

► Portugal

Internal Audit and Evaluation Office, Portuguese Institute for Development Support

Mandate and policy

The Internal Audit and Evaluation Office (GAAI) of the Portuguese Institute for Development Support (IPAD) is responsible for evaluating the entire Portuguese development aid programme by conducting internal or external programme, project, sector, country and thematic evaluations. GAAI also participates in joint evaluations with other donors and partner countries. It gives technical assistance in evaluation and promotes some activities of evaluation capacity building. It is responsible for the dissemination of evaluation results and for ensuring the incorporation of the evaluation recommendations into programming process. GAAI is working to develop an information management system. GAAI also conducts internal audits and gives assistance to external audits. The evaluation focus of Portuguese development assistance is moving from the project focus to a higher and wider focus.

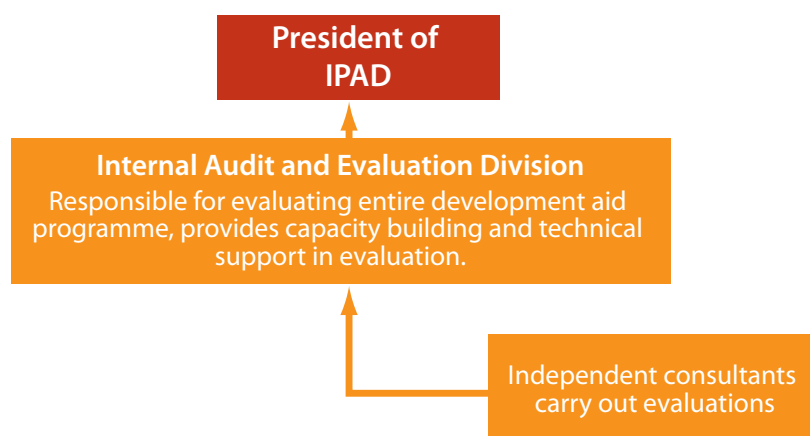
GAAI is guided by the Portuguese development assistance strategy paper: “A Strategic Vision for Portuguese Development Co-operation,” (IPAD, 2006) which defines Portugal’s development assistance policy and its evaluation. The “Evaluation Guide” (2nd edition, IPAD 2009) establishes the objectives and provides guidelines for the evaluation of Portuguese development co-operation. The Portuguese development evaluation policy paper was waiting for approval by the Secretary of State at the time of writing.

Self-evaluations are done by IPAD programme staff with the technical support of GAAI; there are no decentralised evaluation units. The staff capacity for conducting evaluations in field offices is limited.

Independence and quality

GAAI is an independent unit within IPAD, institutionally separate from the operational units. The head of GAAI reports directly to the President of IPAD. The independence of the evaluation process is also ensured by a transparent procurement process and by assuring the respect of the guidelines to avoid conflict of interest in evaluation.

Summary of the evaluation and reporting process



The external consultants are responsible for implementing the evaluation process and for the elaboration of the evaluation report, respecting the terms of references (designed by the evaluation staff in a participatory process). GAAI reports some difficulty in finding consultants with the necessary development evaluation experience and the legal capacity to carry out evaluations for IPAD and, especially, a shortage of Portuguese-speaking evaluators.

The quality of the evaluation reports is assessed by a matrix prepared by GAAI. All evaluations follow the OECD/DAC and European Union evaluation guidelines to ensure acceptable quality.

Planning

GAAI's three year evaluation plan contains the criteria for selecting evaluations and defines an indicative framework of the evaluations to be undertaken each year. The evaluation plan is defined in a consultative planning process, incorporating the needs of other departments and ministries as well as other relevant stakeholders. The President of IPAD is responsible for the approval of the evaluation plan.

Co-ordination and partner country involvement

GAAI regularly consults other donor's evaluation plans available in the DAC Network on Development Evaluation inventory. Given the limited number of partner countries and the working language, it has been difficult for GAAI to find partners for conducting joint evaluations. The GAAI uses other evaluation reports and shares its plans with the DAC Secretariat.

GAAI involves local evaluators from developing countries as members of every evaluation team and partners are also consulted while developing the evaluation terms of reference.


Reporting and use


GAAI reports directly to the President of IPAD.

Although there is no specific budget for the dissemination of evaluation findings, all the evaluation reports and executive summaries are available on the IPAD website and are also disseminated through: seminars and workshops (for other national ministries, civil society and governments of partner countries); mail/e-mails (final reports and executive summaries are sent to DEREc and to the EU Evaluation Inventory); newsletters, and the GAAI annual report.

After the conclusion of each evaluation, the GAAI staff assesses the extent to which stakeholders agree with the evaluation recommendations and which actions they are willing to implement. For 2009, it was established by IPAD that a minimum of 70% of all evaluation recommendations must be implemented. One year after completion of the report, the unit staff assesses the level of implementation of those recommendations. The results of this assessment are made public in the GAAI annual report, which is available in the IPAD website.

Snapshot of evaluation resources – Portugal

 Head of Evaluation

 Evaluation staff

USD 508 500

0.082% of ODA



Produces an average of three evaluations per year.