Synthesis report
on independent evaluations in 2008
in the thematic priority area decentralisation
# Table of contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of acronyms</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Background, objectives and object of the synthesis report</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 For the reader's guidance</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Objectives and activity areas</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Rating according to DAC criteria</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Relevance</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Effectiveness</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Impact</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Efficiency</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Sustainability</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Synopsis of sections 3.1 to 3.5</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Rating of cross-cutting development themes</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Poverty reduction and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1 Mainstreaming in development strategies (in the field)</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Gender equality</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Effects on the partner's capacity to act (capacity development)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Concept of sustainable development</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Regional-specific and sectoral assessment</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Comparison between regional-specific and global elements – significance of the framework conditions</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Capacity development for representation of political interests (consensus building and decision-making) in the decentralisation process</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Partnerships based on a multi-level approach</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4 Involvement of non-governmental actors (civil society and private sector)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Mode of delivery, programme design and cooperation arrangements</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Contract and cooperation management</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Summary of conclusions and lessons learned</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1 Cross-sectoral experience</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.2 Regional and sector-specific experience</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.3 Experience in relation to service provision, programme design, cooperation and contract management</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Recommendations</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1 Cross-sectoral recommendations</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2 Sectoral recommendations</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.3 Recommendations for contract and cooperation management and cooperation arrangements</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.4 Recommendations regarding evaluation methodology</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overviews
Overview 1: Assessment grid for DAC criteria 24
Overview 2: Ratings and weightings for all DAC criteria and countries 25
Overview 3: Average rating of the DAC criteria 35
Overview 4: Weighting of the DAC criteria 36
Overview 5: Poverty markers 37

Figures
Figure 1: Relevance 26
Figure 2: Effectiveness 28
Figure 3: Impact 31
Figure 4: Efficiency 32
Figure 5: Sustainability 34
Figure 6: Overall rating 35

Annexes:
Annex 1: Terms of Reference for the synthesis report on decentralisation
Annex 2: (Sample) terms of reference for individual evaluations in 2008
Annex 3: Guidelines on evaluating the success of projects/programmes
Annex 4: Sustainable development, GTZ’s concept - GTZ guidelines 2006
## List of acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BMZ</td>
<td>German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIM</td>
<td>Centre for International Migration and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAC</td>
<td>Development Assistance Committee of the OECD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DED</td>
<td>German Development Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>Development cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHLMD</td>
<td>Department of Human Resource Management and Development (DHRMD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC</td>
<td>Financial cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTZ</td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KfW</td>
<td>Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINALOC</td>
<td>Ministry of Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLGFC</td>
<td>National Local Government Finance Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public-private partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRSP</td>
<td>Poverty reduction strategy paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RALGA</td>
<td>Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIAM</td>
<td>Rwanda Institute of Administration and Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLGSC</td>
<td>and the National Local Government Finance Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToRs</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC</td>
<td>Technical cooperation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

In 2008, the theme of decentralisation was selected as one of two thematic areas to be examined in the independent evaluations conducted each year since 2005. 14 development measures were evaluated, of which:

- 12 are interim evaluations (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, the Philippines, Rwanda, Serbia, and South Africa);
- two are final evaluations (Chile and Malawi).

This synthesis report was commissioned in order to encourage the addressees to make increased use of the evaluations' findings and the lessons learned, identify factors of success and failure, and draft relevant recommendations. The report focuses on sectoral issues, while issues related to evaluation methodologies are not dealt with extensively.

The results reflect the assessment of the fourteen evaluation reports. As the evaluations investigated a limited random sample, the results cannot claim to be representative of all decentralisation measures, although many findings will no doubt be of general interest.

Four evaluations were conducted together with the German Development Service (Cameroon, Malawi, Rwanda, South Africa).

The fourteen development measures were uniformly assessed based on the following OECD/DAC criteria:

- **Relevance** refers to the extent to which the objectives of the development measure match the needs of the target groups, the policies of the partner country and partner institutions, the global development goals and the German Government's basic development policy orientation. (Are we doing the right thing?)

  With an average rating of 2.1, all development measures were considered to be successful as regards 'relevance'. One development measure was rated as very good (1), 11 as good (2) and two as satisfactory (3).

- **Effectiveness** classifies the extent to which the direct results (objectives) of the development measure are being achieved (comparison of actual situation with targets). (Are we achieving the objectives of the development measure?) This assessment focuses on the 'results indicators' outlined in the project/programme design (offer).

  In 86%, or 12 of the 14 projects/programmes, the degree of objectives achievement was regarded as successful (average rating of 2.3). One development measure received a rating of very good, seven were considered good, four satisfactory and two as unsatisfactory (4).

- **Impact** refers to the extent to which the development measure contributes to achieving the intended overarching results. (Are we contributing to the achievement of overarching development results?)

  86%, or 12 of the 14 measures, were categorised as successful. The average rating for this criterion was 2.7. Six projects/programmes were rated as good, six as satisfactory and two as unsatisfactory.

- **Efficiency** relates to the appropriateness of the resources invested in a development measure compared to the results achieved (cost-benefit ratio). (Are the objectives being achieved cost-effectively?)

86%, or 12 of the 14 measures, were
78%, or 11 of the 14 development measures, were considered successful in terms of their efficiency (average rating 2.6). Six projects/programmes were considered good, five as satisfactory and three as unsatisfactory.

- **Sustainability** refers to the probability that the positive results of the development measure will continue beyond the end of assistance. (Are the positive results durable?)

All of the development measures were assessed as successful in terms of the sustainability of their results (average rating of 2.5). Seven measures were rated as good and seven as satisfactory.

The following table presents an overview of the ratings for the criteria relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Number of reports</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good (2)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory (3)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfactory (4)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of the overall rating, which takes account of a score and a weighting for each criterion, 10 of the evaluated development measures received an average of 'good' (2), two were assessed as 'satisfactory' (3) and two as 'unsatisfactory' (4). Altogether, twelve of the measures are therefore considered to be successful. With an average overall rating of 2.4, the five criteria were clearly rated as successful.

The following table presents an overview of the ratings for the criteria relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAC criteria</th>
<th>Average value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A comparison by evaluation type was not carried out, as the development measures for which final evaluations were conducted are also still being implemented.

Overall, the sectoral assessment of the development measures was positive in terms of the instruments and methods used. The following points (success factors) are particularly noteworthy in this regard:

- The multi-level approach plays a particularly crucial role in decentralisation measures, as these measures not only need to strengthen the provision of public services at municipal level. In many countries, they also have to build a regulatory framework and promote interaction between the different levels of government. In this context, the measures usually deal with the needs of the different levels in a flexible manner, and weight these different levels in line with the possibilities for achieving results.

- The most important success factor for incorporating locally acquired experience into national discussion processes is the provision of a clear mandate by and the coordination of activities with the partner organisation that will process this experience.
• All projects/programmes focus on capacity development. Occasionally the aspect of building institutional capacities is still somewhat neglected, however.

• The promotion of civil society at local and national level is a key success factor. Cooperation with DED has proven useful in this context. It provides intensive support to organisations, to build their institutional capacities.

• One of the most important quality characteristics of all development measures is intensive advisory services on processes between central government, local governments and the population, and on the drafting of new laws and procedures.

• Activities to strengthen the capacity for action at municipal level must help practice technical administrative procedures, implement municipal projects and ensure public accountability. Advisory content is best assessed if it can be put to direct use.

• The drafting of handbooks and guidelines together with partners facilitates the dissemination of results in areas that lie outside the direct impact area.

• The full commitment of partners is particularly important for the long-term success of development measures, as is their capacity to independently carry out activities once the measure has drawn to a close. In this regard, long-term capacity development measures for diverse institutions at meso level are particularly helpful, as is involving these institutions at an early stage, in order to systematise sporadic successes.

In addition to weaknesses in implementation, factors that restricted success in a limited number of measures include the following elements (factors determining failure):

• external events such as new elections and other political crises that cannot be influenced by the project/programme

• weaknesses in the resource base (quality and quantity of staff, funding) of state partners and statehood in general

• shortfalls in the capacities of many civil society organisations to finance and ensure the quality of their activities

• failure to recognise the role that municipalities play in promoting the local economy

In addition to the OECD/DAC criteria, overarching development themes provided further evaluation content. The following results were achieved in this context:

Poverty impacts are more marked in development measures whose design incorporates local development elements. This is mostly the case in Latin America. Only a minority of measures conducted their own poverty or target group analysis. All projects and programmes do, however, take account of the political dimension of poverty as they promote political participation in decision-making processes.

No project/programme pursued its own gender strategy; six projects/programmes did however have a gender analysis compiled. Activities do not yet take adequate account of the development measures’ gender marker.

For the most part, all development measures conformed with the three principles of sustainable development. The process orientation of projects/programmes is particularly prevalent, and all measures pursue a highly value-oriented approach. Thanks to the multi-level approach adopted, the holistic approach was implemented successfully for the most part.
The following recommendations relate to the above-mentioned weaknesses in the development measures.

- The political will and 'real' priorities of partners should be more clearly analysed and presented in the context analysis and in political dialogue.
- Expectations regarding the degree to which innovations introduced by the project can be independently disseminated by partner organisations (broad-based effectiveness) must be based on partners’ actual personnel and financial capacities.
- Policy dialogue conducted by BMZ and its efforts to unite implementing organisations through harmonized development cooperation’ should be stepped up.
- Indicator benchmarks should reflect to a more appropriate degree the actual conditions that cannot be influenced.
- More attention should be paid to long-term training for intermediaries and to the provision of systematic support to service providers who will be able to offer a viable product to local clients (municipalities) once the measure has drawn to a close.
- Activities must focus to a greater degree on financing and on the 'business model' used by civil society organisations.
- Strengthening the role that municipalities play in local economic development (and as a result, boosting municipal income) must form a key aspect of any project/programme that aims to promote capacity development in municipalities.
- The promotion of public municipal services can only be needs-oriented if it is based on a poverty and gender analysis.

The vision of German DC organisations working together harmonized development cooperation’ has not yet been achieved. Coordination processes are still too time-consuming and the implementing organisations are focused more on sticking to their traditional roles and work cultures than on achieving this new ideal.
1. Introduction

1.1 Background, objectives and object of the synthesis report

GTZ extended and optimised its evaluation system in 2005, the major innovation being the introduction of independent evaluations on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Each year since then, GTZ has commissioned about 30 independent evaluations (interim, final and ex-post evaluations) of thematic priority areas. One of the two priority areas examined in 2008 was decentralisation. The use of binding evaluation criteria that are geared towards those of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), along with a uniform assessment grid, enable comparison of the evaluations.

The Evaluation Unit commissions independent research institutes and consulting firms to conduct these evaluations of selected GTZ projects and programmes in order to review them from an external perspective. These institutes and firms in turn contract the services of one international and one national evaluator from the partner country.

Once the Evaluation Unit has accepted the evaluation reports submitted, it arranges for a synthesis report to be compiled for each thematic area (a comparative study of the evaluation reports). The results of the synthesis report serve to promote institutional learning at GTZ and the German Development Service (DED), and can be used in knowledge management and in reports to BMZ. The reports are also made available on the GTZ website and can be used for PR activities.

This synthesis report focuses on:

14 evaluation reports from 2008 on the priority area 'Decentralisation':

- 12 of these are interim evaluations (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, the Philippines, Rwanda, Serbia, and South Africa);
- two are final evaluations conducted six months before or after the end of the programmes (Chile and Malawi).

No ex-post evaluation was conducted as the requirements for conducting such an evaluation (evaluation conducted between two and five years after the measure has been completed) were not fulfilled in the priority area under review. In many countries, development cooperation has only started to work on the theme of decentralisation relatively recently, which explains why so few final evaluations were conducted.

This synthesis report aims to:

- summarise the results of the 14 individual evaluations;
- identify recurring strengths, weaknesses, factors determining success and failure and the underlying reasons;
- identify cross-project/programme lessons learned and recommendations;
- promote the increased use of evaluation findings by addresssees and actively incorporate these groups into the evaluation process.

Detailed Terms of Reference (ToRs) are attached in Annex 1.
1.2 For the reader’s guidance

This synthesis report is broken down into sections, in line with the report structure provided by GTZ’s Evaluation Unit, and a series of key questions on each section. The report on the cross-sectoral evaluation of private sector development in the steel industry, conducted in 2007, was also used as a guideline.

In order to ensure that the results of the evaluation reports on the priority area of decentralisation are objective and comparable, all evaluation teams used identical ToRs and a standard, annotated structure. Despite this, and despite GTZ’s best efforts to ensure quality, the TORs and key questions are open to subjective interpretation. Even the sections that assess the development measures using the five DAC criteria are open to a degree of interpretation that makes it difficult to conduct a comparative analysis. The subjective interpretation of the author of this synthesis report also comes into play, particularly given that he conducted two of the fourteen evaluations himself (Cameroon and Malawi), and is very familiar with two further measures evaluated (Burkina Faso and South Africa). Despite all efforts to be objective, this imbalanced knowledge of the details of the projects and programmes evaluated has inevitably influenced the presentation of the findings. For example, the author frequently provides anecdotal examples from the projects and programmes mentioned above. His lack of background knowledge of the projects and programmes evaluated in Latin America meant that these findings were not assessed in the same degree of detail.

Furthermore, it must be noted that the list of key questions for the section on the sectoral assessment of projects/programmes was very long (more than four pages) when compared with the space available in the evaluation reports (no more than five pages). It goes without saying that the evaluation reports weight the individual questions very differently. The sectoral assessment section is the most important source of answers to the key questions for Section 6 of the synthesis report.

This report aims to assess the evaluation reports, above all from a thematic point of view. In line with the requirements stipulated by the Evaluation Unit, the evaluation reports focus on the results actually achieved rather than on a detailed description of activities. This further restricted the informative value of the evaluation reports as regards the sectoral issues raised in this report.

Issues related to the evaluation methods used are not the main thrust of a synthesis report. If methodological aspects impinge on the informative value of the evaluation reports and limit this report’s ability to analyse and summarise findings, this is pointed out. The author tried to deal with evaluation methodologies separately, which is not always possible or expedient, however, and methodological aspects may sometimes be included in the sectoral assessment. Section 9.4 of this report summarises the methodological observations as regards the conclusions.

In all development measures, the evaluation was based on the ongoing phase. In other words, the indicators to be rated are taken from the current offers.

The evaluations in Chile and Malawi were designated final evaluations. At the time the evaluation was conducted, however, the programme in Chile was in the last month of the current implementation phase. The rationale behind the evaluation approach used in Malawi was that the end of the first phase (evaluated here) marked a clear juncture in the design

---

1 In some cases, the evaluators made minor changes to the indicators.
that justified conducting a final evaluation at that point in time. The programme in Malawi did, however, continue under the same name with almost identical objectives.

As only two evaluations were not designated interim evaluations, this report avoids comparing findings by evaluation type.

Four of the fourteen evaluations were conducted as a joint evaluation by DED and GTZ. This was a new feature of the evaluation programme in 2008. Although this report includes the additional details from the four reports in appropriate sections, it is not a joint report by DED and GTZ.

Section 6 of this report analyses differences and similarities between specific regions. The regional aspect is also addressed in other sections, however. Six of the evaluated reports deal with projects/programmes in Africa, five with Latin America, one with Europe and two with Asia. It is evident however, that a very limited random sample is used and that all statements related to specific regional aspects must be viewed with caution. As the author works mainly with measures in Africa, his regional subjectivity, albeit unintentional, also comes into play here. The author hopes, however, to have nevertheless highlighted any regional differences. Within the group of African countries reviewed, a key distinction must be made between South Africa and the other countries evaluated. The term 'typical African countries' refers to the majority of African countries. This term is not intended to classify these countries. It merely demonstrates that they share certain similar characteristics that allow them to be classified as a group, characteristics that South Africa does not share, mainly for socio-political and economic reasons.

According to GTZ terminology, what was formerly known as a ‘project’ or ‘programme’ is now referred to as a ‘development measure’. For stylistic reasons, this report uses the (hopefully unobjectionable) term ‘project/programme’ as a synonym for the official term ‘development measure’.

This report also uses the term ‘component’ to describe activity areas of projects/programmes. For measures that are classified as programmes, this term refers to the component structure described in offers. For projects, however, it refers to their thematic areas, which were derived from the planned results and indicators.
2. Objectives and activity areas

The following sections provide a brief description of the fourteen evaluated development measures. The descriptions are based on the information provided in the offers and in the evaluations on the context, the core problem, the objectives, the methodological approach, the target groups and intermediaries.

