

Chapter 6: Results management and accountability of Portugal's development co-operation

Results-based management system

Indicator: A results-based management system is in place to assess performance on the basis of development priorities, objectives and systems of partner countries

Camões I.P. is putting in place a results-based management system. Results are already identified at the project level and Camões I.P. is beginning to develop them for its country programmes. At this stage, project and country level results are limited to capturing outputs. Putting in place a set of measurable results at the country level which also capture outcomes and impact will enable the institute to assess the performance of Portugal's ODA. Monitoring is still work in progress given Portugal's fragmented aid system and partner country data are scarcely used.

Results-based management for projects is better, but the system lacks a results culture

Portugal emphasises that accountability and learning are central concerns for development co-operation amid a government-wide push for more performance-based public sector management. Since the last review, Camões I.P. has introduced a requirement that all project proposals – submitted by line ministries for prior opinion and from civil society organisations¹ for funding – must include a logical framework. This is still a work in progress. A sample of project documents analysed shows that some are more thoroughly prepared than others and that all projects only consider results at the output level.

Portugal's new Strategic Cooperation Programmes are beginning to be rolled out across partner countries. These include objectives and indicators for measuring progress at the country level and apply to all Portuguese actors involved in co-operation activities in that country. For example, the new Strategic Cooperation Programme for Timor-Leste 2014-2017 aligns Portuguese projects and activities to the specific goals and objectives expressed by the East Timorese government in its Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030. However, results are still expressed in terms of outputs instead of outcomes (Camões I.P. 2014a).

Portugal still has some way to go to be able to capture the development outcomes and impacts of its projects and programmes in the countries and regions in which it works. Ensuring all country programmes have a clear set of outcome-orientated results will improve the institute's ability to assess ODA projects within these countries and could help the institute and Portugal's other development actors to adjust their project designs, where needed, to ensure greater impact.

Results tracking across the development co-operation system is challenging; use of partner country data is limited

Camões I.P. is grappling with how to ensure results monitoring that is high quality and harmonised across the entire development co-operation system. A key challenge is changing the focus of project monitoring from reporting on whether project deadlines have been met and financial targets kept, to measuring progress against output and outcome results. In order to help this transition, Camões I.P. plans to prepare guidelines to help all co-operation actors when monitoring results. Portugal also needs to ensure management routinely uses results data to inform decision making and programme design.

Using partner country data in monitoring continues to be a challenge for Portugal. Use of these data is still very limited, due to lack of experience and the dearth of data collected by partner country governments.

Evaluation system

Indicator: The evaluation system is in line with the DAC evaluation principles

Camões I.P. has a well-developed evaluation system, but there is scope to improve line ministries' evaluation practices to ensure a consistent standard. The Evaluation and Audit Division in Camões I.P. is independent of the operations unit and has a clear policy and plan to guide its work. While the number of staff has increased, the division's workload has also considerably expanded. Portugal includes partner countries in its evaluation process, which is good practice.

Evaluation is well-structured at Camões I.P.

Evaluation is a well-established part of Camões I.P.'s development co-operation programme cycle and is supported by a strong set of guidance and quality control measures. For example, to ensure the quality of evaluations Camões I.P. appoints a management group for each evaluation and a matrix for assessing the quality is created for each evaluation report (Camões I.P., 2015). However, there is still further to go to ensure an evaluation culture across all of Portugal's development actors. In particular, there appears to have been no evaluation to date by the Portuguese government of its extensive concessional loan portfolio managed by the Ministry of Finance, though one is planned.

Steps are being taken to try to improve this situation. A new evaluation policy for Camões I.P. was at a draft stage during this peer review (Camões I.P. n.d.). It takes into account standards agreed by the OECD DAC (OECD, 2010) and grants the Institute's Evaluation and Audit Division a clear mandate to evaluate all development co-operation interventions and to ensure the quality of evaluations conducted by other line ministries. The draft evaluation policy has been discussed with line ministries in an effort to increase the uptake of the policy by all Portuguese development actors. Camões I.P. is also offering training to line ministries on evaluation.

