around 70% support the

ODA target of 0.7% of gross national income set by the United Nations.

These are very positive findings for development policy, and an incentive for the BMZ to continue its present approach, which focuses on fighting poverty in the countries with which we cooperate, particularly by promoting food security, education and employment. In the spirit of the 2030 Agenda, as a pact on the world’s future, climate adaptation measures, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and peacekeeping remain our priorities. Partnership – and a focus on results – determine how we seek to achieve these goals.

But the study also shows that people still know very little about development cooperation – even about the huge progress that the international community has made in fighting poverty, child mortality, etc. High levels of support also go hand in hand with scepticism regarding the effectiveness of development cooperation and suspicions of corruption.

### Conclusions

Evidently, all those engaged in development cooperation still have a lot of convincing to do and need to make it clear that any money raised from German taxes that is spent on development cooperation is subject to rigorous monitoring and multiple audits by various internal and external audit institutions, also including the Federal Court of Audit. We will look at how we can communicate these multiple control mechanisms and the monitoring results more effectively. This also includes showing how

much the BMZ is already doing to help our partner countries crack down on corruption by supporting reform initiatives in many different areas, such as public financial and tax administration, procurement and support for civil society.

There is also work to be done in terms of proving the effectiveness of development cooperation. It seems that it is only a small group of people working in the field of development who take note of the evaluation reports on the impacts of development cooperation published periodically by the official implementing organisations. We are in the process of implementing reforms aimed at delivering findings which better serve our purposes and are more suitable for education work. The BMZ is the first German Ministry to have set up an independent evaluation institute with a mandate to independently review all development cooperation measures. We intend to increasingly use the findings of these evaluations, which show both light and shade, for our dialogue with the general public as well.

The international community has achieved great successes over the past 20 years. In that time, poverty has been cut by half. As the DEval study has shown, apart from telling people about the continuing high need for support and the setbacks, we need to communicate these successes much more effectively. The challenge, which we want to address, is how we can change the way that Africa is perceived. We want Africa to be seen as a continent of opportunity, not just the “poor house” of the world. However, the media and aid organisations that raise funds through public donations also have an important role to play here. They must talk about the success stories of development cooperation, instead of only showing images of disaster and misery.

Ordinary people, local communities and businesses in Germany can also do their bit: by engaging in and with development policy, by making responsible consumption choices in Germany and by lobbying for decent work for people in the Global South. We are doing all that we can to support these activities.