**Bolivia: Decentralised Governance and Poverty Reduction Support Programme, interim evaluation**

Term: January 2002 to December 2011, estimated overall DC contribution: EUR 90,500,000

Bolivia returned to a democracy and a market economy in the mid eighties. An ambitious reform programme was started, followed by decentralisation measures, announced in 1994. The first prefecture elections were held in 2005. In 2006, a constitutional reform process was introduced, and the National Development Plan published in 2007. The new Plan targets comprehensive social changes that support poor indigenous groups which account for the majority of the population. Territorial, political and social cohesion in Bolivia is still at risk, however, and the country’s ability to implement ambitious new policies is significantly hampered. Shortfalls in the political, normative, institutional, personnel and economic framework in Bolivia give rise to political and social conflict, which considerably weakens democratic governance, the legitimacy of the political system, and public administration (core problem). A key challenge (particularly given the radical nature of the government’s new reform programme) lies in the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

The programme’s overall objective is: Democratic governance, the quality of public administration and the legitimacy of governmental action is strengthened and implementation of the National Development Plan is facilitated. The programme is made up of five components: (1) decentralisation; (2) institutional reform and citizen participation; (3) social equity; (4) crisis prevention and conflict management; (5) the constitutional reform process. The programme evolved from the pooling of 10 individual measures. The German contribution covers sectoral, methodological and process advice to partner institutions, along with mediation and training. It covers advice on drafting policies, reforming the constitution, improving the efficiency of public administration, promoting social concertation and dialogue processes, and supporting social equity, especially among the poor and particularly disadvantaged sections such as women, indigenous groups and young people.

The target group is the entire population of Bolivia, particularly those living in the priority areas assisted by German DC. Selected municipalities, corresponding special-purpose and umbrella associations, diverse ministries and other governmental organisations and civil society institutions act as intermediaries.

**Burkina Faso: Decentralisation and Municipal Development Programme, interim evaluation**

Term: January 2005 to December 2017, estimated overall DC contribution: EUR 25,000,000

In 1991, decentralisation was enshrined in the constitution as one of the principles of building statehood. However, the government did not draft decentralisation guidelines until 1998. These were replaced by a decentralisation act in 2005. Whereas urban municipalities were
set up as early as the nineties, rural and regional municipal authorities were only established in 2006 when a decentralisation strategy that was discussed and agreed with the donor community was also adopted. However, decentralisation reforms are only progressing slowly. Public participation in development processes and the performance capacity of local self-governance were limited by a lack of understanding among participants regarding their respective roles, and regarding standards and procedures for local governance (core problem).

The programme’s overall objective is: Within the framework of decentralisation reform, the population gradually participates to a greater degree in the reform process and municipal authorities increasingly offer improved public services. The programme is a cooperative programme between GTZ, Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) and DED. It is made up of the following three components that pursue a systemic multi-level approach: (1) Management of decentralisation reform (macro level); (2) regional planning and cooperation (meso level); (3) strengthening local administrative structures (micro level). In addition to advisory services at the central level, the implementation measures focus on the priority regions in the south-west and east of the country that are assisted by German/Burkina Faso DC. Components of promotion cover sectoral and organisational advice, process advice, training measures, dialogue forums and workshops. The development measure followed on from a project to devise steering instruments and build actors’ capacities. GTZ provides support for designing a national capacity building strategy for municipalities, to enable them to take on responsibility for investment projects.

The target group is the entire population of Burkina Faso, above all the citizens of municipalities in the priority regions supported by DC. Intermediaries include the national and deconcentrated authorities of the interior, finance and economic ministries, the permanent fund for community development - FPDCT, the municipal umbrella organisation, municipal authorities in the priority regions supported by DC and private service providers.

Chile: Decentralisation and Regional Development Programme, final evaluation

Term: January 2004 to December 2008, estimated overall DC contribution: EUR 8,000,000

Since 1990, Chile has pursued a policy to modernise the state by establishing democratic and efficient institutional structures for stable economic development. Up to 2006, only gradual progress was made in shifting responsibility to subordinate government and administrative structures. This changed with the change of government in 2006. Activities to promote the regional level are incoherent and this, teamed with the limited institutional competencies of regional governments and administrative structures, means that efforts to build the performance capacities of regional governments lack effectiveness (core problem).

The programme’s overall objective is: The Chilean Government’s policy to promote regional governments is more coherent and geared towards needs. Support provided by the development measure is broken down into two components. Component 1 ‘Advice on regional and decentralisation policy’ aims to improve coordination of these policy areas at the central government level and to clarify the competences of the central government and the regions. Component 2 ‘Advice on integrated regional management’ is geared towards disseminating nationwide instruments and good practices used in support provided to date in the region. The programme evolved from the pooling of seven individual measures.
The German contribution involves providing advice at the central government and regional levels. Promotional components cover advisory services by international and national long-term and short-term experts on decentralisation and regional policy, counterpart training, assistance to national training programmes and support in incorporating the programme into national and international knowledge networks.

The target group is the population of Chile, particularly those living in priority regions supported by DC. Measures focus on the needs of economically disadvantaged women and youth and of indigenous groups living in settlement areas. National ministries and promotional institutions, selected regional governments, municipal associations, civil society organisations, private-sector associations and universities act as intermediaries.

Costa Rica: Local and Communal Development in Costa Rica (PRODELO), interim evaluation

Term: May 2000 to June 2010, estimated overall DC contribution: EUR 4,021,255

Costa Rica’s political landscape is still characterised in almost all sectors by a predominately centralised government. However, there is a growing awareness that the central government is finding it increasingly difficult to fulfil people’s needs as regards public services. State structures are inefficient, economic development is slow, and the country’s population is increasing, being concentrated in the region around Costa Rica’s capital. As a result, local government and the rural population are out of step with national development. Government institutions, municipal governments and civil society organisations lack the capacities required to steer local development processes effectively (core problem).

The project’s overall objective is: The quality of and access to municipal services has improved, as has the ability of actors to drive local sustainable development processes, and above all disadvantaged population groups have benefited as a result. This objective is to be achieved by measures in the following activity areas: decentralisation and municipal development, strengthening citizen participation, local economic development, environmental management and the dissemination of lessons learned. The project’s inter-institutional approach provides advice both at national level, so as to improve the political framework for decentralisation and develop instruments for participatory local and municipal development and at canton level, in order to generate positive experiences that can be replicated.

The main target group is (disadvantaged) sections of the population living in eleven representative cantons in the northern and southern regions of Costa Rica. The national municipal association, the umbrella organisation of local development organisations, the state municipality advisory institute, the audit office and the directorate for municipal and local development, which represents the interest of civil society, serve as intermediaries.

El Salvador: Advice on Municipal Promotion and Decentralisation (PROMUDE), interim evaluation

Term: July 1995 to December 2009, estimated overall DC contribution: EUR 24,400,000

Efforts to modernise government in El Salvador have so far been unable to eliminate considerable regional and socioeconomic development disparities (with high levels of poverty, particularly in rural regions). Attempts to drive municipal development and a coherent decentralisation process have come to a standstill due to political polarisation and restricted
Decentralisation – Synthesis Report

Scope for dialogue. Municipalities were not provided with the required framework to independently fulfil their administrative tasks or improve their capacities and funding. Sustainable local development is practically non-existent, as municipalities do not carry out their tasks efficiently, and are unable to take on a lead role due to structural obstacles (core problem).

The programme’s overall objective is: Municipalities steer local and regional development effectively. The programme comprises four components: (1) Policy design; (2) broad-based information management; (3) public services and (4) municipal management. A multi-level approach is used, in order to ensure that institution-building reforms at central government level will achieve the desired results in the area of direct municipal development. Key actors from the public and private sectors and civil society are encouraged to cooperate at the sub-national level (vertical networking) and are above all meant to coordinate the interests and tasks of the national, local and regional levels (horizontal networking). Linking comprehensive interventions in the La Paz region with governmental advisory services will improve the coherence of policies, which in turn will enhance the quality of planning, budgeting, and service provision by actors. This will strengthen local development and democracy.

The target group is the entire population of El Salvador, in particular those living in the La Paz region. The intermediaries are municipalities in La Paz and their associations, the ministry for housing and urban development, the social investment fund for local development, the Salvadorian Institute for Municipal Development, the National Youth Secretariat and civil society organisations.

Georgia: Strengthening of Local Self-Government, interim evaluation

Term: January 2007 to December 2012, estimated overall DC contribution: EUR 5,000,000

The normative framework for municipal self-government in Georgia was thoroughly revamped between 2004 and 2006. In 2006, territorial reforms were introduced and more than 1,000 municipalities were merged to form 70 autonomous administrative units. The role played by the regions in Georgia’s government structure remained unclear, however, and the issue of how far self-determination and autonomy will go is a potential source of considerable conflict. Actors in local government must learn to carry out their functions and tasks in ethnically diverse areas in line with the normative framework, and in consultation with the central and regional governments. Until such time as this issue is resolved, municipalities will be unable to carry out their core functions (planning, budgeting, provision of services) in an orderly and needs-oriented manner (core problem).

The development measure’s overall objective is: Municipalities perform core functions (planning, budgeting, provision of services) in an orderly, needs-oriented and transparent manner. The measure pursues a multi-level approach and aims to institutionalise interaction between governmental and non-governmental actors. Promotional components cover policy, sectoral, process and organisational advisory services by long-term and short-term experts, training measures for professionals and managers in communication, organisational development, participation and conflict mitigation mechanisms and technical matters.

The project’s target group is the population of Georgia. The Georgian Parliament’s Committee for Local and Regional Affairs, the office of the State Commission on Effective Govern-
ance, authorities responsible for local and regional development, municipalities, Georgian municipal associations and selected non-governmental organisations (NGOs) act as intermediaries.

**Ghana: Local Governance and Poverty Reduction Support, interim evaluation**

Term: October 2003 to September 2013, estimated overall DC contribution: EUR 15,000,000

Reforms to decentralise political, administrative and fiscal structures in Ghana, which have been underway since 1988, have so far been unable to achieve their objectives. These objectives are increasing public participation in political and administrative decisions, and promoting effective and efficient administrative structures that are geared towards the needs and expectations of the population. The fragmented implementation of decentralisation reforms and the lack of a clear political and strategic orientation are obstacles that prevent the establishment of a conducive framework in which municipal authorities can carry out their tasks. This gives rise to the following core problem: Municipal authorities are not able to provide the public services entrusted to them in an orderly and demand-oriented manner.

The development measure’s overall objective is: *The public services to be carried out by municipal authorities are provided in an orderly and demand-oriented manner.* The project’s methodological approach involves advising the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment (MLGRDE) and other relevant national institutions and selected municipal authorities on implementing reforms in the area of political, administrative and fiscal decentralisation (multi-level approach). The development measure assists MLGRDE by conducting organisational and process analyses to strengthen its institutional expertise for drafting and steering policies and to implement an open and consultative policy-making process that provides institutionalised and methodological support for participation by municipal authorities and civil society organisations. Activities also include advising sectoral institutions on implementing decentralisation, advising municipal authorities in selected regions on implementing their tasks, and building the capacities of civil society organisations and sectoral institutions to assess decentralisation reforms and draft further proposals.

The project’s target group are the inhabitants of four regions and the entire population of Ghana, who will benefit from improved conditions for municipal authorities. National and local decision-makers, representatives of sectoral institutions, civil society organisations and traditional figures of authority are intermediaries.

**Guatemala: Municipalities for Local Development (PROMUDEL), interim evaluation**

Term: January 2006 to December 2013, estimated overall DC contribution: EUR 11,500,000

The signing of the peace accord in 1996, after 36 years of civil war, paved the way for a process of peace and reconciliation in Guatemala. There is still a long way to go in eliminating the structural causes of conflict, however, and the legacy of the civil war continues to impinge on rule of law, policy-making and public administration. Although the legal framework for citizen participation in public affairs has improved significantly, large sections of marginalised population groups are still unable to participate in political consensus building and in economic development in an appropriate manner and to a suitable extent. In most municipalities, local governments and civil society organisations
still cannot fulfil core municipal tasks, and help shape and implement local development processes (core problem).

The development measure’s overall objective is: Together with the other levels of government, local actors jointly support municipal policies and activities that promote good governance, that significantly improve public municipal services, and that prevent and reduce the risk of natural disasters, with a particular emphasis on poverty reduction. The programme only works at local level and comprises four components: (1) Citizen participation in municipal policies; (2) citizen-oriented municipal government and management; (3) municipal services and development, and (4) communication and knowledge management. Promotional components mainly include advice on change projects, methodological and instrumental development, basic and further training measures, the development of financial incentives as cofinancing (local subsidies) for poverty-oriented projects, and finally the systematisation of lessons learned and the organisation of forums, seminars, working groups and publications to make this experience available to third parties.

The programme’s target group are the citizens of selected municipalities. Intermediaries include democratically elected local councils, municipal governments, groups and special purpose associations, national state institutions responsible for implementing decentralisation policy, municipal and rural development; civil society and private-sector organisations, training institutions and mass media.

**Cameroon: Decentralisation and Local Development Assistance Programme, interim evaluation together with DED**

Term: December 2003 to December 2015, estimated overall DC contribution: EUR 33,000,000

The government does not deal with its regulatory tasks effectively, particularly in the area of rural development. Since municipal elections were held for the second time in the middle of 2002, it has been evident that municipalities have a key role to play in local development, even if local actors do not have the resources or capacities they need to effectively plan and support development processes. The decentralisation laws passed in 2004 and the preliminary decentralisation strategy (2005 – 2009) drafted by the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation paved the way for introducing reforms. However, the political will for systematically implementing decentralisation – which would involve the comprehensive transfer of competences and, ultimately, resources – remains relatively weak. On a positive note, the aspect of decentralisation plays an important role in the revision of the national poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP), underway since February 2007, and decentralised actors are being included as key players. This shift is based on the realisation that local development potential, which ultimately will help reduce poverty, is not being adequately leveraged even though both the PRSP and decentralisation have been officially implemented for four years now (core problem).

The programme’s overall objective is: The population and decision-makers in selected regional and local authorities independently shape their own social and economic environment, and contribute to poverty reduction. The overall programme is being implemented jointly by GTZ, KfW and DED, and is made up
of five components: (1) Implementation of the national poverty reduction strategy; (2) promotion of municipal development; (3) implementation of decentralisation/deconcentration; (4) promotion of civil society (responsibility lies solely with DED) and (5) donor harmonisation, above all as regards adapting to policies, strategies and partner systems. The contribution provided by German technical cooperation (TC) covers sectoral and strategic advice, the development of decentralised municipal governments and associations and sectoral authorities. Components of support by German TC include sectoral, organisational and process advice by international, regional and local long-term and short-term experts, supplies of material and equipment, funding for training and organisational development measures for the municipal equalisation fund, the Cameroonian municipal association and the municipal training institute.

The programme’s target group comprises sections of the population in selected rural and urban municipalities in the key provinces supported by DC. The intermediaries are municipalities, the Cameroonian municipal association, the training institute for municipal personnel, selected decentralised administrative structures and provincial governments, key ministries, and coordination bodies responsible for decentralisation and the technical committee for monitoring and evaluating PRSP implementation.

**Malawi: Promotion of Democratic Decentralisation, final evaluation conducted with DED**

Evaluated term: January 2003 to December 2007, estimated overall DC contribution: EUR 7,590,000

Malawi’s first democratic presidential and parliamentary elections in 1994 heralded the start of a decentralisation process, which resulted in the holding of municipal elections in November 2000, following the ratification of the legal framework and policy guidelines in 1998. The municipal elections planned for May 2005 were postponed and had not yet been held at the time the evaluation was conducted. Currently, there are 40 local authorities that do not yet have the capacities required to adequately contribute to democratisation and poverty reduction, in their role as development actors. Neither the national institutions responsible for implementing reforms nor the local authority bodies have the capacities required to fulfil their new roles and tasks as part of decentralisation. This gives rise to the following core problem: The democratically elected local authorities do not provide demand-oriented, effective services to the population.

The development measure’s overall objective is: Demand-oriented and effective services are provided by the democratically elected local authorities to the general public. The programme comprises the following four components: (1) Local governance; (2) financial management; (3) local services and (4) management of the reform process. From a methodological point of view, the programme supports democratic decentralisation, using a systemic multi-level and multi-actor approach that combines policy, sectoral and organisational advice methods. The development measure follows on from a long-running TC project to promote democracy and decentralisation.