While staffing numbers have been increased within Camões I.P.'s Audit and Evaluation Division,² the division's workload has also expanded as a result of the merger.³ The division is keen for some of its responsibilities – such as assisting with project monitoring – to be done by staff based in partner countries. This makes sense as staff on the ground are closer to programming and have local knowledge. This would free up the division to focus on larger evaluations and its other responsibilities.

Camões I.P.'s Evaluation and Audit Division is independent of operations

The Evaluation and Audit Unit reports directly to the board of Camões I.P. and is independent of operations. The division proposes a work plan which is approved by the board at Camões I.P. Final evaluation reports are published only after a discussion with all interested parties (NGOs, partner country representatives etc.).

Camões I.P. has a strategic and comprehensive evaluation plan

Camões I.P. has a rolling three-year evaluation plan approved by the institute's senior management.⁴ The 2014-16 plan is strategic, for example, it will assess the effectiveness of Camões I.P.'s new NGO co-financing mechanism and, it will, for the first time, evaluate an infrastructure loan project funded by Portugal's credit line.⁵

The plan does not specify the financial allocation for each exercise and there is no dedicated budget for evaluation. However, staff interviewed in the Evaluation and Audit Unit informed that the budget attached to evaluations in 2015 was EUR 100 000, excluding salaries.

Evaluation partnerships between Portugal and partner countries are positive

Camões I.P. strives to include partner countries in the evaluation cycle. Terms of reference are drafted with staff of partner country embassies in Lisbon as well as other stakeholders in partner countries. They are also invited to participate throughout the process on the ground. The involvement of partner countries does, however, depend on the commitment of the individual country, which is not always guaranteed according to Camões I.P.'s staff. Involvement of partner country authorities is also not systematic for evaluations conducted by other line ministries. As for joint evaluations with other donors, Portugal has less experience – something noted already in the previous DAC peer review (OECD, 2011).

Institutional learning

Indicator: Evaluations and appropriate knowledge management systems are used as management tools

The extent to which Portugal's development co-operation system learns from its own experience is limited. Evaluation findings are not systematically used to inform decision making and there is no knowledge-sharing mechanism.

Learning from evaluations is not yet systematically part of decision making

Camões I.P. has improved its practices for learning and using evaluation findings, but it is aware that it has a long way to go to inculcate a culture of learning among all Portuguese actors involved in development co-operation. Evaluation findings are regularly shared at workshops with interested partners (CSOs, line ministries and partner country representatives). Evaluated entities are able to formally express disagreement or agreement with the findings and senior management is requested to give a final response. The Evaluation and Audit Division also publishes an annual evaluation report which highlights, among other things, progress made on implementing evaluation recommendations. The latest available annual report from the Evaluation and Audit Division states that 43% of recommendations that had been accepted were implemented, 22% were not implemented and 46% were partially implemented (Camões I.P, 2014d). This is good practice.

However, it can be difficult for Camões I.P. to follow up the degree to which recommendations are implemented as this depends on implementing agencies submitting

information to Camões I.P. A lack of information from implementing agencies was flagged as an issue in the last annual evaluation report (Camões I.P. 2014e).

Portugal lacks a knowledge-sharing mechanism

Portugal's fragmented development co-operation system requires a strong knowledge management mechanism to share learning across the multitude of actors involved. No such system is currently in place. The lack of communities of practice and knowledge-sharing networks is preventing Portugal's development co-operation actors from learning fully from their experiences and improving their practice. The planned establishment of technical working groups under the Inter-ministerial Commission for Co-operation (Chapter 1) could be a step in the right direction. It would create an environment where staff from different line ministries working on the same sector can meet more systematically to discuss their experiences and challenges.

Communication, accountability and development awareness

Indicator: The member communicates development results transparently and honestly

Transparency has improved since the last peer review. Camões I.P.'s new communication strategy aims to increase the visibility of Portuguese development co-operation and foster citizens' trust. However, more regular communication with external stakeholders about the impact of all Portugal's ODA activities could enable Portugal to tell "better stories" about its work and enhance accountability. Portugal has invested strongly in development education and its work has won international acclaim.

