

## ► Spain

### Evaluation Division, Directorate-General for Development Policy Planning and Evaluation (DGPOLDE)

State Secretariat for International Co-operation within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation

Department of Programming and Quality of Aid

Spanish Co-operation Agency (AECID)

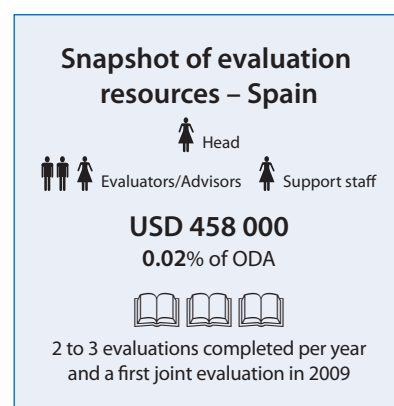
#### *Mandate and role*

The evaluation of Spanish development co-operation involves primarily the Directorate-General for Development Policy Planning and Evaluation of the State Secretariat for International Co-operation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation (DGPOLDE-MoFaC), the Department responsible for ensuring the coherence of planning, monitoring and evaluation in the co-operation policy. Within DGPOLDE, the Division of Evaluation is charged with undertaking strategic, sector, thematic and country-level evaluations and conducts two to three per year. The Spanish Co-operation Agency (AECID) is the main executing agency. AECID's recently established Department of Programming and Quality of Aid is also assigned functions of quality and evaluation. At the time of writing this Department did not have a budget or human resources for developing evaluation functions at the AECID level. There is no detailed information available on the other actors within the Spanish co-operation system. This profile therefore focuses on the work of the Evaluation Division of the DGPOLDE.

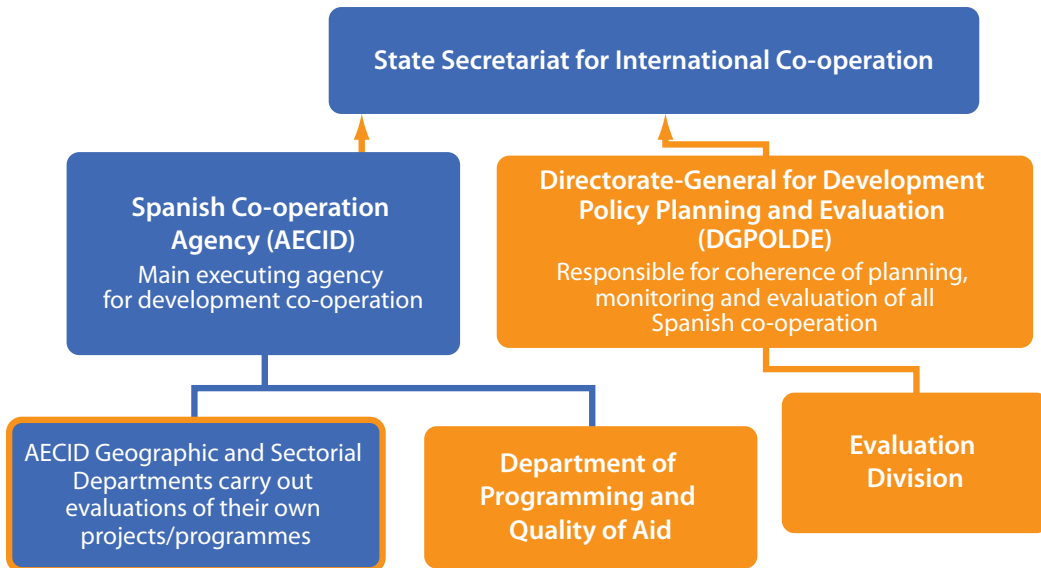
In addition to the strategic evaluations undertaken by DGPOLDE, line units programme and carryout project and programme evaluations of their own activities. The Evaluation Division of DGPOLDE compiles and shares these evaluations and offers methodological support.

#### *Independence*

The Evaluation Division of the DGPOLDE is a separate entity, independent from the planning department of DGPOLDE and from implementing departments and involving different staff. The Co-operation Council, a consultative body comprising representatives of the General Administration of State and civil society, provides input on the evaluation policy. It is envisaged that an "Evaluation Group" will be developed in the future as a reference and support to the Division. This Group will include the main agents in evaluation of Spanish co-operation.



### Summary of the institutional set-up of evaluation



### Quality

Compliance with the DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation is summarised in a final assessment form completed at the end of the evaluation process. The process is overseen by a Monitoring (or Reference) Committee, which serves a follow-up function to ensure the relevance of questions to be considered and use of the results.

There has not been a specific exercise to assess the quality of the Evaluation Division but a recent evaluation of the Second Master Plan for Spanish co-operation, looked at, among other things, the performance, trajectory, and results of the Division. Some of the weaknesses identified included difficulty in finding experts in evaluation methodology and the lack of systematised information, qualitative monitoring, or ex ante evaluation, which increase costs in time and resources for collecting information. The study also identified the need to strengthen the evaluation culture for managers and planners that use the evaluation information in decision making. Most actors are not familiar with the evaluation process or with the quality criteria or principles. The challenges in training are still significant. Finally, Spanish Co-operation is characterised by a multiplicity of actors and the participation of many actors often makes it difficult to narrow the focus of evaluation and prioritise the information needs of all stakeholders.

The Evaluation Unit advises some of the evaluation process managed by other Spanish co-operation actors, trying to respect the principles and internationally agreed quality standards. However there is no detailed information available on all the actors within the Spanish co-operation system about quality of their evaluations. As a first step, the Evaluation Unit is elaborating a resources and evaluations activities annual report.

### Co-ordination and stakeholder involvement

The Department consults relevant evaluation reports from other donors via DReC and ALNAP before planning a new evaluation, shares its evaluation programme with the Secretariat and plans to start consulting other donor evaluation plans this year. In 2009 Spain began its first joint evaluation with the EC in Senegal.

Partner country stakeholders are always involved in field visits and as members of the evaluation monitoring or reference committee. They are also increasingly involved in designing evaluations and in tracking follow-up action. The department seeks to incorporate the information needs of different stakeholders, particularly the partner country, when designing an evaluation.

The Master Plan for Spanish Co-operation identifies the need for evaluation capacity development in partner countries and the department tries to do so through the Spanish Impact Evaluation Fund (SIEF) of ten million Euros and the Millennium Development Goals Fund, though there is not an overarching strategy on capacity support. A plan has been approved to substantially increase the evaluation budget to EUR 900 000 in 2010.

### *Planning*

The DG POLDE annually sets its strategic evaluation plan, including defining a number of country evaluations to be performed. These evaluations are part of the integrated cycle of political co-operation with partner countries and are intended to complement monitoring. Planning is done in three steps. The agency is invited to suggest ideas on what should be evaluated for the year under consideration, which are considered together with the priorities of the evaluation team. A high level meeting then takes place between the Secretary of State, director of the Agency and the Director-General of the Evaluation Unit. The Secretary of State ultimately decides what will be evaluated.

### *Reporting and use*

Final reports are published, distributed widely among agency staff and management and formal presentation of the evaluation results. The head of evaluation participates in senior management meetings. At the level of project/programme evaluations recommendations from evaluations are incorporated in most of the cases. It is more difficult to achieve management response at policy level and there is no guarantee that recommendations are used for policy level decisions and planning.