The programme’s target group is the Malawian public, particularly in the geographical area of intervention. At the national level, intermediaries include the ministries and institutions responsible for decentralisation and local authorities, selected training institutions, and civil society organisations. At the sub-national level, district and municipal administrations act as intermediaries.
The Philippines: Decentralisation Programme, interim evaluation

Term: October 2005 to September 2015, estimated overall DC contribution: EUR 13,000,000

The introduction of the Local Government Code in 1991 was the start of a structured decentralisation process in the Philippines. Significant difficulties are still being encountered in leveraging the benefits of these decentralised structures, however. Local authorities (at the provincial, city and community level) are frequently unable to carry out their increasing workload (for example, due to a lack of personnel and funding). Sectoral ministries do not adequately coordinate their assistance programmes, which cover social, economic development and infrastructural measures, for example, with local authorities, and the full potential of these promotional inputs is not tapped. Insufficient account is also taken of the role played by the private sector and civil society as key development partners. In general, there is a significant lack of interaction between the public and private sectors and civil society (core problem). As a result, social and economic development potentials are not adequately utilized.

The programme’s overall objective is: The public and private sectors work together with civil society in a setting that is conducive to decentralisation. The development measure pursues a multi-level approach, and covers the following three components: (1) Political decentralisation and good governance; (2) fiscal decentralisation and improved financial management and (3) institutional decentralisation and improved service provision. The programme evolved from the pooling of three previous projects. The programme strategy is geared towards the systematic linkage of policy, sectoral and organisational advice, promotion of networked interventions at the municipal and provincial levels with participation from the regional and national level, strengthening of cooperation between the public and private sectors and civil society and the promotion of social change processes that target the guiding visions of transparency, responsibility, participation and democracy. Key elements of the development measure involve supporting organisational development and quality management processes, raising the awareness of representatives from the public and private sectors and from civil society with regard to decentralisation and democratisation, training intermediaries and target groups, processing experience and ‘good practices’, developing replication mechanisms and policy and sectoral advice. Financial contributions are provided for studies, learning projects, workshops and events.

The target group are the inhabitants of partner villages, rural and urban municipalities and provinces. Intermediaries at the national and regional levels are the National Economic Development Authority, the Department of Interior and Local Government, sectoral services (such as health, water, and agriculture), provincial and municipal local authority administrations, the private sector and NGOs.

Rwanda: Programme to support decentralisation, interim evaluation together with DED

Term: October 2007 to December 2014, estimated overall TC contribution: EUR 13,200,000

Since the genocide in 1994, Rwanda is now on the path towards political stability and towards creating an enabling environment for further political, economic and social development. After a phase of consolidation, the constitution was adopted and presidential and parliamentary elections were held in 2003, and adminis-
Decentralisation – Synthesis Report

In Serbia, decisions on the fiscal decentralisation process were made without consulting the municipalities. Municipalities relied heavily on state transfers, and the lack of coordination and communication mechanisms between the levels severely restricted their decision-making powers, which diminished their sense of responsibility for their budget. As a result, they were unable to tap into potential improvements, or take account of local needs. The Law on Local Self Governments, which came into force on 01 January 2007, introduced a transparent fiscal equalisation mechanism for the first time, along with measures to strengthen municipalities’ capacities to generate revenue. The law included plans to transfer property tax assessments to municipalities in 2007, marking a key milestone in fiscal decentralisation that would have allowed municipalities to demonstrate for the first time that they were not only able to take on these new tasks, but were also able to implement them more effectively than the central tax administration had in the past. However, the political decision-making process drew to a halt and was only resumed in May 2007 when a new government was formed, and plans to decentralise property tax came to a standstill. The project’s core problem is that municipal revenue levels

The intermediaries are local councils, municipal and provincial administrations, selected organisational units at MINALOC, specific multiplier institutions such as RALGA and RIAM, civil society organisations, NGOs and private enterprises that provide advice at the municipal level, and legal bodies, particularly in the field of criminal prosecution.

Serbia: Reform of Intergovernmental Finance Systems, interim evaluation

Term: January 2006 to June 2011, estimated overall DC contribution: EUR 3,450,000

In Serbia, decisions on the fiscal decentralisation process were made without consulting the municipalities. Municipalities relied heavily on state transfers, and the lack of coordination and communication mechanisms between the levels severely restricted their decision-making powers, which diminished their sense of responsibility for their budget. As a result, they were unable to tap into potential improvements, or take account of local needs. The Law on Local Self Governments, which came into force on 01 January 2007, introduced a transparent fiscal equalisation mechanism for the first time, along with measures to strengthen municipalities’ capacities to generate revenue. The law included plans to transfer property tax assessments to municipalities in 2007, marking a key milestone in fiscal decentralisation that would have allowed municipalities to demonstrate for the first time that they were not only able to take on these new tasks, but were also able to implement them more effectively than the central tax administration had in the past. However, the political decision-making process drew to a halt and was only resumed in May 2007 when a new government was formed, and plans to decentralise property tax came to a standstill. The project’s core problem is that municipal revenue levels

The intermediaries are local councils, municipal and provincial administrations, selected organisational units at MINALOC, specific multiplier institutions such as RALGA and RIAM, civil society organisations, NGOs and private enterprises that provide advice at the municipal level, and legal bodies, particularly in the field of criminal prosecution.
are difficult to predict and there is only very limited scope for shaping and steering conditions at the local level.

The project's overall objective therefore reads: Municipal finances are based on a more reliable and autonomous basis. To achieve this objective, the measure supports the systematic exchange of information between municipal and central level (government and parliament), via the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM) as an intermediary. As pilot measures, selected municipalities are also being assisted in levying property tax. Promotional components cover advice on legal matters and organisational development, basic and further training measures, and the provision of funding.

The target group is the entire population of Serbia, who will benefit from the provision of public services. Members and staff of the SCTM (municipalities and local authorities), employees at the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, and members of parliamentary committees act as intermediaries.

South Africa: Strengthening Local Governance Programme (SLGP), interim evaluation conducted with DED

Term: March 2004 to February 2013, estimated overall DC contribution: EUR 29,000,000

Following the end of apartheid, fundamental administrative reforms assigned key tasks for social, economic and democratic development to municipalities. They are in charge of key services and infrastructure and share responsibility for solving acute problems as regards crime, eliminating social disparities, unemployment and HIV/AIDS, as part of a development-oriented government strategy. However, municipalities, which were essentially established from scratch, require significant administrative training to deal with the multitude of laws and guidelines that now exist. They lack the capacities to shape good governance, particularly in the areas of strategic and cooperative development and investment planning, the provision of socio-economic services, integrated economic development and citizen participation (core problem).

The programme’s overall objective therefore is: Municipal development is better coordinated and supported within and between the spheres of government and is geared towards balancing the interests of civil society and the private sector. The programme, which integrates five previous projects and is implemented by DED and GTZ, comprises the following five components. (1) intergovernmental cooperation and policy implementation; (2) institution building of municipal governments; (3) local economic development; (4) public participation and responsible local governance and (5) coordination of the priority area 'local governance and development'. The development measure’s key methodological element involves promoting and mainstreaming coordination and cooperation between the three levels of government together with partner organisations, along with cooperation between municipalities, the private sector and civil society. Training measures and materials are also developed, support provided for the systematic exchange of experience within South Africa and internationally, innovative approaches devised and disseminated and organisational development measures implemented.

The programme’s target group are the inhabitants of municipalities in South Africa, above all those living in the key provinces supported by DC. Partner ministries and governmental authorities at the national, provincial and district levels act as intermediaries, along with the
South African Local Government Association (SALGA), national NGOs, private and public service providers and other institutions that support municipal development.

Summary and comparison of all fourteen evaluated development measures

The following sections analyse the evaluated development measures under different formal and content-related aspects.

At the time of the evaluation, five of the evaluated development measures were in the first implementation phase (Georgia, Guatemala, Malawi, the Philippines and Rwanda), seven were in the second phase (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chile, Ghana, Serbia and South Africa) and one each in the third (Costa Rica) and fourth (El Salvador) phases.

The level of funding for the projects differs significantly. This cannot be explained by their ToRs alone. Annual TC funds earmarked in the offers for the current phase range from EUR 400,000 (Costa Rica) to EUR 4,750,000 (Bolivia). Partner inputs primarily comprise non-financial contributions of personnel and the provision of premises, not just in ‘typical’ African countries. In Bolivia and South Africa, partner inputs amount to more than EUR 1,000,000 per annum. From the very start, the programme in Guatemala was designed as a cofinancing programme together with Swedish DC. Although other combined financing measures are being carried out for specific tasks, they are not always clearly specified.

A comparison of the core problems shows that shortfalls in the performance capacity of the local self-governance bodies formed the main basis for defining the objectives system in six of the 14 projects/programmes (Cameroon, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Malawi and South Africa), and constituted a partial basis for this task in another six projects/programmes (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, El Salvador, the Philippines, and Rwanda). In the latter six projects/programmes, general structural obstacles or shortfalls in the performance capacity of government bodies and institutions, civil society and other organisations at the meso level are also identified as being part of the core problem. The core problems of the project/programmes in Chile and Serbia are very specific and relate to only one particular area of the decentralisation process (regional development and predictability of local revenue).

Four of the projects/programmes evolved from the merging of a number of previous projects/programmes, ranging from between three (the Philippines, Rwanda) and 10 (Bolivia). In six other development measures (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chile, Ghana, Guatemala, and Malawi), the offers mention relevant previous projects/programmes, some of which ran for more than 10 years.

Only two of the evaluated measures are classified as joint programmes (KV marker) with KfW (Burkina Faso and Ghana). Two of the programmes are based on a joint programme proposal drafted by DED, GTZ and KfW (Cameroon and Rwanda). GTZ works together with DED in six of the projects/programmes (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Guatemala, Malawi, the Philippines and South Africa). Here too, DED independently assists coordinated and complementary programmes in Bolivia, Malawi and South Africa, and DED experts are integrated into the component structure of the other projects/programmes.

The objectives systems (which comprise all the objectives and indicators contained in the offers) are usually geared towards the specified core problem and towards the actual conditions that apply in each case. The objectives
and components of several projects/programmes have been modified during the transition from one programme phase to the next, based on the progress made in the decentralisation process, changes to the priorities of BMZ and/or the partner country.

Eleven projects/programmes work at all intervention levels (micro, meso, and macro). One programme does not work at the local level (Chile), one does not work at the national level (Guatemala) and the measures in Cameroon, Costa Rica and Ghana have only started work at the national level in the current phase. Although the programme in the Philippines appears to successfully incorporate its experience into national debate, it does not provide direct advisory services at the national level, which is in keeping with the objectives system. Only seven of the development measure have identified anticipated results at the national level in their objectives system or specified them in the overall objectives indicators (Bolivia, Cameroon, Chile, Malawi, the Philippines, Rwanda and Serbia). The objectives systems of the other projects/programmes lie at municipality, regional or population group level. Five of the projects/programmes provide services at the national level but have not planned any results at this level in the objectives system.

Five development measures refer to ‘good governance’ in the overall objectives and indicators and the component objectives (Bolivia, Georgia, Guatemala, the Philippines, and South Africa), nine mention participation by citizens and civil society (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ghana, Guatemala, Malawi and South Africa) and eleven specifically cite improved service provision by municipal authorities (the exceptions being Bolivia, Chile and Serbia). Only four development measures allude to poverty reduction or to support for disadvantaged groups in their overall objectives and/or indicators (Bolivia, Cameroon, Costa Rica and Guatemala).

Some of the overall objectives indicators for the projects/programmes in Malawi, Serbia and South Africa relate to all municipalities in the country in question, whereas in all other projects/programmes the indicators are restricted to the intervention zone. As none of the development measures work directly with all municipalities in a country, it can be concluded that the indicators in the three countries mentioned also take account of indirect results.

In the component objectives, eleven development measures refer to targeted changes to the legal and regulatory decentralisation framework (the exceptions being Georgia, Guatemala and the Philippines). All projects/programmes are geared towards capacity development and the components of seven measures explicitly refer to the relationships between different intervention levels (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Chile, Costa Rica, Georgia, the Philippines and South Africa). Local economic development was included in the objectives system of just four development measures (Costa Rica, Guatemala, Rwanda, South Africa), though it should also be mentioned that five other countries include the separate DC priority area of economic development (El Salvador, Georgia, Ghana, the Philippines and Serbia). In three development measures, local economic development was removed from the objectives system after the first phase (Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Chile). Corresponding activities are being continued, however, as part of other components.

Two development measures each have a somewhat unusual component that evolved partly from the pooling of previous projects. The programme in Rwanda includes a component that aims to restructure the National Public Prosecution Authority, while one of the
Four of the fourteen development measures are categorised as projects and therefore do not have an explicit component structure (Costa Rica, Georgia, Ghana and Serbia). The component structure of two development measures (Burkina Faso and Cameroon) is determined by the intervention levels (micro, meso and macro), whereas the components of the programme in the Philippines are characterised by the three generally accepted dimensions of decentralisation (fiscal, administrative and political). Thematic elements determine the structure of the other projects/programmes.

In two of the development measures, the target group is the entire population of the whole country (Georgia and Serbia). Although seven projects/programmes say that the entire population is the target group, this statement is then qualified by additional remarks such as: 'particularly those living in (the) priority region(s)' (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Chile, El Salvador, Ghana, Malawi, South Africa). In the other projects/programmes, only the inhabitants of the priority region or selected partner municipalities are specified as the target group (Cameroon, Costa Rica, Guatemala, the Philippines and Rwanda). In some projects/programmes, the target group only seems to comprise population groups that will benefit from direct results, whereas others include those that will also gain from indirect results.

With the exception of Guatemala, all development measures pursue a methodological approach that plans to implement exemplary pilot measures, in order to feed experience from the local and regional levels back to the national level, and in doing so, achieve broad-based effects that extend beyond the priority region. The number of selected partner municipalities that serve as pilot municipalities is flexible. Some projects/programmes aim to provide comprehensive support to all municipalities in the priority region (for example, Cameroon), whereby the priority region serves as a pilot region.

Based on the above analysis of elements such as objectives systems and target groups, it is only possible to categorise projects/programmes to a limited extent. One programme (Chile) and one project (Serbia) clearly only deal with very limited sub-areas of decentralisation. One project (Costa Rica) and one programme (Guatemala) pursue an approach very similar to that of municipal or even rural development, and tend to overlook the national level. The other projects/programmes work to different extents at all levels and with a number of different actors, particularly state institutions, civil society organisations and municipalities. The available documents do not give any clear indication whether the projects/programmes comply with any 'ideals' of decentralisation measures. It is also not possible to clearly assess whether all development measures deal with relevant elements of decentralisation, that is, elements that correspond with the situation in the country in question.
3. Rating according to DAC criteria

The evaluations were assessed by the relevant evaluators based on the five criteria ‘relev-
ance’, ‘effectiveness’, ‘impact’, ‘efficiency’ and ‘sustainability’, which are specified by
OECD/DAC, and using the assessment grid provided (see overview 1).

The evaluator in question assigned a ‘weight-
ing’ for each criterion and gave reasons
whether the relevant development measure is
very important in the special context of the
development measure (weighting of 3), impor-
tant (weighting of 2) or less important (weight-
ing of 1). The final overall rating for each
evaluation criterion is derived from the score
multiplied by the corresponding weighting. The

‘Guidelines on evaluating the success of pro-
jects/programmes’ are attached as Annex 3.

The following sections outline the individual
ratings and weightings for the criteria evalu-
ated, followed by an analysis of the validity of
the weightings that deviate from the standard
weighting (2). Before we look at the reasons
why a measure received a particular rating, the
extent to which key questions were answered
is briefly explained. This will help assess the
comparability of the reports. An analysis of the
reasons for assigning a particular rating helps
identify factors influencing success and failure.
Methodological notes on the rating of the indi-
vidual criteria are provided at the end of each
sub-section.

Overview 1: Assessment grid for DAC criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>very good rating</th>
<th>good rating, no significant defects</th>
<th>satisfactory rating; positive results predominate</th>
<th>unsatisfactory rating; negative results predominate despite identifiable positive results</th>
<th>clearly inadequate rating; despite several positive results, the negative results clearly predominate</th>
<th>the project/programme is useless, or the situation has deteriorated on balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Guidelines on evaluating the success of projects/programmes, GTZ, p.10
Overview 2: Ratings and weightings for all DAC criteria and countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rating</td>
<td>Weighting</td>
<td>Rating</td>
<td>Weighting</td>
<td>Rating</td>
<td>Weighting</td>
<td>Rating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Philippines</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1 Relevance

Relevance refers to the extent to which the objectives of the development measure match the needs of the target groups, the policies of the partner country and partner institutions, the global development goals and the German Government’s basic development policy orientation. The overriding question is: Are we doing the right thing?

