

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND IMPLEMENTATION FOLLOW-UP

Midterm Evaluation of the Netherlands Trust Fund (NTF) V Programme: A New Netherlands and ITC Partnership to Generate Long-term Socioeconomic Impact

Management Response, Action Plan, Results, and Means of Verification

Date of submission of final evaluation report: 23 September 2024

Responsible manager:	Martin Labbé, Tech Sector Development Coordinator and Programme Manager
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Date of finalization of management response: 06 January 2025

This document presents the management response to the recommendations of the Midterm Evaluation of the NTF V Programme.

The evaluation made 5 key recommendations. The matrix sets out whether ITC agrees, partially agrees, or disagrees with the recommendations and sub-recommendations. It presents the planned (or taken) action points, responsibilities and timelines.

Recommendation 1: Create stronger linkages with financial initiatives under the Ministry, particularly focusing on access to finance and investment.

Suggested actions:

1.1. The representative of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Steering Group can facilitate a strategic exchange between the programme management and key stakeholders in the DGGF, CFYE, and Orange Corners.

1.2. Further identify potential areas of collaboration with regards to access to finance and investment for cohort members of the programme.

Period of implementation: 2-3 months after evaluation

Assigned to: Representative of Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Steering Group

Management Response and Justification [if “Partially accepted” or “Rejected”]

The recommendation is:	Accepted:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Partially accepted:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rejected:	<input type="checkbox"/>	[mark the relevant field with “X”]
	Justification: [when “Partially accepted” or “Rejected”]						

Action points and responsibilities

Action points ¹	Expected result/s and means of verification	Responsible office / partner	Contributing office(s) / partner(s)	Deadline [Month/Year]	Remarks
1.1. Facilitate a strategic exchange between the programme management and key stakeholders in the DGGF, CFYE, and Orange Corners.	Documented discussions with DGGF, CFYE and Orange Corners focal points facilitated by MoFA with agreed way forward, if any.	MoFA	NTF V programme manager	06/2025	
1.2. Further identify potential areas of collaboration with regards to access to finance and investment for cohort members of the programme.	Documented discussions with Rabobank and FMO facilitated by MoFA with agreed way forward, if any.	NTF V project teams	MoFA	03/2025	

Recommendation 2: Ensure a strengthened position of national coordinators.

Suggested actions:

2.1. Redefine the responsibility profiles of national coordinators to assess how much each person can and should handle and possibly increase the number of personnel at the national level. This review should also identify which tasks can be delegated or managed elsewhere, ensuring a balanced workload and optimal efficiency.

2.2. Consider hiring assistants for the national coordinators.

Period of implementation: 2 months after evaluation

Assigned to: NTF V Programme management

Management Response and Justification [if “Partially accepted” or “Rejected”]

The recommendation is:	Accepted:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Partially accepted:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rejected:	<input type="checkbox"/>	[mark the relevant field with “X”]
	Justification: [when “Partially accepted” or “Rejected”]						

¹ For “Accepted” recommendations, action points should provide a comprehensive response to each recommendation and, if any, to sub-recommendations. For “Partially accepted” recommendations, action points should provide a substantive, coherent response. For “Rejected” recommendations, only justification text in the field above is necessary.