Steps have been taken to implement the Common Standard

Portugal has improved the transparency of its development co-operation since the last peer review, as noted in Chapter 3. Committed to providing its ODA information in line with the Common Standard,⁶ it now publishes forward-looking spending plans⁷ and project-level data. The development of an Integrated Information System should also further enhance transparency (Box 6.1). While Portugal has published a timetable for achieving the Common Standard, it is, however, unlikely to make the December 2015 deadline of full implementation.

Box 6.1 Portugal's Integrated Information System for development co-operation

Portuguese co-operation started to develop an integrated information system in 2013-14, following its Busan commitments, to ensure conformity with the OECD-DAC regulations in terms of reporting aid. This system will have several positive impacts on the quality of Portugal's reporting:

- public and private financing institutions can input data directly through an electronic platform
- the system will be able to automatically validate data against the DAC rules
- field staff will be able to input data directly, so statistical information will better reflect the reality of Portuguese aid on the ground
- it will enable online consultation and downloads of statistical data.

Source: Camões I.P. (2015), *Memorandum of Portugal*, 16 March 2015, Government of Portugal, Lisbon.

Portugal could do more to tell stories about its development impact through social media

Complying with recommendations from the last peer review, Camões I.P. now has its own communication strategy which aims to increase the visibility of Portuguese development co-operation and to foster citizens' trust (Camões I.P. 2015a). Communication is predominately based on a digital approach.⁸ Communication became more important following the merger of Portugal's former development agency and the language and culture institute. The visual identity of the former development co-operation agency became subsumed under the image of the language/culture institute. The communication department is working hard to make clear to citizens that the former language institute now also has development co-operation responsibilities.

Despite Portugal's new communication strategy, there is considerable scope for Camões I.P. to tell stories to external audiences about the impact of all of Portugal's development co-operation. Such communication would enhance the transparency, accountability and visibility of Portuguese development co-operation. Camões I.P. produces an annual report online (Camões I.P. 2014d), but it only covers its own operations (education and development) and not those of other Portuguese development actors. It could also profit from its large social media follower base to better communicate the development results of its activities or tell stories about the improvements its projects have made to people's lives in partner countries.⁹ Camões I.P. should communicate more systematically on the programmes implemented by all the line ministries, so as to provide a comprehensive overview of its ODA supported activities. Accountability lines with parliament also need to be nurtured (for example, evaluations are still not presented to parliamentarians and could be a feature of parliamentary debates with some regularity, e.g. once a year).

Portugal has been praised for its good work in awareness raising for development

Portugal has its own National Strategy on Development Education 2010-2015 (IPAD 2010), which aims to integrate development and global citizenship into Portugal's formal and informal education system. Portugal's leadership in development education is the result of years of engagement with different actors from government and civil society, and dedicated funding to support development education NGOs from Camões I.P. Portugal's activities in this area have been peer reviewed and praised by different international bodies such as the Global Education Network Europe (GENE 2014) and the European Commission (EU 2012).

Notes

1. For NGOs, the obligation to submit a logical framework has been in place since 2002.
2. In June 2015, the Evaluation and Audit Division had six full-time staff. In the previous development co-operation agency – IPAD – there were only 2.5 members of staff in this division.
3. The division is now responsible for evaluation and internal audit of both development co-operation and language activities. This adds to the division's other responsibilities of quality control and risk management.
4. The 2014-16 plan indicates 15 development-related evaluations to be conducted and 5 language-related evaluations.
5. The project in question was specified as “support to infrastructure construction in Cabo Verde” and required coordination with the Ministry of Finance as responsible for the credit line which financed this project (Camões I.P. 2014c).
6. At the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan in 2011, countries and organisations resolved to: “Implement a common, open standard for electronic publication of timely, comprehensive and forward-looking information on resources provided through development co-operation taking into account the statistical reporting of the OECD-DAC and the complementary efforts of the International Aid Transparency Initiative and others.” Participants at Busan agreed to implement this standard fully by December 2015. Portugal has chosen to achieve the standard outside of the IATI process.
7. See OECD stats for the Portuguese estimates for 2014-18, <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=FSS/>.
8. Camões I.P. uses Facebook to organise discussions and share news (the institute's Facebook profile has more than 33 000 followers). Feedback from website users has also helped Camões I.P. improve disclosure of ODA data, making them more user-friendly and machine readable.
9. A scan of Camões I.P.'s Facebook page activity during June and July 2015 shows most posts related to the culture/language activities of the institute. There was no mention of the results of projects implemented by Camões I.P. or other line ministries in partner countries. The news section of Camões I.P.'s website does link up to short documentation collecting testimonies and stories of positive development linked to Portugal's development co-operation efforts (i.e. www.instituto-camoes.pt/cooperacao/bicicletas-matutuine).