Eleven of the fourteen development measures are rated as ‘good’ (2), which is the average rating. One measure was considered to be very good (1) and two to be satisfactory (3).

In almost half (six) of the evaluations, ‘relevance’ received a weighting of ‘very important’ (3), the other eight use the standard weighting of ‘important’ (2). All reports except for one (Costa Rica) provide a reason for the assigned weighting.

The reports provide different reasons for a high-scoring weighting. For Bolivia, the high-scoring weighting for this criterion is explained by the key role that decentralisation plays in the country’s stability. Similarly, the report on Chile maintains that decentralisation provides the basis for further development. Both arguments appear valid at first, but lead to the conclusion that all decentralisation measures are likely to be particularly important. Two reports (Burkina Faso and Georgia) argue that as the development measure is still at an initial stage in the programme cycle, the orientation (relevance) is particularly important. Conversely, it could be argued that development measures that have been running for a long time are less relevant, which is unlikely to be the case. The reason given for the Philippines is that all thematic/conceptual dimensions of decentralisation are included. This reason is also less than convincing, as a good concept and the sound implementation of the development measure should be taken into account in the rating and not in the weighting.

The issues outlined in the guidelines on rating relevance are not taken into account to the same degree in all reports. In two reports (Cameroon and Malawi), international themes, standards and conventions are not mentioned. Many others only referred to these factors in passing. Almost all reports refer to country strategies, priority area strategy papers and BMZ sector strategies. Four of the reports evaluated do not explicitly examine whether the development measure is a priority for civil society organisations (Ghana, the Philippines, Serbia and South Africa). All of the reports suggest that the objectives of the development measure meet the population’s needs. The key issue of whether the development measure is a suitable means of tackling core development issues of the country in question is assessed positively in all reports.

The relevance of the development measure in South Africa was assessed as ‘very good’. The different reasons for a positive assessment of relevance are not, however, dealt with in the same detail and to the same degree of quality in all reports. The following success factors can improve the relevance of measures, for example: (1) building the capacities of local self-governance bodies is a key element of
government policy; (2) the project/programme works closely with the responsible ministry or other government commissions and bodies on implementing and further developing policy; (3) the programme concept is closely linked with the government’s strategy for implementing decentralisation, in which formal linkage plays a less significant role than content-related and organisational linkage in the reform process; (4) the programme concept is implemented in very close consultation with the partner organisation, both at strategic and operational level; (5) the programme concept corresponds to German DC priorities and values; (6) the project/programme has at least an indirect relevance to poverty reduction, which clearly strives to improve conditions for the population. A further success factor that is mentioned in other projects/programmes is (7) the very flexible design of the measures, which allows them to adapt to changes in the political and economic situation, thereby ensuring that they remain relevant.

On average, the criterion of relevance received a relatively high rating, which is to be expected, given that decentralisation can only be supported if a reform policy is already in place. In fact, even more ratings of ‘very good’ could have been expected. Although it is not directly evident from the reports, it would appear that a lack of political will and a shift in the political priorities of partner governments in several countries prevented evaluators from awarding a rating of ‘very good’. The potential of projects/programmes to meet the first four success factors depends to a large degree on how serious the partner government is about driving decentralisation reform. A lack of political will and the inadequate prioritisation of decentralisation are mentioned in seven reports (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Malawi and Serbia), although this only resulted in the rating being downgraded to ‘satisfactory’ in the case of Serbia. In Malawi, the inadequate handling of the decentralisation crisis by German DC resulted in an overall rating of ‘satisfactory’.

Therefore, the most important factor influencing failure is an inability to prioritise decentralisation and a lack of political will to reform on the side of the partner government, although all development measures do conform with the principles of official national policies and strategies. It is important to differentiate between the inadequate prioritisation of decentralisation and the complete or partial lack of political will to reform. Although governments in countries such as Georgia and Serbia may perhaps be willing to introduce reforms, decentralisation is unlikely to be a priority anywhere in times of war and general political crisis. In countries such as Burkina Faso and Cameroon, on the other hand, it is the government’s willingness to introduce reforms that is debatable. Many offers state that a decline in the partner government’s willingness to introduce reforms poses a risk. Only in the case of Cameroon is this risk mentioned in the description of the context in the offer. Regarding this factor as a risk rather than as part of the context would on the one hand indicate that in some cases the will to reform is assessed too optimistically (at least in official quarters). On the other hand, however, it could also affect the concept design, which may not be optimally geared towards achieving objectives, as it treats a key factor as just a risk and not as a criterion that shapes the context. However, no clear conclusion can be drawn from the reports in this regard.

It must also be considered in this context whether downgrading several development measures because the partner government did not prioritise decentralisation is warranted. This question arises particularly in cases where partner governments do not openly
discuss the issue, and where it is not addressed in political dialogue. As the key question for the criterion of ‘relevance’ is ‘Are we doing the right thing?’, a failure to prioritise decentralisation or a lack of will to introduce relevant reforms should not result in the rating being downgraded. The key factor should be whether the project/programme and German DC reacts appropriately to these aspects. Only the Malawi report mentions that the German side reacted inappropriately to the changing prioritisation of decentralisation, which resulted in the rating being downgraded. In Serbia on the other hand, the project’s rating was downgraded because the partner government changed its priorities, in order to deal with political crises. The project reacted flexibly in this regard and was able to design advisory services with other partners so that most of the objectives could still be achieved. As a result, the project remained relevant in a changing environment.

Given the different approaches to dealing with the criterion of ‘relevance’, it would be worthwhile clarifying the relevant criteria in the guidelines on evaluating the success of projects/programmes, and examining more closely and consistently when checking quality whether these criteria are met. The high-scoring weighting assigned to ‘relevance’ in many reports would above all suggest that evaluators deviated from the standard weighting due to a subjective conviction of the key role played by decentralisation rather than consideration of the programme-specific setting and national needs. This reduces the comparability of the project/programme ratings.

The rating assigned to ‘relevance’ should also reflect whether German DC reacts flexibly to changes in the setting, for example, the political prioritisation of decentralisation.

3.2 Effectiveness

Effectiveness classifies the extent to which the direct results of the development measure are being achieved (comparison of actual situation with targets). The overriding question is: Are we achieving the objectives of the development measure and are we using the right approach? This assessment focuses on the ‘results indicators’ outlined in the design of the development measure (offer).

Figure 2: Effectiveness

‘Effectiveness’ received an average rating of 2.3, which is lower than the score for ‘relevance’. The relevance of one development measure was rated as ‘very good’ (1), seven as ‘good’ (2), three as ‘satisfactory’ (3) and two as ‘unsatisfactory’ (4).

Three evaluations regard effectiveness as ‘very important’ (3) and weight the rating accordingly. In one case this is justified by the fact that this criterion is particularly important at an advanced stage in the programme cycle (El Salvador), in another it is argued that effectiveness is particularly important at the start of a development measure (Guatemala), and finally in the third case (Georgia), it is claimed that both ‘effectiveness’ and ‘relevance’ are the most important criteria. None of these explanations appear convincing. If effectiveness is indeed to be regarded as the most important
criterion (together with relevance), this should be reflected in the standard weighting. The timing of the evaluation in the project/programme cycle should also not affect the weighting, as during interim evaluations, future results should be assessed based on those achieved to date.

Unexpected results are not mentioned in any of the evaluations. Some reports refer to unanticipated results, but these are in fact the intended results of planned activities, and can be identified in the results chain although they are not specified in any one indicator.

The evaluations usually describe component indicators in detail (except in the case of the Philippines, where only two service packages are explained in full and all indicators are listed in a table). In eight reports (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Costa Rica, Georgia, Ghana, the Philippines and Rwanda), the evaluators rate the achievement of the programme objective based on ‘anecdotal evidence’ and a sectoral assessment, due to a lack of data (because most of the planned surveys and measurements had not yet been carried out). Two reports – Rwanda and South Africa – do not provide any information on the achievement of the overall objective. For Rwanda, this is justifiable, as only one of the two components deals with decentralisation and the overall objective is very general. In the case of South Africa, this would appear to be an oversight.

The success factors determining a high degree of effectiveness can be illustrated using the example of the report on El Salvador, which rates this criterion as ‘very good’. Some of these specific aspects crop up in all reports that positively assess the evaluated development measures. The individual success factors specified are: (1) sound and realistic planning (in particular, realistic indicators) and good monitoring, in order to deal flexibly with unplanned developments; (2) selection of an appropriate intervention zone, to ensure that staff have clear orientation, that ‘production’ objectives are transparent, that partners are clear about the prospects of receiving support, and the relationship between pilot measures and the broad-based effects is evident; (3) good intermediaries that are able to carry out and continue doing tasks independently, at least once corresponding capacity-development measures have been conducted; (4) good synergies between components and with other development measures, in order to take advantage of synergy potentials; (5) the ability to adapt flexibly to the strategies used by partners. An additional success factor that can be identified in projects/programmes assessed as ‘good’ is (6) the direct usability of the services provided, which meet the practical needs of the municipal administration in particular.

Factors that determine the failure of a project/programme can be broken down into two general categories: factors that are within the sphere of influence of the development measure (internal factors) and factors that lie outside its scope (external factors).

Internal factors that restricted effectiveness came into play in Burkina Faso, Ghana and Malawi in the form of weaknesses in the project/programme design and in the implementation of the development measure. In the case of Chile, shortfalls in the hierarchy of objectives, the inaccurate description of the context, and the unclear definition of some indicators are given as factors that influenced effectiveness.2 The evaluation of the development measure in Ghana mentions design flaws and

---

2 It is not traceable, however, why the development measure in Chile was ‘only’ rated as satisfactory. According to the report, the degree of objectives achievement was assessed as 80%, which fully corresponds with the achievement of objectives in measures rated as ‘good’.
inadequate indicators, and the Malawi report cites unclear intervention zones, or the failure to define such zones in the first place. In both cases, this resulted in a lack of motivation to improve effectiveness. Adequate account was not always taken of the lack of a clear commitment by the lead executing agencies and intermediaries at the central governmental levels (in Burkina Faso) and the complex framework (in South Africa), and the anticipated results were too ambitious as a result. In some countries, insufficient account was taken of the capacities of partner organisations to assimilate the results achieved in pilot municipalities and to sustain them on a broad-based level, which led to unrealistic expectations. Some projects/programmes touched on another reason why indicators were unrealistic (and effectiveness reduced as a result). Indicators are drafted together with partners. Whereas indicators are binding for GTZ, they rarely have the same significance for the partner side. Indicators can only be expected to have the same significance for partners in development measures that are very closely linked with partner programmes that are also independently implemented by the partner side. In other countries, indicators do not constitute part of the partners’ motivation system, and staff rarely face any consequences if objectives are not achieved. This argument is also linked with the hypothesis put forward in many projects/programmes that there is access to the political decision-making level.

However, only the report on South Africa substantiates these claims.

External factors prevent objectives from being achieved in almost all development measures. The following factors deserve particular mention: postponed municipal elections (Malawi), massive deficits in human resources at the municipal level (all African countries and Guatemala), the conflicting interests of key actors (in Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Ghana), and a lack of political will to introduce reforms (this point is discussed under section 3.1). BMZ is only considered to play a role in external factors that hamper objectives achievement in Burkina Faso and Malawi – in Burkina Faso for not providing sufficient funding to attain the objectives targeted by the development measure and in Malawi for reacting inadequately to the postponement of municipal elections. Only the Cameroon report explicitly identifies corruption as a problem that influenced failure. It is only mentioned in a few other reports in passing.

As already outlined in the section on relevance, evaluators seem to adopt an inconsistent approach to awarding a weighting that justifiably deviates from the standard value.

3.3 Impact

Impact refers to the extent to which the development measure contributes to achieving the intended overarching results and other indirect results. The overriding question here is: Are we contributing to the achievement of overarching development results?

3 This aspect could also be regarded as a weakness in planning, which would constitute an internal factor.
The average rating for impact is 2.7, which is substantially lower than the scores for relevance and effectiveness. Six development measures were rated as ‘good’ (2) or ‘satisfactory’ (3), and two as ‘unsatisfactory’ (4).

Nine evaluators weight impact with the standard value (2), four weight it as ‘less important’ (Cameroon, Georgia, Malawi and the Philippines) and one as ‘very important’ (Guatemala). In the case of Guatemala, it is suggested that the results orientation of German DC inevitably requires a higher weighting for this criterion. This argument is not particularly convincing, as it applies to all criteria and all countries. The explanation given in the other three reports that assign a lower weighting to impact – that the development measures are still at the start of the project cycle – is more credible. Conversely, it could be concluded that the programme in Guatemala (which is in the fourth phase) should actually be weighted as ‘very important’. The Malawi report assigns a lower weighting to ‘impact’, as this factor is less significant in the short term in times of political crisis (postponement of municipal elections), compared with ‘relevance’ and ‘effectiveness’.

Of all DAC criteria, ratings vary the most for this criterion, indicating just how difficult it is to evaluate the impact of ongoing development measures. None of the reports use data to measure the impact, which leads to the conclusion that no relevant data were available. Eleven reports try to assess the plausibility of indirect results, which amounts to the same thing as assessing the results chain, which was done in Section 2.2 of the corresponding evaluation report. The accounts given in the reports range from a description of the indirect results that lie close to the objectives level of the results chain (direct result), without going into any specific detail about the highly aggregated results (Bolivia), to a detailed discussion of the usability of data on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and of good governance obtained from other sources (Guatemala). Whereas the Philippines report describes a future impact at the micro level only as plausible, three reports make no mention of the anticipated indirect results contained in the results chains (Bolivia, Burkina Faso and El Salvador).

Given the lack of data on impact, all information provided is based on plausible assessments. Success factors can therefore also only be identified based on plausible assessments, which however, has already been done in the offers for the projects/programmes and will not be repeated here. Several reports describe initial indirect results that are to provide a basis for further results at a higher level. Here, the most common observation is that instruments and procedures have been included in manuals and guidelines used by intermediaries that are not directly connected with the development measure, and are located outside the priority region. There are indications, however, that this did not produce the same benefits, as the project/programme does not provide any technical support in these cases.

Consequently, it is difficult to identify factors influencing failure from the reports. The lower than anticipated rating of ‘unsatisfactory’
for the indirect results of the project in Ghana is mainly attributed to the large number of unconnected individual activities that were unable to achieve the desired results. In the case of Malawi, which received the same rating, the poor assessment is a direct consequence of the bad score for 'effectiveness'. The 'impact' rating assigned for the programme in Bolivia is surprising, however, as it is scored higher than 'effectiveness'.

3.4 Efficiency

Efficiency relates to the degree to which the appropriateness of resources invested in a development measure correlate to the results achieved (cost-benefit ratio). The overriding question here is: Are the objectives being achieved cost-effectively?

Figure 4: Efficiency

Efficiency was assessed as 'good' (2) in eight development measures, as 'satisfactory' in three cases and as 'unsatisfactory' in three others, resulting in an average rating of 2.6.

In three development measures, efficiency was regarded as 'less important', which deviated from the standard weighting. Whereas no explanation was provided for Costa Rica, and in the case of El Salvador it was only noted that efficiency is less important than effectiveness and sustainability at a more advanced stage of the programme cycle (which is understandable), it is argued for Bolivia that the increased effort required for process advice, where actors change frequently, impaired efficiency. The latter argument describes the reality of most TC projects/programmes, particularly those that pursue multi-level and multi-actor approaches, as was the case in most of the measures evaluated. As process advice is a component of all evaluated projects/programmes, the efficiency of one measure should not be assigned a lower weighting than other measures, for the purposes of comparability.

Very few development measures allow the microeconomic efficiency to be calculated. Only the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system used in Bolivia seems to enable the cost-benefit ratio to be calculated for each component, which allows the efficiency to be measured. None of the reports analyse the macroeconomic efficiency. Otherwise, the quality of the 'efficiency' criterion is assessed using the relevant key questions.

The evaluation reports correlate the microeconomic inputs with the services provided, using their own experience and expertise as a yardstick. No clear methodology is evident for assessing how efficiently results were achieved.