Action points and responsibilities					
Action points	Expected result/s and means of verification	Responsible office / partner	Contributing office(s) / partner(s)	Deadline [Month/Year]	Remarks
2.1. Redefine the responsibility profiles of national coordinators to assess how much each person can and should handle and possibly increase the number of personnel at the national level. This review should also identify which tasks can be delegated or managed elsewhere, ensuring a balanced workload and optimal efficiency.	Officially documented and signed-off responsibility profiles for each national coordinator, reflecting current and updated roles and tasks, based on UNOPS TOR (or consultancy TOR) Results of workload assessments before and after the review, showing reductions in overburden and more equitable distribution of tasks. Periodic performance reviews of national coordinators to evaluate the impact of the redefined roles and the delegation of tasks on their overall performance.	NTF V country focal points + national coordinators		03.2025	
2.2. Consider hiring assistants for the national coordinators.	Needs assessment with regards to administrative support (linked to 2.1.)	NTF V country focal points + national coordinators		03.2025	
<p>Recommendation 3: Improve (i) a streamlined and intentional approach to systemic change and (ii) effective mainstreaming of targeted SDGs at all levels of the programme.</p> <p>Suggested actions:</p> <p>3.1. Use the reconstructed theory of change developed for this evaluation to review and revise the interlinkages between impact-level objectives, outcome-level objectives, and expected outputs.</p> <p>3.2. Identify and document the critical assumptions that need to be met for each pathway of change. Put a focus on risks and assumption at the policy level approach and access to finance and investment. Also consider adding an outcome indicator to measure systemic change at the policy level (which is currently missing).</p> <p>3.3. Conduct workshops with national coordinators to validate the revised strategy in the theory of change and ensure a common understanding of the pathways of change and underlying assumptions, especially against the realities of national contexts.</p> <p>3.4. Use the identified assumptions and findings of the workshop to develop a detailed plan that addresses priority areas throughout the last year of programme implementation.</p> <p>Period of implementation: 1 month after evaluation</p> <p>Assigned to: NTF V Programme management</p>					
<p>Management Response and Justification [if “Partially accepted” or “Rejected”]</p>					
The recommendation is:	Accepted: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Partially accepted: <input type="checkbox"/>	Rejected: <input type="checkbox"/>	[mark the relevant field with “X”]	
	Justification: [when “Partially accepted” or “Rejected”]				
Action points and responsibilities					
Action points	Expected result/s and means of verification	Responsible office / partner	Contributing office(s) / partner(s)	Deadline [Month/Year]	Remarks
3.1 Use the reconstructed theory of change developed for this evaluation to review and revise the interlinkages	Interlinkages between impact-level objectives, outcome-level objectives, and	NTF V M&E focal point and Programme manager	NTF V project managers	03.2025	

between impact-level objectives, outcome-level objectives, and expected outputs.	expected outputs reviewed and revised, if required, at the level of each project.				
3.2 Identify and document the critical assumptions that need to be met for each pathway of change. Put a focus on risks and assumption at the policy level approach and access to finance and investment. Also consider adding an outcome indicator to measure systemic change at the policy level (which is currently missing).	Based on the updated TOC, revised critical assumptions, risks, and outcome indicators with a focus on the policy level approach and access to finance and investment.	NTF V M&E focal point and Programme manager	NTF V project managers	03.2025	
3.3. Conduct workshops with national coordinators to validate the revised strategy in the theory of change and ensure a common understanding of the pathways of change and underlying assumptions, especially against the realities of national contexts.	Workshops conducted to disseminate the information	NTF V M&E focal point	NTF V project managers	03.2025	
3.4. Use the identified assumptions and findings of the workshop to develop a detailed plan that addresses priority areas throughout the last year of programme implementation.	Workplans updated to integrate findings	NTF V project managers		03.2025	

Recommendation No. 4: Improve the data quality by improving the M&E system.

Suggested action 4.1:

4.1.1 Develop comprehensive definitions and guidelines for all monitoring system components to standardize processes and data interpretation.

4.1.2. Develop and implement a comprehensive programme level dashboard that integrates data from both sectors into a unified system, providing a better overview and ensuring that all relevant data is accessible at a higher, overarching level. Therefore, align the dashboards of both sector with each other.

4.1.3. In the long term, a browser based digital system is recommended that allows to have different workspaces for the sector but can also aggregate data easily. With the current timeline, this is not seen as still possible but rather short-term adjustments are recommended.

Period of implementation: Immediately after the evaluation

Assigned to: NTF V Programme M&E focal point

Suggested action 4.2:

4.2.1 Optimize financial planning at the programme level. Continuously plan, monitor, and evaluate resource allocation across different components.