Bibliography

Government sources

Camões I.P. (2015a), *Estratégia de Comunicação*, Camões I.P. (Camões Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua Portugal), Lisbon, Portugal, www.instituto-camoes.pt/comunicacao/estrategia-comunicacao.

Camões I.P. (2015b), *Plano de Gestão do Risco: Incluindo o Risco de Corrupção e Infrações Conexas*, Camões I.P., Lisbon, Portugal, www.instituto-camoes.pt/gestao-risco/gestao-risco.

Camões I.P. (2015c), *Memorandum of Portugal 2015*, Camões I.P., Lisbon, Portugal.

Camões I.P. (2014a), *Programa Estratégico de Cooperação: Portugal – Timor-Leste: 2014-2017*, Camões I.P., Lisbon, Portugal, http://d3f5055r2rwsy1.cloudfront.net/images/cooperacao/pec_pt_timor1417.pdf.

Camões I.P. (2014b), *Programa de Ação de Cooperação Técnico-Policial com a República de São Tomé e Príncipe*, Camões I.P., Lisbon, Portugal.

Camões I.P. (2014c), *Plano de avaliação 2014-2016*, Government of Portugal, Lisbon.

Camões I.P. (2014d), *Relatório de actividades 2013*, Government of Portugal, Lisbon, www.instituto-camoes.pt/planos-e-relatorios-de-atividades/documentos-de-gestao/planos-e-relatorios-de-atividades/relatorio-atividades-2013-prov.

Camões I.P. (2014e), *Relatório anual da avaliação e da auditoria 2013*, Government of Portugal, Lisbon. http://d3f5055r2rwsy1.cloudfront.net/images/cooperacao/relat_avaliacao2013.pdf.

Camões I.P. (n.d.), *Cooperação Portuguesa: Política de avaliação*, draft, Government of Portugal, Lisbon.

GOP Government of Portugal (2014), *Decreto lei 73, Diário da República No 91, 13 May 2014*, <http://dre.tretas.org/dre/316970/>.

IPAD (2010), *Estratégia Nacional de Educação para o Desenvolvimento, Instituto Português de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento*, Government of Portugal, Lisbon.

IPAD (n.d.), *Saúde para Todos – Programa Integrado, Instituto Português de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento*, Government of Portugal, Lisbon.

Other sources

ECDPM (2015), "Use of PCD indicators by a selection of EU member States: A brief analysis and overview", *Discussion Paper No 171, European Centre for Development Policy Management, Maastricht* <http://ecdpm.org/publications/policy-coherence-indicators-eu/>.

EU (2015), *Special Barometer 421: The European Year for Development, citizens' views on development, co-operation and aid*, European Union, Brussels, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_421_en.pdf.

EU (2012), *Commission Staff Working Document on Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) in Europe*, 20 December 2012, European Commission, Brussels https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/working-document-development-education-awareness-raising-programme-swd2012457-20121220_en.pdf.

OECD (2011), *OECD Development Assistance Peer Reviews: Portugal 2010*, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264098312-en>.

OECD (2010), *Quality Standards for Development Evaluation*, Development Assistance Committee, OECD, Paris, www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/qualitystandards.pdf.



From:
**OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews:
Portugal 2016**

Access the complete publication at:
<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264248571-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2015), "Results management and accountability of Portugal's development co-operation", in *OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Portugal 2016*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264248571-11-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document, as well as any data and map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area. Extracts from publications may be subject to additional disclaimers, which are set out in the complete version of the publication, available at the link provided.

The use of this work, whether digital or print, is governed by the Terms and Conditions to be found at <http://www.oecd.org/termsandconditions>.