Success factors are not dealt with in any degree of detail; the few factors mentioned can be grouped under the category 'professional management'. Almost all reports state that the direct provision of services is cost-effective. The reports on Burkina Faso, Ghana and Malawi express certain reservations in this regard, however, as weaknesses in the management of internal decision-making mechanisms and in internal communication reduced the economic efficiency of service provision.

Cofinancing and combined financing with other donors are deemed to boost efficiency in Bo-
livia, Chile, El Salvador and Guatemala. However, none of these reports take account of the total costs, and these statements need to be reviewed.

Internal coordination between German DC organisations requires a lot of effort, and is regarded as a key factor influencing failure as it reduces the efficiency of service provision. If we regard German DC as one business in line with the principle of harmonized development cooperation, the coordination processes between German implementing organisations and with BMZ can be viewed in terms of microeconomic efficiency. In several development measures (Cameroon, Guatemala and South Africa), coordinating activities with DED is regarded as very time-consuming, and explicitly results in a poorer rating in the cases of Cameroon and South Africa. In Cameroon, the introduction of joint programme proposals did not in any way reduce coordination inputs or improve harmonisation between implementing organisations. Only a minority of development measures maintain a definite working relationship with KfW, and coordination efforts in Burkina Faso and Cameroon are regarded as significant, whereas this is not the case for Ghana or Rwanda.

In the development measures that assign components or sub-components to subcontractors, most of the reports consider the coordination effort to be disproportionately high (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chile, Guatemala and the Philippines). In the South Africa report, the lack of subcontractors is explicitly mentioned as a success factor for efficiency.

A lack of the resources required to achieve the ambitious indicators is cited as a reason for reduced efficiency in Costa Rica and particularly in Burkina Faso. Efficiency problems in Ghana are attributed to the reduction of cash funds at an early stage of the project, although personnel costs remained unchanged. In Chile, the personnel resources assigned during the first phase are considered disproportionately high. The report on Burkina Faso in particular stated that insufficient personnel resources were assigned, especially given that the programme manager was assigned donor and priority area coordination tasks, which was not planned for in the offer. In other countries, corresponding funds were secured by establishing an independent component (Cameroon, South Africa).

A number of different aspects are listed as reasons why the achievement of results was less efficient than planned. These can be categorised under the heading ‘overly optimistic planning’. The significant effort associated with pursuing a participatory and process-oriented approach is underlined on several occasions.

The arguments used to assess efficiency are often difficult to follow, and highlight the fact that issues related to the methodological approach remain unresolved. For example, it is not clear how the efficiency of the results achieved by a project/programme in a country where statehood is weak can be compared

---

4 In South Africa, however, this relates more to the structural obstacles, despite the fact that communication within the development measure was good.

5 In Guatemala, increased coordination efforts are attributed to the different working culture, despite the DED experts being integrated into the programme components.

6 The report on the development measure in the Philippines cites the cost of coordination with the partner side as the third dimension of efficiency, in addition to the ratio between inputs and outputs and between costs and benefits. Viewing coordination costs in isolation from the inputs is not very helpful and contravenes the principles of ‘total-cost’ cost accounting.
with that of a project/programme in a country where it is well developed, if the assessment does not take account of the context. In order to achieve the same results in terms of building the capacities of municipalities, the amount of effort required will vary significantly, as key conditions that already exist in countries where statehood is strong must firstly be established in those where it is not. It is not correct to use the term ‘efficiency’ to describe the differences in the inputs required. Unexpected events, for example, the appointment of a new director at the partner institution, cannot be used to justify whether a measure is efficient. If two development measures carry out the same activities and ultimately achieve the same results, the appointment of a new director in one of the measures but not in the other will require increased effort (e.g. for training) but is unlikely to impinge on efficiency.

3.5 Sustainability

The criterion of sustainability refers to the probability that the positive results of the development measure will continue beyond the end of assistance. The overriding question here is: Are the positive results durable?

Figure 5: Sustainability

Half of the evaluated development measures were assessed as ‘good’ (2) and half as ‘satisfactory’ (3) (average 2.5).

With the exception of the development measure in Bolivia, which received a lower weighting, all programmes were awarded the standard weighting (2) for this criterion. The reason given for the lower weighting in Bolivia is that processes in an ongoing development measure are not expected to be sustainable. This is not a convincing argument, however, as it applies to 13 of the 14 projects and programmes.

As none of the development measures had been completed at the time of the evaluation, sustainability could not be directly measured or analysed in any of the reports.

All of the reports use more or less the same methodology in that they rate the anticipated sustainability of the direct results of individual packages of measures based on an analysis of (i) the orientation and implementation of the relevant programme concept in terms of the aspect of sustainability, (ii) the results that have already been achieved and (iii) a risk assessment. Only the reports on Costa Rica, Guatemala and Rwanda clearly refer to the four dimensions of sustainability (economic, political, social and ecological), whereas these are only mentioned or implicitly referred to in some of the other reports (El Salvador, Ghana and South Africa).

Most of the reports cite the following success factors for sustainability: (1) consistent ownership of the decentralisation process by the policymakers and the partner institutions, citizen participation and good governance and (2) the development of long-term personnel and institutional capacities of municipalities, ministries, institutions at the meso level and the private sector (service providers). Approaches that (3) involve local institutions in standardising training measures and (4) view capacity
development as an institutional task that is based on a long-term strategy, are regarded as particularly sustainable. Additional success factors are (5) the legal and institutional mainstreaming of roles, procedures and mechanisms, (6) the active political participation of the population in local decisions and (7) scrutiny of the government at all levels by an informed public (and functioning civil society organisations). It is also evident from the reports that sustainability can be achieved if (8) development measures are designed and implemented in line with the needs of the target group. (9) Measures usually have good prospects of sustainability if key interests are taken into account, for example, in measures to boost municipalities’ income. Some reports also regard (10) local economic development as a key success factor for sustainability as this helps municipalities to secure income to carry out their tasks. The evaluation reports reveal that (11) a multi-level and multi-actor approach is vital if measures are to be sustainable.

One frequently mentioned factor influencing failure is the lack of funding available to partners, so that they can sustainably use the capacities and instruments developed. This aspect is most frequently discussed in the context of municipal planning (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Malawi and South Africa).

Most reports view the unpredictability of political processes – which can result in the replacement of elected officials and their public servants at all levels – as posing a significant risk to the sustainability of capacity development. This risk is particularly serious in countries in which both the quality and quantity of personnel resources is unsatisfactory.

The inability of central governments to consistently prioritise decentralisation and eagerly drive reform is cited as the key reason for downgrading measures to ‘satisfactory’ (in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Guatemala and the Philippines).

3.6 Synopsis of sections 3.1 to 3.5

In terms of the overall rating, which takes account of a score and a weighting for each criterion, 10 of the evaluated development measures received an average overall rating of ‘good’ (2), two were assessed as ‘satisfactory’ (3) and two as ‘unsatisfactory’ (4). Altogether, twelve of the measures are therefore considered to be successful on the whole. With an average overall rating of 2.4, the criteria were clearly rated as successful.

Figure 6: Overall rating

Overview 3: Average rating of the DAC criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAC criteria</th>
<th>Average value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The reports on Ghana, Rwanda, Serbia and South Africa assign the standard weightings to all criteria.

### Overview 4: Weighting of the DAC criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Average weighting</th>
<th>Deviation from the standard factor of 2 (number of reports)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 – less important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Relevance and effectiveness receive a significantly higher weighting than the other criteria. However, the reasons given for the deviant weightings for either relevance or effectiveness do not appear convincing. The justification given for other non-standard weightings also lacks credibility. The low weighting awarded for 'impact' is rather more credible.

According to the guidelines on evaluating the success of projects/programmes (see Annex 3), a project/programme can only be assessed as 'successful' if the criteria of 'effectiveness', 'impact' and 'sustainability' are rated as at least 'satisfactory'. If this is not the case, the entire project/programme is downgraded to 'unsatisfactory'. Only the development measure in Ghana was downgraded in line with these guidelines because the 'effectiveness' and 'impact' were assessed as 'unsatisfactory'. The development measure in Malawi received an average rating of 'unsatisfactory', without downgrading.

Only one rating assigned in the Chile report is not transparent. Although the report states that the average degree of objectives achievement is over 80%, effectiveness is only rated as 'satisfactory'. The ratings assigned for the efficiency of results achievement cannot always be corroborated, as different concepts are used. Although the information provided on sustainability is traceable in all cases, a comparison shows that the same arguments are used for different ratings.

No assessment is made based on the evaluation type, as all projects/programmes were still being implemented at the time of evaluation.
4. Rating of cross-cutting development themes

4.1 Poverty reduction and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

4.1.1 Mainstreaming in development strategies (in the field)

All affected countries have committed to achieving the MDGs. In Serbia and Chile, poverty reduction is not a priority for the government however, and it has not been incorporated into planning. The report on the development measure in the Philippines does not refer to any government PRSP. For all other countries, the mainstreaming of the development measure in the corresponding national PRSP is either justified by (i) the hierarchic assignment of decentralisation policy to a poverty strategy set down in a PRSP or by (ii) a clear link between decentralisation and ongoing government programmes that are very relevant to poverty reduction (growth strategies).

The mainstreaming of the development measures in the relevant poverty reduction or development strategy is also reflected in the corresponding programme objectives, component selection and overall objectives indicators. Only two development measures (Costa Rica and Guatemala) have overall objectives that directly address poor groups. Four development measures have objectives systems that include economic aspects of poverty (Bolivia, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala).

The political dimension of poverty is taken into account in the objectives systems of eleven development measures in that public participation (usually by disadvantaged groups) in political processes is mentioned as an objective or an indicator (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ghana, Guatemala, Malawi, the Philippines, Rwanda and South Africa).

A clear trend can be observed: development measures in Latin America tend to also take account of the economic dimension of poverty in their objectives systems, and almost all development measures (with the exception of Serbia) regard political participation as a key element of decentralisation reform, and include this aspect either in their objectives system or at least in their activities.

4.1.2 Poverty marker used in the offers and its distribution

Twelve of the evaluated development measures were assigned the marker MSA (comprehensive poverty reduction at the macro and sectoral level), one (Serbia) was categorised as EPA (general development approach) and one (Guatemala) as SUA (other direct poverty reduction especially basic social services). Only six evaluation reports specify the marker and comment on its appropriateness (Bolivia, Cameroon, Chile, Georgia, Ghana and Malawi).

Overview 5: Poverty markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marker</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSA: Comprehensive poverty reduction at the macro and sectoral level</td>
<td>The target group cannot be delineated and can only be reached indirectly via long results chains; the poor will draw significant benefits from indirect results of the project/programme; the project/programme improves the living conditions of the poor and promotes their productive potential; key mechanisms for involving the poor in the political process are in place; the results chain between the project/programme and improving living conditions of the poor can be developed and is plausible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPA: General development approach</td>
<td>Criteria are only partially fulfilled or not at all, pro-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
jects/programmes are eligible for promotion based on general development-policy considerations.

**SUA:** Other direct poverty reduction, especially basic social services: The target group can be reached directly, via short results chains; the proportion of poor people in the target group is at least 50% or at least the proportion of poor people in the region’s population (no less than 30%); the project/programme improves the living conditions of the poor and develops their productive potentials; the poor are involved in the project/programme and identify with it; local conditions in the project environment enable a poverty-oriented approach to be adopted.

The marker EPA is assigned to the development measure in Serbia, which is realistic given that poverty aspects were simply not included in planning.

All other development measures work on participatory planning procedures and many also conduct activities that are directly geared towards improving the living conditions of people in the municipalities. These are often conducted as pilot activities, however, and do not target any broad-based, direct results in terms of poverty reduction once they have been completed. The marker MSA appears appropriate in development measures that do not provide any direct, poverty-reduction inputs, and are only designed to improve governance through political participation and the structural effects of decentralisation (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Malawi, Rwanda and South Africa). The programme in Chile was also categorised as MSA, however, despite the lack of a national poverty strategy and an obvious poverty orientation.

In Georgia, services are geared primarily towards the meso and macro levels and do not include measures to improve public participation in political processes. In this project, the results chain is significantly longer than would be expected for the marker MSA. This development measure should therefore have been assigned the marker EPA, like the programme in Chile. The report on the Philippines maintains that there is no link between the development measure and poverty reduction, but nevertheless considers the marker MSA as appropriate. This case seems similar to that in Georgia, and the marker EPA would have been more appropriate.

The development measures in Costa Rica and El Salvador were classified as MSA, which the reports regard as justified. However, compared with other development measures (particularly the one in Guatemala, which was categorised as SUA), and considering the fact that a relatively high proportion of the outputs target direct results in terms of poverty reduction, the marker SUA would seem more appropriate. In both development measures, poverty orientation also constitutes a cornerstone of the rationale for rating/weighting the ‘relevance’.

Only the development measures in Bolivia, El Salvador and Guatemala base their activities on a poverty analysis. A differentiated target group analysis is only available for El Salvador and Guatemala, whereas partial analyses were only conducted as required for Costa Rica. No poverty analyses or differentiated target group analyses were compiled for the development measures in Africa. A shift away from direct, poverty-oriented outputs (in line with local economic development, for example) and towards structural aspects of poverty is evident, and is supported by BMZ. This is reflected in the strong alignment of almost all development measures with political participation, particularly in the area of participatory planning, but also as regards consolidating civil society’s control functions. Reducing structural poverty through decentralisation is widely recognised as requiring a long results chain, however, and
it will be difficult to provide evidence of an indirect result during the term of the relevant development measures, even if this result is plausible.

As this trend restricts the implementation of direct poverty-reduction activities, it is unrealistic to expect that the poverty impacts could actually be proven at the time of the evaluation. In cases where development measures only implement limited pilot measures, the direct result will be minimal anyway. If pilot measures cover all municipalities in the priority region, however, significant – and therefore verifiable – poverty impacts should be achieved. In cases where TC works together with FC on establishing infrastructure for the provision of basic services, a contribution to poverty reduction can be attributed to TC. Unfortunately, information provided in the reports in this regard is sketchy, and is not detailed enough to allow a credible analysis to be compiled.

Only the objectives systems in the following South American development measures take account of equitable distribution by favouring disadvantaged groups: Bolivia, Costa Rica, Guatemala (here, only improved access to municipal services for disadvantaged groups). None of the reports deal in detail with this theme in terms of the redistribution of income. The measures listed above also conducted a detailed poverty analysis (see Section 4.1.1.). Although none of the reports explain why no poverty analysis was conducted, given the conceptual differences it would appear that development measures that deal primarily with strengthening governance and building the capacities of administrative structures and mechanisms, and planned poverty-oriented measures as pilot measures if at all, consider a differentiated poverty analysis to be less of a priority. Rather than simply being addressed as part of other objectives, poverty reduction only constitutes an objective in its own right in decentralisation projects/programmes where decentralisation is linked with the concept of local development, which appears to be more often the case in Latin American countries.

Municipal development also has the potential to directly reduce poverty, in terms of strengthening administrative and planning capacities. However, to exploit this potential, additional investment funding is required, which TC usually does not have. The discontinuation of outputs in the area of local economic promotion as part of municipal development activities in three development measures (Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Chile) reduced this potential, as systematic support for the role of municipalities in economic development could no longer be provided. Local development plans are another key factor in taking account of the needs of poor population groups when planning public infrastructure. These plans are not just tailored towards public infrastructure, however, but (should) also incorporate significant elements that help improve the economic climate and promote private sector development, which should ultimately benefit the poor. The potential for reducing poverty is severely restricted if general economic conditions are not improved as well.

Conclusions

Twelve of the evaluated development measures were assigned the marker MSA (comprehensive poverty reduction at the macro and sectoral level) in the offer, one (Serbia) was categorised as EPA (general development approach) and one (Guatemala) as SUA (other direct poverty reduction especially basic social services). Only six evaluation reports specify the marker and comment on its appropriateness (Bolivia, Cameroon, Chile, Georgia, Ghana and Malawi).
**Poverty** reduction is mainstreamed in objectives systems to a greater degree in development measures that also incorporate local development elements. These projects/programmes are all located in Latin America, and were the only ones that conducted an independent poverty analysis. Reducing the political dimension of poverty by strengthening political participation is, however, included in the objectives systems of eleven development measures. This corresponds one-to-one with the classification of target groups in the results chains, as reducing economic poverty is always assigned to the indirect level. As regards the political dimension of poverty, most of the development measures aim to achieve direct results, by pursuing measures to promote participatory planning processes and open up municipalities to participatory scrutiny, and to some extent through civic education and awareness-raising activities. Only six of the reports discuss whether the poverty markers awarded are appropriate. In one development measure (Chile), the poverty marker assigned was too ambitious, whereas the opposite applies in two others (Costa Rica and El Salvador), particularly when compared with the only development measure that was assigned the marker SUA.