4.2.2 Reallocate underspendings from previous years to minimize wastage and direct investments towards high-impact activities more consciously

4.2.3. Make a detailed financial planning for the remaining period to allow for financing regarding adapted approaches.

Period of implementation: Immediately after the evaluation

Assigned to: NTF V Programme management and national coordinators

Management Response and Justification [if “Partially accepted” or “Rejected”]

The recommendation is:	Accepted:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Partially accepted:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rejected:	<input type="checkbox"/>	[mark the relevant field with “X”]
	Justification: [when “Partially accepted” or “Rejected”]						

Action points and responsibilities					
Action points	Expected result/s and means of verification	Responsible office / partner	Contributing office(s) / partner(s)	Deadline [Month/Year]	Remarks
4.1.1 Develop comprehensive definitions and guidelines for all monitoring system components to standardize processes and data interpretation.	Definitions and guidelines for all monitoring system components	NTF V M&E focal point	NTF V project managers	03.2025	
4.1.2. Develop and implement a comprehensive programme level dashboard that integrates data from both sectors into a unified system, providing a better overview and ensuring that all relevant data is accessible at a higher, overarching level. Therefore, align the dashboards of both sector with each other.	One programme level dashboard	NTF V Programme M&E focal point & NTF V Agri M&E focal point		03.2025	
4.1.3. In the long term, a browser based digital system is recommended that allows to have different workspaces for the sector but can also aggregate data easily. With the current timeline, this is not seen as still possible but rather short-term adjustments are recommended.	Same as above – we are already online.			03.2025	
4.2.1 Optimize financial planning at the programme level. Continuously plan, monitor, and evaluate resource allocation across different components.	Optimized financial planning at the programme level	NTF V programme manager	NTF V administrative assistant	03.2025	
4.2.2 Reallocate underspendings from previous years to minimize wastage and direct investments towards high-impact activities more consciously	Not relevant – our financial management already allows us to.				
4.2.3. Make a detailed financial planning for the remaining period to allow for financing regarding adapted approaches.	Detailed financial planning for each project and the programme budgets	NTF V programme manager & NTF V project managers		12.2024	
<p>Recommendation 5: Create a comprehensive exit and sustainability plan for the remaining programme duration.</p> <p>Suggested actions:</p> <p>5.1. Continue developing an exit and sustainability strategy collaboratively with programme partners while focussing on how support can steadily be reduced. Furthermore, develop contingency plans in case of dramatic changes in political priorities or security situations in some countries. Focus on the financial sustainability of key partners and actions.</p> <p>5.2. Communicate the exit and sustainability strategy to all stakeholders involved to ensure mutual understanding and to increase ownership further.</p> <p>5.3. Implement the strategy within the programme to create ownership of future roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>Period of implementation: 3-6 months after evaluation</p> <p>Assigned to: NTF V Programme management and national coordinators</p>					

Management Response and Justification [if “Partially accepted” or “Rejected”]							
The recommendation is:	Accepted:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Partially accepted:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rejected:	<input type="checkbox"/>	[mark the relevant field with “X”]
	Justification: [when “Partially accepted” or “Rejected”]						
Action points and responsibilities							
Action points	Expected result/s and means of verification	Responsible office / partner	Contributing office(s) / partner(s)	Deadline [Month/Year]	Remarks		
5.1 Continue developing an exit and sustainability strategy collaboratively with programme partners while focussing on how support can steadily be reduced. Furthermore, develop contingency plans in case of dramatic changes in political priorities or security situations in some countries. Focus on the financial sustainability of key partners and actions.	Exit and sustainability strategy for each project developed and submitted to partners	NTF V programme manager & NTF V project managers	Reviewed and approved by SG	03.2025			
5.2. Communicate the exit and sustainability strategy to all stakeholders involved to ensure mutual understanding and to increase ownership further.	Covered in the above recommendation.	NTF V programme manager & NTF V project managers	Reviewed and approved by SG	03.2025			
5.3. Implement the strategy within the programme to create ownership of future roles and responsibilities.	Exit strategies implemented	NTF V programme manager & NTF V project managers	Reviewed and approved by SG	06.2025			