Only the objectives systems in some South American development measures take account of equitable distribution by favouring disadvantaged groups.

Very few of the development measures have a clear strategy for achieving broad-based direct results in terms of poverty reduction. Strategies for working with pilot municipalities or zones contain substantial inconsistencies and unresolved issues. Therefore, the conceptual classification of the achievement of direct poverty impacts (economic dimension) is rarely transparent and individual development measures vary. Some projects/programmes have substantial funding for activities to directly reduce poverty, whereas others lack funding or are unable to conduct these measures. Here, it would be worthwhile clarifying the concept of ‘pilot project/municipality’ in relation to the concept of ‘priority region’.

### 4.2 Gender equality

Thirteen of the evaluated development measures were assigned the marker G-1, and one was categorised as G-0 (Serbia). Whereas 11 reports mention this marker, only three explicitly state whether the classification was appropriate (Bolivia, Guatemala, and Serbia). However, it can be implicitly concluded from the other reports that all of the markers assigned are regarded as appropriate from a conceptual point of view.

In four development measures, a gender analysis was carried out at the start (Bolivia, El Salvador, Georgia, the Philippines). In two measures, a corresponding study was carried out at the time the evaluation was conducted (Burkina Faso, Ghana). None of the reports mention a separate gender strategy.

An analysis of the overall and component objectives and of the indicators at both levels shows that the objectives system of two development measures does not take any gender aspects into account. This would appear justifiable for Serbia (a project progress review conducted in 2007 also found that a G-0 classification was the only option), but this is difficult to comprehend in the case of Rwanda.

---

7 According to the guidelines on AURA offers, in cases where the marker G-1 is assigned, the contribution to gender equality should be anchored in one of the indicators at the overall objectives level, in the phase objective, or in one of the component objectives and its indicators.
Only two development measures (Ghana and Malawi) identified the number of gender-differentiated impacts in the indicators. In two other measures, gender is regarded as a qualifying aspect: two indicators of the programme in Chile take account of sound, ‘gender-responsive’ planning practices, and in South Africa, gender is to be taken into account in municipal development plans. The project in Ghana has adopted one of its gender mainstreaming indicators from national directives.

Four programmes contain indicators that lean more towards the aspect of promoting women and identify specific target values for elements such as increasing the proportion of women involved in municipal councils (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, El Salvador and Guatemala).

In four more projects/programmes, the only indication that gender is taken into account in the objectives system is that the word ‘women’ is included in at least one of the indicators (Cameroon, Costa Rica, Georgia, the Philippines). However, this can hardly be considered as evidence that the objectives system is gender-differentiated, even if all relevant indicators are to be measured on this basis.

According to the evaluation reports, the implementation phase of eight development measures substantiated the gender marker assigned. This usually means that, in the majority of measures, gender aspects are taken into account by selecting training participants based on their gender, among other things, and by including specific mechanisms above all in development planning procedures, for example. None of the reports mention whether these elements, which are located at the output level, also produce results in the area of gender equality, as no gender-differentiated monitoring system is in place.

Cameroon, El Salvador and South Africa are cited as examples of development measures where gender aspects have been particularly systematically integrated into the project/programme design. In Cameroon, it is interesting to note that a gender training unit has been systematically integrated into all training measures by private service providers and civil society organisations, and the implementation of measures is monitored, to ensure that gender aspects are included. Almost all development measures held specific courses on gender, although the reports do not provide any conclusive information on the results of these measures. As none of the development measures has a gender-oriented M&E system, gender impacts are usually not documented.

In Bolivia, Cameroon, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador and South Africa, structural results are observed in cases where the development measures helped ensure that gender aspects were incorporated into handbooks and guidelines at the national level, or where explicit gender guidelines were drafted. Gender aspects were usually incorporated into planning guidelines, general directives on dealing with gender at the municipal level (South Africa) and in the context of helping to draft the national policy on equality (Bolivia). It is also claimed, however, that the development measure in Bolivia still sticks too rigidly to a conventional approach to promoting women, a point that is implicitly referred to in other reports too. The development measures that do not merit the marker G-1 are considered to pursue an unsystematic approach and implement one-off actions in a 'mechanical' manner. The report on Rwanda does not provide any information on gender aspects in the activity area of decentralisation.

Nine reports provide information on the integration of gender aspects in projects/programmes, which in most cases equates to gender differentiation at personnel level. This would indicate however that the
measures are aligned with GTZ’s internal equality guidelines, rather than with a gender mainstreaming approach. Gender differentiation among programme staff was only negatively assessed in Bolivia. A gender officer was appointed in four development measures. This is portrayed in slightly more negative terms in the report on Burkina Faso as other staff members feel they are no longer responsible for gender issues. The other reports (Chile, Costa Rica and South Africa) seem to implicitly assess the appointment of a gender officer positively.

A comparison of the integration of gender aspects into the objectives system and an assessment by the evaluators shows that integrating gender aspects into the objectives system will by no means guarantee gender-oriented implementation. Neither will appointing a gender officer. Active and target-oriented support from the project/programme manager is vital for gender-oriented implementation.

Conclusions

It is clear from all reports that the appropriate gender markers were assigned. Three projects/programmes underline the systematic integration of gender aspects. Structural results are identified in six countries where the development measures played a part in having gender aspects included in handbooks and guidelines at the national level. Overall, however, there were some significant shortfalls when it came to taking account of gender aspects: (1) A gender analysis was only available at the start of four development measures, whereas an analysis had just been conducted in two of the measures; (2) none of the development measures had a separate gender strategy; (3) only eight of the 13 development measures fulfilled the criteria of the G-1 marker they were assigned; (4) no development measure has a gender-oriented monitoring system; (5) assigning project/programme-specific gender officers is only successful if they have unwavering and constant support from the project/programme manager.

4.3 Effects on the partner’s capacity to act (capacity development)

It is difficult to judge how the reports rate the effect of development measures on the partners’ capacity to act, as no report provides an overall assessment of this aspect. Section 3 of the report on Costa Rica did not provide any details in this regard, making it even more difficult to assess the effects. As a result, the author of this synthesis report has tried to form an overall assessment using the information provided in Section 3 and in other relevant sections of the reports, but is aware of the risk of misinterpreting this information.

Only those development measures that acted at all three levels (micro, meso and macro), and targeted specific results as regards boosting the capacity to act at both the individual and institutional level, received a good overall rating. Four development measures received an average overall rating of ‘good’ (Cameroon, Guatemala, Rwanda and Serbia), eight of ‘satisfactory’ and two of ‘unsatisfactory’ (Burkina Faso and Ghana).

Although all development measures conducted capacity development measures, it is not always clear from the reports which measures drafted a capacity development strategy. In order to present a differentiated assessment of the evaluation results, the following sections first look at results at the micro level (municipalities and grassroots organisations, including local civil society organisations). An assessment of the meso-level results (municipal associations, training institutes, provincial and regional governments and administrations, for
example) is then provided, followed by the results at the macro level (ministries and legislative institutions responsible for decentralisation and municipalities).

In all development measures except for Burkina Faso and Ghana (and Chile, where the programme did not intervene at the municipal level), there is evidence that the capacities of the municipal administrations were strengthened at the micro level. In all cases, this was initially achieved by building the individual capacities of staff at partner organisations. Several reports also show how the control functions of the population and civil society were strengthened (in Bolivia, Cameroon, El Salvador, Georgia, Guatemala and Rwanda). On several occasions, it is stressed that longer support processes are required, in order to safeguard this improved capacity to act, particularly in cases where there is a wide gap between the initial and the target situations and where the idea of local self-government with citizen participation still lacks a solid footing, as is the case in all African countries (except for South Africa). Only some of the reports adequately explain the extent to which assistance is geared towards supporting the relationship between the municipal council and the municipal administration. The reports attribute the unsatisfactory average rating received by the development measures in Burkina Faso and Ghana on the one hand to a tendency to implement unrelated one-off activities, which allow little scope for conducting a continuous advisory process, and on the other to the fact that individual capacity-building measures did little to improve municipalities' capacity to act. In Africa in particular, the poor educational background of municipal staff and the lack of resources for municipalities are viewed as problematic. In several development measures, the high turnover of municipal staff is regarded as a significant obstacle for successful and sustainable institutional capacity development.

Latin American development measures that promote close ties between local development and decentralisation place particular emphasis on strengthening the competence of the population (for example, within the framework of social control mechanisms). The report on El Salvador expresses uncertainty about whether capacity building will be sustainable if a decentralisation law does not create the required legal framework.

All of the results relate to the municipalities of the intervention zones to which the development measures provide direct or indirect (via intermediaries) advisory services. All reports except for the one on Guatemala deal with the pilot character of measures. Only the report on Costa Rica states that neighbouring communities adopted the instruments and/or methods devised and used by the development measure, based on the exemplary character of activities in partner municipalities, and in doing so strengthened their capacity to act. Several reports point out that the experience gained in advising the development measures was used to draft national handbooks and guidelines for action for municipalities (in Cameroon, Chile, Ghana, Malawi and South Africa). The development measure in Malawi summarised experience in 'pilot municipalities' in a very systematic manner, and together with national educational institutions developed courses that are offered in all municipalities. It is clear, however, that particularly as regards municipal finances, pilot municipalities achieved significantly better results due to the more intensive support they received.

At the meso level, the picture is a lot more varied. In countries in which the entire range of decentralisation reforms is supported, municipal associations, training institutions, sectoral authorities and – where available – territorial
administrations (provincial, regional, and prefectoral) constitute key partners for capacity development. Municipal associations were assisted in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, El Salvador, Georgia, Malawi, the Philippines, Rwanda, Serbia and South Africa. In this context, good results were achieved in boosting the capacity for action in the Philippines, Rwanda and Serbia. The positive results achieved in Rwanda are attributed to the strong political will to promote municipalities and drive decentralisation, which has an effect on the entire political system. In Serbia, the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM) is the main partner, which, thanks to cooperation with the development measure, understood its role significantly better and was enabled to restructure itself and generate the resources required to fulfil its tasks. As the project in Georgia has only been running for a short time, results are still inconclusive. In Cameroon, results were mixed, whereas in Burkina Faso, El Salvador, Malawi and South Africa, no results were achieved in this context. In all of these countries just mentioned, the municipal associations experienced considerable internal problems that were not attributable to the development measure, and were also unlikely to be resolved or influenced by it.

The results at the mid level of the territorial administration are still very weak in general. In 'typical' African countries this is again due to systemic problems that are almost impossible for the development measure to resolve (resources, educational background, corruption). Educational and advisory institutions in which training modules were integrated above all into new or existing courses are mentioned as key partners in the reports on Bolivia, Cameroon, El Salvador, Malawi and Rwanda. In El Salvador, Malawi and Rwanda (here, the introduction of methodological aspects is underlined), these modules have been sustainably integrated, whereas this is not yet the case in Cameroon.

In Malawi, measures were successfully implemented to promote the Department of Human Resource Management and Development (DHRMD) and the National Local Government Finance Committee (NLGFC). The measure helped the NLGFC in particular to build its capacity to act by implementing modified methods and contents that were openly welcomed by participants. In Cameroon, an organisational development process was successfully implemented for the municipal finance fund. In Bolivia, assistance was provided to several institutions (such as the land registry); however, the sustainability of results is questionable. In Chile, advisory services were provided to the Chilean Economic Development Agency (CORFO), which only significantly benefited from the development measure once support had drawn to a close, among other things thanks to the appointment of a new director. The success of measures is frequently attributed to a highly motivated partner side, advice on specific topics which helps achieve results quickly, and intense cooperation and a trusting relationship with the partner side.

Results achieved in the context of strengthening the partner's capacity to act are weakest at the macro level. This is primarily due to the fact that this level is very politicised and that most of the development measures have significantly less scope for influence here than at other levels. Although efforts to promote involvement in and above all the participatory design of processes to draft new laws or procedures\(^8\) have been successful to some de-

---

\(^8\) The following development measures have a significant influence on shaping laws and national government policies: Bolivia (fiscal decentralisation law, gender policy, corruption policy), El Salvador (regional planning law, still before parliament), Malawi (capacity development policy –
gree in countries where political will to reform is weak, this can rarely be viewed in terms of boosting the involved ministries’ capacity to act. It is difficult to convince the ministries involved that structural changes are required, in order to enable the expertise acquired to be applied without external help (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana and Malawi). In the Philippines and Rwanda on the other hand, the reports indicate that measures to strengthen the capacity to act at the macro level have been very successful, thanks to the strong political will. However, no clear pattern can be identified, as progress was also achieved in cases where decentralisation was not considered a priority or the required political will was not particularly evident. Several reports note that a multi-level approach offers additional advantages in this context, as projects/programmes can feed to the relevant ministry hands-on information obtained by municipalities, information that the ministry would otherwise be unable to access as it has no multi-level monitoring systems of its own.

The situation observed in Burkina Faso is characteristic of countries with weak statehood. Here, a number of training measures were carried out for ministerial staff, but the evaluators were unable to speak with interviewees who could describe specific results or improvements.

An improvement in the capacities of the different actors to effectively shape interaction between the state, the private sector and civil society is observed – at least at the local level – in countries where participatory planning processes are supported (Bolivia, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Chile, Georgia, Malawi, the Philippines and South Africa). These were then used to establish communication channels for the first time. However, this improvement is often only observed at the local level (and at the regional level in Chile), and in countries with little funding of their own it depends on the financial aid provided by donors for the planning process (which was the case in all African countries except for South Africa). Only the development measure in the Philippines is regarded as having helped the government to move away from a supervisory role and step up its function as intermediary. The measures in Cameroon and Rwanda assist umbrella associations of civil society organisations. Here, joint support provided by DED and GTZ has helped to put in place important, but as yet unsustainable (financial) conditions that will allow civil society to become a key player in policy implementation.

Conclusions

Improving partners’ capacity to act can be regarded as an ideal basis for successful capacity development at all levels (micro, meso and macro). Four development measures were therefore assessed as ‘good’, eight as ‘satisfactory’, and two as ‘unsatisfactory’.

Capacity building at the local level was geared towards strengthening individual capacities; only about half of the development measures also achieved institutional results. Intensive support to partners in applying newly acquired skills and drafting handbooks and guidelines – which allows municipalities that do not receive direct support to strengthen their capacity to act – was a key success factor. Using national training institutions also plays a crucial role in disseminating results.

At the meso level, it was only possible to strengthen the capacity to act at a minority of
the municipal associations that received support. Success factors are difficult to pinpoint, although a remarkable number of municipal associations experience significant internal shortcomings that cannot be eliminated by capacity development measures. The success of measures in other institutions often depends on a highly motivated partner side, advice on specific topics which helps achieve results quickly, and intense cooperation and a trusting relationship with the partner side.

The degree to which results are achieved as regards increased capacity to act is lowest at the macro level. This is mainly due to the fact that this level is extremely politicised and widescale improvements can only be expected where there is a strong will to reform. However, some success was also achieved in cases where political will was not very evident.

The success of efforts to build partner organisations’ capacity to act to an acceptable degree depends mainly on the initial situation of the relevant organisation/institution. Organisations that have already built a certain degree of capacities in this regard can better absorb capacity building measures and integrate them into their systems. Among partners with very limited financial and personnel resources, individual expertise can be improved, which also has a positive effect on the capacity to act. However, it is difficult to achieve sustainable improvements as these institutions often lack the funds to mainstream innovations, and stretched personnel resources are put under even more pressure by high staff fluctuation which can easily cancel out any progress.
5. Concept of sustainable development

The information provided on this topic varies to a great degree in the individual evaluation reports. In some cases, the information provided on the DAC criterion of ‘sustainability’ is merely repeated; in others a detailed account of the programme concept and corresponding project/programme measures is given which is then compared with conceptual elements of the principle of sustainable development. Given the wide variation of the information provided, the overall situation is unclear, which makes it difficult to analyse it correctly.

Holistic approach:

Most of the development measures evaluated work at a number of levels, even if the intensity of work at each level differs in some cases. Only the development measures in Costa Rica and Guatemala work almost exclusively at the local level. In Ghana, activities were only conducted at the local level during the first phase, which changed in the second phase when the local level was ignored. In Cameroon, the first phase was geared solely towards the micro and meso levels (at least as regards decentralisation), whereas the approach was expanded to incorporate the macro level in the second phase. Linking activities at the different levels does not work in all cases, for example, there was little linkage in Burkina Faso as internal mechanisms were lacking and the instruments employed were limited to capacity-building measures to strengthen individual skills.

All development measures pursue a multi-actor approach, usually at different levels. In the context of support provided to interaction processes, all participants usually receive assistance as required (advice and training), to enable them to better carry out their roles. In the programme in Cameroon, measures to promote civil society are not synchronised with measures to promote municipalities, as coordination problems exist between the implementing organisations.

All development measures link the social and political dimensions of decentralisation and development measures that advise on local development also integrate the economic dimension. The ecological dimension is only incorporated into a few development measures. Those that do include it implement local development measures (or plans) that also concern the environment (Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, the Philippines and Rwanda).

Whereas the ecological dimension of development should be addressed as a cross-cutting theme, the economic dimension must be treated as a standalone element, even if it ties in closely with the political and social aspect. Given the clear tendency to sidestep the economic dimension in decentralisation projects/programmes, the approach used cannot be regarded as holistic. Municipalities play a crucial role in local economic development, which cannot be leveraged without advisory services, however.

Only some reports provide information on combining sectoral, political and organisational advisory services. However, all three types of advice clearly come into play in almost all development measures, even if it is spread across different levels in some cases. Sectoral advice is given in all development measures (in Malawi, however, local subsidies were favoured over sectoral advice to service providers and recipients). Political advice is geared towards the municipal and national levels, although acceptance among some ministries on the partner side, which are less interested in advisory services, is not always evident.
Organisational advice is provided to civil society organisations, municipalities and institutions at the meso level. According to the reports, very little effort has been made to involve national ministries in organisational development measures.

**Process-oriented approach:**
All development measures are highly process-oriented. This is evident from participatory negotiation processes such as planning, the establishment of new procedures and exchange formats (competence transfer, municipal supervisory authority, planning, finances, and so on), the drafting of national policies and conflict resolution. These processes usually receive direct support (from own personnel or service providers) and the capacities of participants to carry out their roles are built through training and direct support for interaction processes. This approach promotes the transparency of interests and allows actors to learn in a less repressive environment, as the support provided by the relevant development measure makes it more difficult for people in positions of authority to assert themselves by exerting power rather than by using sound arguments. Only the reports on Burkina Faso and Costa Rica mention weaknesses in implementation.

Process orientation and fostering transparent decision-making go hand-in-hand. The reports on Burkina Faso and Ghana explicitly state that internal project/programme decisions are not transparent for partners, something that is mentioned in passing in some other reports. Although in some cases these claims are only an attempt to gain better access to project/programme funds, they should nevertheless be taken seriously, as a lack of transparency within a project/programme will of course affect the willingness of partners to learn.

**Value-oriented approach**
All programmes that promote decentralisation measures strive to foster essential values of German DC. These include: democracy, good governance, rule of law, public accountability, and citizen participation in political decision-making within the framework of transparent processes. In some development measures, other themes include human rights (Costa Rica, Guatemala and Malawi) and the development of a social market economy (Bolivia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Guatemala). Interestingly enough, the latter is only mentioned in Latin American development measures that focus on local development, and provide substantial support for the economic dimension of decentralisation. Only five reports mention the PD/GG-2 marker (Cameroon, Malawi, Serbia, Chile and Rwanda). Several reports refer to the problem of corruption as an obstacle to achieving rule of law (Bolivia, Cameroon, the Philippines), without identifying how the development measures react to the problem.

**Conclusions**
For the most part, all development measures conformed with the three principles of sustainable development. Some concessions must be made with regard to the holistic approach, as not all development measures deal with all levels, and the programme concept does not always include the different dimensions of decentralisation. In some countries, the project/programme concepts do not deal with the economic role that municipalities play, which does little to help consolidate 'municipality' as an administrative unit. The process orientation of projects/programmes is particularly prevalent, and weaknesses have more to do with implementation problems than with structural issues. All development measures pursue a...
6. Regional-specific and sectoral assessment

This section is based mainly on the list of questions outlined in section III of the ToRs. The information provided in the reports varies significantly, and in all cases, not enough details are provided on the key questions asked. The following sections are therefore not as detailed as they could be, given the lack of information.

6.1 Comparison between regional-specific and global elements – significance of the framework conditions

In the project/programme design, some of the framework conditions were assessed as conditions that can be influenced, while others were not. Whereas anticipated changes in the objectives, indicators and results chain are regarded as framework conditions that can be influenced, conditions that cannot be influenced restrict possible objectives achievement. The problem of the general framework definition arises from the difficulty in drawing a clear line between conditions that can or cannot be influenced. Furthermore, conditions change without any external influence, or it only emerges over time that they can (or cannot) be influenced, which can have a positive or negative effect (risks). This ‘grey area’ moves the goalposts. As mentioned elsewhere, the assumptions made during the planning stage with regards to the framework conditions in some projects/programmes were too optimistic (see Section 3.2), particularly as regards how the political sphere can be influenced.

All projects/programmes, except the programme in the Philippines, transparently reflect the framework conditions in their objectives systems, and usually in the component structure too. The development measure in the Philippines is structured in line with the dimensions of the very definition of decentralisation, which is not a very appropriate means of reflecting key framework conditions in the partner country.

Two development measures only work on a small subset of what decentralisation encompasses, because of the framework conditions, namely, both decentralisation and statehood are at an advanced stage (Chile and Serbia). The same may be said about the development measure in Guatemala, which is only active at the local level, and not at the macro level. This measure does not try to change the framework conditions, although they are regarded as doing little to successfully promote municipal development. As a result, the measure in Guatemala pursues an approach similar to a rural development programme, which involves all local actors, including municipalities. It is not clear whether this programme approach was selected in response to the framework conditions. In Costa Rica, the project concept is clearly geared towards advising the national level. However, in practice, the development measure appears similar to the one in Guate-
mala as it also primarily pursues a local development approach.

In other development measures, the framework conditions are incorporated into the objectives system as the initial context that needs to be changed and are processed accordingly as part of the services provided (see also Section 3.2 on shaping the framework conditions - external factors affecting effectiveness). In this context, some development measures home in on the framework conditions to the extent that component objectives are directly taken from strategic plans to implement decentralisation in the country in question (Burkina Faso) or contain national indicators for decentralisation at the overall objectives level (Ghana).

Elements that regularly recur in the objectives system are (except for Chile and Serbia) strengthening the capacity to act of municipalities and usually of selected institutions at meso level as well (municipal associations, educational institutions), support for the reform process through advice to the responsible ministry or commission and for the process to shape policies, fostering of political participation by citizens and strengthening of civil society. In all countries, this forms the crux of the problem analysis on which the corresponding project/programme was designed.

The analysis presented of the development measures’ conceptual approaches cannot be used to comment on how the relevant framework conditions are dealt with at the specific regional level. The fact that concepts are geared more towards local development in Latin America may possibly have evolved from social and political factors (e.g. a stronger politicisation of the population). The reports do not comment on this, however.9

The extent to which the framework conditions influence the results of the development measures is evident in each country, as these conditions ultimately determine what is possible. Providing support for local authorities on themes such as administration (including municipal financial management and the provision of public services) forms part of advisory services in all countries. The lack of objectives achievement in this context is due to internal factors. However, the extent to which measures are successful depends on the framework conditions, in other words, the relevant laws and provisions, and on the resources available to municipalities. Here, there is a significant gap between African countries (with the exception of South Africa) and Latin American countries where financial and human resources are significantly greater and statehood is better established in general.

The promotion of institutions at the meso level is successful in most countries when roles have been clarified, sufficient resources are in place and statehood is well established in general. In ‘typical’ African countries, actors at this level have very restricted funds and human resources of their own, which limits success, and has a very negative influence on sustainability. Rwanda is the exception to the rule here, as the government has a strong interest in the country’s development and in driving the introduction and consolidation of decentralisation nationwide. The President concludes performance agreements with each mayor, which motivates those involved10 and sets clear expectations. This effect trickles down to institutions at the meso level (municipal supervisory authority, municipal association, and the educational institution).

---

9 The reports do not allow for a quantitative comparison of the framework conditions in different regions.

10 This of course could be interpreted as covert centralism.
Success at the macro level depends to a large degree on the political framework, which cannot be shaped by the project/programme. In some countries, the government lacks the will to drive decentralisation reform any more than necessary to secure further donor funding for the country in question (Burkina Faso, Cameroon). In other countries, decentralisation is not a priority (or it has dropped down the list of priorities as the measure progressed), as other factors such as the retention of power and conflict shape the country’s policy (Georgia, Malawi, Serbia), or a change of government at least temporarily slowed down reforms (Bolivia). Some countries have a certain degree of political will, but internal power structures in the government allow different sectoral ministries to slow down the actual transfer of competences in line with their own interests (El Salvador, Ghana).

None of the reports mention the degree to which development measures have helped to put decentralisation on the political agenda in the partner country. In cases where decentralisation moved up the list of priorities, usually after the formation of a new government, development measures grasped this opportunity and supported the process through sectoral and in-process advice. However, many reports noted that the projects/programmes did trigger change processes even if results are not yet visible.

Given the limited opportunities for fostering political will where it is completely lacking, it must be considered what approach should be adopted in these countries. The first phase in Cameroon explicitly excluded the national level, and focused on the micro and meso levels. This approach is based on the origin of the development measure (merging with community development) on the one hand, and on the objective of developing examples of good local governance that could be incorporated at the national level on the other. It is similar to the approach adopted in the Philippines, which explicitly included this strategy in its objectives function, however.

Focusing activities at local level, and at meso level where possible, in order to ultimately exert pressure on the political level influenced the acceptance of decentralisation at national level in most countries where this was not a given. However, this influence had a bigger impact on ministerial staff than on those in power. None of the reports indicate that the local approach exerted increased pressure on those in power, or that the success achieved by local measures provided a guiding light that could help shift political priorities at national level.

The fact that it was difficult, or in some cases impossible, to shape conditions that cannot be influenced, and this situation is not conducive to decentralisation, does not undermine the expedience of supporting decentralisation measures in cases where the conditions appear uninfluenceable, or of the multi-level approach as such, however. Yet it does highlight that a differentiated approach must be found that takes account of the relevant framework conditions, the extent to which these can be changed, and partners’ capacity to act at the national level. In countries where there is little political will, it is worthwhile building the capacities of the municipal level even in cases where this is unlikely to ensure sustainability, in order to gain ground and make a case for decentralisation at the political level too. Democracy and decentralisation are inextricably linked and are key values of German DC. In order to abide by the principles of 'joined-up DC', and exert greater influence at the political level, implementing organisations must ensure that their strategy for achieving these values is in step with political dialogue conducted by BMZ and must work hand in hand.
Existing conditions, i.e. the framework conditions identified at planning stage, are occasionally presented as risks rather than as obstacles that can be changed (and therefore would have to be integrated into the development measure’s operational strategy) or cannot be changed, thereby restricting the achievement of results. Real risks are unexpected changes to the framework conditions. Several reports mention that unexpected changes hampered the achievement of objectives in the set timeframe, and/or called for additional inputs. Unexpected changes may include a change of government (Bolivia), changes in key personnel (Burkina Faso), conflict (Georgia), the postponement of municipal elections (Malawi) or other significant political problems (Serbia). None of the reports indicate, however, that these circumstances threatened to derail the entire decentralisation process.

As all of the development measures run over several legislative periods, changes in government and shifting priorities will always be a factor. The case of Costa Rica shows that a change in government and the replacement of key personnel can have a positive effect, which was not the case in Burkina Faso. Several reports state that the analysis of the framework conditions and of potential changes was incorrect, unrealistic or incomplete, and that objectives, results and sustainability could therefore not be achieved as planned. Factors that were frequently underestimated include above all the educational background of staff in municipalities and institutions at meso and macro level. Whereas some reports explicitly criticise the inability to correctly assess the framework conditions (Guatemala, South Africa), others only mention it in passing.

The level of corruption and the degree of political polarisation (which poses potential for conflict) are two conditions that are difficult to deal with. Political alliances and political polarisation between parties play a role in Latin America in particular (in some countries in Africa it is more a case of polarisation between those in power and all other political and social tendencies). The redistribution of resources required during the decentralisation process inevitably constitutes an element of these differences, though in many respects it constitutes just one of many areas of conflict. This situation can lead to sudden obstructions in local processes, despite any number of conflict-reducing and integrative activities conducted by the development measure (in El Salvador, this was also due to a lack of a clear majority in the parliament). On the whole, this slows down progress, but does not jeopardise the achievement of objectives, as this type of local constraint is always taken into account in the indicators to a certain degree. Corruption, on the other hand, is more difficult to assess, and the negative effects it has on the achievement of objectives are difficult to take into account during planning and are problematic, as the report on Cameroon and some reports on Latin American countries outlined.

On average, the development measures in Africa rated worse than those in Latin America\(^1\): All development measures in Latin America received an overall rating of ‘good’, whereas the six measures in Africa receive ratings of ‘good’, ‘satisfactory’ and ‘unsatisfactory’, spread equally across the board. In Burkina Faso (3), Ghana (4) and Malawi (4), implementation problems are cited as the main reason for downgrading the rating. In Cameroon, a lack of coordination between relevant German implementing organisations (effi-

\(^{1}\) As only one Eastern European, one Middle Eastern and one East Asian country were included in the sample, this experience is not used to examine regional-specific aspects.
ciency: 4) was the reason behind the overall rating of 'satisfactory'. This analysis does not support the theory of success factors being determined by regional conditions. A comparison of the ratings should also take into account the funds available to the development measures. No exact details are available of the number of long-term experts assigned in the development measures. Based on the planned TC funds for each year of the project/programme term outlined in the offers, African countries are at a slight advantage (EUR 2,300,000 compared with EUR 2,200,000 p.a.). This changes, however, if Chile and South Africa are taken out of the equation, as they represent ‘atypical’ development measures/countries (planned funds then EUR 1,900,000 versus EUR 2,500,000 p.a.). If we include partner contributions, the gap widens even more, as partner contributions in Africa (except for South Africa) are minimal. Unfortunately, the data provided in this context is incomplete. This too, undermines the hypothesis of regional-specific success factors.

One plausible hypothesis for inherently regional differences would be, however, that the framework conditions were more difficult. Statehood seems to be a key factor in this regard. In ‘typical’ African countries, the resources available to ministries and institutions at the meso level are so weak that staff spend a lot of their time trying to acquire more. Furthermore, personnel resources in most partner organisations are very stretched and replacing just one staff member can have huge repercussions for a development measure (as described in Burkina Faso). Although a similar situation is reported for Bolivia too, ‘typical’ African countries would appear to fare significantly worse when it comes to resources, the political situation and the basic capacities of the public service and government institutions. Analysis of the reports indicates that a lack of statehood in ‘typical’ African countries would appear to be the key factor influencing regional differences.

The degree to which the decentralisation processes themselves have matured appears to have little influence on regional-specific differences, as these processes have been ongoing for a similar period of time in Latin America and Africa, even if the actual implementation term in Africa is shorter. Furthermore, local authorities have existed in all Latin American countries for many years, albeit with limited funding and responsibilities. In some African countries (Burkina Faso), local governments were only set up in rural areas for the first time in 2006.

It should be noted here too that donor coordination in Latin America in general is rated as good to satisfactory, apart from minor blips (Guatemala). In half of the measures implemented in Africa (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Malawi), donor coordination was described as weak. This reinforces the negative effect of weak statehood.

It remains to be clarified why success can be achieved particularly at the local level, and even be welcomed by the national level, in countries where governments show little interest for other issues. Action by centralised ministries in Africa is determined to a great degree by requests for donor funding (with the exception of South Africa and perhaps Rwanda). For central authorities, there is a welcome overlap of interests if a multi-level approach is pursued that generates funding as a by-product of achievements at the municipal level. This relieves pressure on discussions conducted with political opponents and donors. Strengthening the administrative dimension of municipalities brings additional advantages for ministries as administrative processes function better.
6.2 Capacity development for representation of political interests (consensus building and decision-making) in the decentralisation process

At national level, relatively few development measures seem to use capacity development measures to support the consensus building process outside of partner ministries (and the parliament in a few cases). The development measures in Cameroon, El Salvador, Malawi and Rwanda support mechanisms and/or civil society actors, in order to shape national decision-making processes. In El Salvador, this is done by promoting a mechanism to involve the private sector and civil society in discussions on decentralisation policy, which opened up debate in new areas. In Cameroon, Malawi and Rwanda, national NGO umbrella organisations are assisted, in all cases with heavy involvement from DED (placement of a development aid worker in umbrella organisations). This type of assistance is at least planned in Ghana.

In Rwanda, support for the NGO umbrella organisation resulted in an invitation by the government to participate in consultations on the new NGO law. In Cameroon, this work is more closely associated with services provided at municipal level in the educational sector than with decentralisation reforms in general, which is realistic, given the actual chances of influencing these reforms. The development measure supported the drafting of a handbook on budget analysis, which proved to be a very useful instrument for creating the required capacities for NGOs to act as 'watchdogs'.

12 This section looks at the role civil society plays in consensus building. Section 6.3 ‘Partnerships based on a multi-level approach’ also examines to what extent the experience gained by government representatives in decentralisation shapes the decentralisation process.

the debate on education, the umbrella organisation is now recognised as having a high level of expertise. In Malawi, an umbrella organisation was selected as the partner organisation. It lost its legitimacy during the evaluation period, which in turn restricted the achievement of objectives. DED also supports a national NGO that organises nationwide training measures and events on civic education, and builds its institutional capacities.

In these three countries, support was provided by assigning a DED expert who provided support for daily tasks, and also independently carried out activities in the umbrella organisation. Other assistance included the provision of funding by DED for local experts. A key aspect of support was to promote internal democracy and organisational development. GTZ’s contribution comprised financing strategic individual activities that complemented the institutional support provided by DED.

The sustainability of these measures is questionable. None of the umbrella organisations or networks could survive on their own income and employ suitably skilled personnel, without external help. This is less of a factor initially when staff are learning to perform roles. However, gaps in financing may pose a problem in the medium term, which could encourage good staff to change jobs and wipe out any capacities built.

Support is provided to municipal umbrella organisations in Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Georgia, Malawi, Rwanda, Serbia and South Africa. In some measures, inputs are delivered by DED (Cameroon, Malawi and Rwanda), with GTZ providing conceptual and financial assistance for strategic activities. In Bolivia, Burkina Faso and El Salvador, it is not clear from the reports whether the municipal associations are receiving assistance in the area of political consensus building in addition to support for providing
services to municipalities. The association was advised on knowledge management in Costa Rica. It is unclear, however, whether this support was used to build capacities to partake in political processes. In Georgia, it was planned that corresponding advisory services would be provided by an expert from the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM). As it turned out, however, only sporadic support was provided, for example, to compile a newsletter at regular intervals.

In Serbia, the development measure built the capacities to act of SCTM – which represents the interests of municipalities at national level – through training measures, and in particular the assignment of a number of short-term experts, to enable it to skilfully carry out its tasks particularly as regards representing interests in the field of tax administration. These advisory services were regarded as particularly successful, as sound sectoral support was provided, an appropriate methodology was used, and information was transferred in a targeted and effective manner. Compared with other countries, however, it must be noted that the Serbian SCTM has resources that far outstretch those available to most other municipal associations.

In Cameroon, Malawi and South Africa, municipal associations experienced internal crises that were primarily caused by shortfalls in management. In Malawi, the dissolution of the municipal councils posed an additional burden, and resulted in elected members losing their seats. In Cameroon, internal democratic structures of the municipal association are still very weak. For example, municipalities are still not entitled to propose resolutions in plenary meetings. In South Africa, the municipal association experienced quite a prolonged managerial crisis from which it is only now recovering. In Cameroon and South Africa, however, certain progress has been made as regards participation in the consensus building process and the degree to which associations are recognised by the government.

The programme in Malawi adopted an approach geared less towards capacity development for actors and more towards financing civic activities for a large number of regional and local actors. Here, however, activities merely served to build the capacities of actors to submit applications. As a result, this advice was regarded more as the negotiation of a financing agreement than as capacity development. The entire advisory approach was designed by the development measure to be demand-oriented, and therefore deliberately did not target any specific predefined needs. Although this approach did produce an acceptable number of individual actions, its political success is somewhat questionable.

None of the reports describe an approach that is geared towards using marketing principles to foster political participation by citizens, build the capacities of interested governmental and non-governmental organisations, and leverage the full potential to improve the representation of political interests. All reports also lack an analysis of which measures are the most effective and achieve the most comprehensive broad-based effects. However, this could also be due to the fact that the reports had little scope for exploring this theme, given the length restrictions.

At the local level, all development measures (except for Chile and Serbia) promote local planning processes that include public participation as a key component. These processes are supported by the development measure in all cases, safeguarding the participatory process being equally as important as sectoral planning. Some development measures explicitly mention participation of the private sector, whereas this may have existed in other measures although it is not explicitly mentioned in
the reports. Only some reports state that preliminary support was provided to participating organisations in the form of training or similar measures, to enable them to better perform their roles (Bolivia, Guatemala, the Philippines and Rwanda). In other countries, capacity building is carried out as process advisory services during the planning process itself.

In Bolivia, Cameroon, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Malawi and South Africa, social watchdog bodies are assisted in creating transparency and accountability in municipal councils, with varying degrees of success. In South Africa, the legally recognised ‘ward committees’ are only functional to a certain extent, as political intrigue undermines their functions. The reports on Cameroon and Malawi only describe individual experience at local level, which was positive, however. In other Latin American countries, both official and traditional organisations are in place whose capacities are being built.

Only four development measures mention cooperation with German political foundations (above all the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung) (Cameroon, Costa Rica, Malawi and the Philippines). In Malawi and the Philippines, cooperation was limited to individual events on conflict management. In Costa Rica, the measure cooperated with the foundations in running training measures and providing support to the municipal association, above all as regards knowledge management. Cooperation with the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung drew to a halt in Cameroon shortly after the development measure started, for reasons that are unknown.

6.3 Partnerships based on a multi-level approach

The networking of different levels is regarded as good by the evaluators in most of the development measures. Working at several different levels and linking these efforts allows roles to be clarified and practised, necessary control mechanisms to be established, new scope to be created for municipalities, national standards to be developed based on practical experience, and broader effects for capacity development inputs for all actors to be generated, particularly for municipalities. The multi-level-approach is therefore also useful in implementing the principle of subsidiarity, or in specific terms, in driving competence transfer.

As the fundamentals of the decentralisation laws were already available in all countries at the beginning of the development measure, advice on legal framework conditions focused on fleshing out these laws through institutional support, rules and codes of practice and the compilation of handbooks. Given the wide spectrum of possible themes, the development measures homed in on a few key aspects, and these were then dealt with at all levels. Here, the municipal development plan seems to be the most popular aspect. In Cameroon, Chile, Costa Rica, Malawi and the Philippines, these inputs helped draft planning handbooks and standards at the national level13. In some Latin American countries and in South Africa, attempts were made to link plans with budget preparation, within the framework of municipal planning, and in addition to practise roles between the deconcentrated and municipal levels. This was not the case in most ‘typical’ African countries.

In the following countries, handbooks, sample procedures, standardised training modules and instruments were accepted and jointly drafted at the national level based on pro-

13 In South Africa, this had already been achieved in a previous project.
ject/programme experience:\footnote{This list is no doubt incomplete, as the reports did not include all results in this context.} Bolivia: inventories, budget preparation; Chile: budget preparation, investment planning, local economic development; El Salvador: general administrative regulations on gender/equality, citizen participation; Malawi: budget preparation; the Philippines: budget preparation; Rwanda: general administrative regulations; South Africa: gender/equality, citizen participation, relationships between governmental levels. Several development measures helped set up basic and further training modules and concepts at national training institutes (Cameroon, Georgia, Malawi, the Philippines, Rwanda).

In some countries, advice was also provided on financial management (El Salvador, Ghana, Malawi, the Philippines and Serbia). In Malawi, the Philippines and Serbia in particular, efforts to link national and municipal actors through learning and communication processes and to establish binding procedures, rules and training modules were successful. However, no development measure was able, through its activities, to help increase transfers from the government to municipalities. Such transfer payments depend on vested interests to such a large degree that they would appear to be inaccessible to the tools employed by TC.

In the development measures that dealt with municipal finances, activities were geared towards increasing municipalities’ own income and to improving financial management, and in this context to clarifying the regulatory framework and drafting municipal financial management procedures, control mechanisms and standards.

In some countries, measures to promote municipal supervisory authorities helped improve actors’ understanding of roles and behaviour patterns by establishing dialogue forums and training measures (Cameroon and Georgia). In Georgia, a law on municipal supervisory authorities was even drafted, which incorporated experience of work at the local level.

Activities to promote municipal associations at the meso level aimed to strengthen their capacities to enable them to shape political aspects of the decentralisation process. However, this was not always successful. In Africa, only Rwanda is a positive example, and a clear statement cannot yet be made regarding the situation in Cameroon.

In many cases, practising new roles within and between the levels produced good results in cases in which the key conditions were in place. In ‘typical’ African countries, the fact that there was no clearly regulated link between development planning and municipal budgets was problematic. These planning processes, however, led to a better understanding among the different actors of their roles and an improvement in the working atmosphere at least in cooperation between levels.

In most countries, however, some key areas of decentralisation lack regulation and the development measures should help achieve objectives in this context. Using a multi-level approach, pilot measures should be implemented on these themes, the measures evaluated and then discussed with the different parties involved. In most cases, these were pilot measures at the local level.

In many countries, there is still no effective transfer of competencies in relation to the provision of basic services (health, education, water, environment), for example, and of the corresponding resources. The development measures try to support and organise communication and negotiation processes, with all sides ideally receiving the support they need to
effectively participate in the relevant processes.

Local experience was successfully incorporated into the relevant national discussion processes in cases where there was a clear mandate for this (Chile, Serbia, South Africa) and/or the partner authorities actively integrated and processed this experience either through their own interest in doing so, or through successful advisory services (Bolivia, Cameroon, Costa Rica – only the last phase, El Salvador, Georgia, Malawi, the Philippines, Serbia, South Africa). In development measures that implemented pilot measures without an explicit mandate to do so, i.e. that tried to use a multi-level approach without prior agreement among all involved levels, acceptance at the national level was significantly lower and standardisation and dissemination of these measures was hindered, if not completely impossible.

The report on Bolivia discusses the implementation of the multi-level approach in relation to the component structure and the programme’s internal organisational structure. Whereas the development measure adopted a holistic approach, the components break down this approach into sectoral elements. Only at the regional level, i.e. in the programme’s organisational unit that is responsible for implementing advisory services to municipalities, all aspects are merged again through holistic customer support (municipalities). As responsibilities at the programme’s national level are broken down into a component structure, and two of these are also assigned to subcontractors, inefficiencies occur. Officers responsible for components are too fixated on their own components, and there is a lack of integration with the holistic concept.

In Burkina Faso, the multi-level approach is directly reflected in the component structure (macro, meso and micro). According to the report, the measure has not been able to network the levels, due to a lack of internal communication and mechanisms. In the Philippines, the component structure reflects the three dimensions of the very definition of decentralisation. The programme’s internal organisational structure is not designed in line with the component structure, as is usually the case, which made it more difficult to clarify responsibilities for achieving the indicators. These examples show how important it is to have an appropriate management system in place, in order to implement the multi-level approach in practice, while retaining all key conceptual principles.

In this context, the multi-level approach rarely involves intervening at each level to the same degree. On the contrary, it must be organised in a manner that it can forge close relationships and remain flexible, to adequately deal with cyclical changes, and only work with some partners at a distance, if needs be. As we see in the case of Cameroon, where one long-term GTZ expert is assigned to a ministry that is unable to absorb the advisory services provided, a multi-level approach (where advice is provided as a matter of principle) can result in inefficiencies, if implemented mechanically.

With the exception of Ghana, the multi-level approach is regarded in all cases as playing a key factor in the design of successful projects/programmes. In Ghana, the ministry is not interested in advisory services, which may be due to the specific arrangement by which the project is attached to the ministry. Whereas a long-term approach certainly underpins success, this may need to be only partially implemented in certain phases, for tactical reasons. However, experience shows that a micro-level approach will not be enough on its own (Costa Rica, the first phase of the project in Ghana, Guatemala) and institutions at the meso level must be involved in the approach (e.g. munici-
The target groups are addressed in the objectives systems of the development measures (overall, component and phase objectives and indicators) in three different ways: (1) Increasing political participation as a direct result (ten development measures); (2) reducing poverty (Costa Rica) and (3) indirectly by surveying the satisfaction of the population with municipal services (eight development measures). Only three development measures (Chile, Serbia and South Africa) deal just with intermediaries and do not mention target groups in their objectives system.

The target group is assigned to the level of indirect results in the results chains of 10 development measures, whereas one results chain does not mention it at all (Georgia), and the target groups are only addressed at the level of highly aggregated results (poverty) in three development measures (Chile, Ghana, and Serbia).

As some of the development measures cofinance municipal development projects, these also achieve direct results (that are not, however, part of the objectives system) as regards the social/economic situation at the target group level. Only the development measure in Costa Rica (the oldest offer; does not use the AURA format) contains indicators that are intended to measure the direct results at the target group level (e.g. reduced unemployment). Individual development measures have established direct contact with target groups by conducting training for women and supporting youth promotion projects. These measures appear to be located mainly in Latin America and conduct secondary activities that usually have an important role to play. The development measures in Chile and Serbia work on themes related to technical subareas of decentralisation, and do not deal with political participation or with poverty, even indirectly. Here, the results chains rightly pitch poverty reduction at the level of highly aggregated results, with a very long results chain.

Direct results are therefore primarily targeted at the intermediary level, and the target group is only indirectly affected as regards improving material living conditions. This only applies to TC measures that usually neither have the funding or the mandate to support municipal projects, but instead develop capacities, enabling intermediaries and target groups to then implement corresponding measures of their own. Results at the target group level are to be achieved as an indirect result, through the provision of public services by municipalities and state services that cooperate with these municipalities.

Section 3.2 (Effectiveness) and Section 3.3 (Impact) of this report look at the extent to which these results have been achieved. Overall, it may be observed that very little data is available on the population’s living conditions, and none of the development measures’ M&E systems provide for the collection of this information. At the time the evaluation was conducted, data on measuring the relevant indicators were only available in very few cases. This is primarily due to the fact that project/programme plans did not provide for data to be surveyed at this stage, and in some cases to the fact that no well-functioning M&E system was available (Ghana, Malawi).

Within the framework of process advice, strengthening political participation plays a relatively significant role as a direct result in most of the development measures. Nine development measures include components that directly pursue political participation (Bolivia, Cameroon, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Malawi, the Philippines, Rwanda and South Africa). This often takes the form of participatory planning processes, participatory
budget preparation, communication, accountability and civic education. These measures are implemented by projects/programmes either using own personnel or service providers.

Mention can also be made here of activities to mitigate and manage conflicts, as these should lead to more effective political participation. These activities are conducted in all Latin American countries (except Chile), and in Malawi and Rwanda. The results achieved here are classed as direct results, and are measured using indicators. Indicators include key activities such as routine accountability procedures, and participation in processes or meetings. The eight development measures whose indicators include the satisfaction of citizens with municipal services go one step further. The underlying idea here is that improved political participation will help ensure that services are more needs-oriented.

The necessary legal framework and the required will among municipal councils and administrations – whose supervisory bodies help build the capacities required to fulfil their role – has a positive influence on the success of sectoral and process advisory services to promote political participation. Support must also be provided for practising political participation, and 'heated' conflicts allowed to settle before several actors can communicate effectively. It is important to draft and relay clear communication and participation mechanisms that are transparent for all actors. The reports do not clearly state whether it is necessary to provide specific training measures to prepare these mechanisms, or whether it is enough to just support processes.

### 6.4 Involvement of non-governmental actors (civil society and private sector)

All development measures, except for the one in Serbia, integrate civil society in their activities to some degree. The most common way of doing this is to involve civil society organisations (including grassroots organisations) in planning and decision-making processes at local level. However, it is not always clear from the reports whether these organisations only receive assistance to build their capacities as part of process support or whether they also receive institutional support. Institutional support seems to be provided in Bolivia, Cameroon, Malawi, the Philippines, Rwanda and South Africa. Activities with local civil society organisations in Cameroon are exemplary. The programme advises partner civil society organisations on drafting strategic principles, in order to identify a vision, a mission statement, and alternatives for action that are needs-oriented and in line with the available expertise. In Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala, the reports seem to suggest that advice is limited to effective participation in planning and a variety of other participatory processes, and does not include institutional aspects. It is assumed that awareness-raising campaigns are designed to prepare planning processes, but do not provide institutional support for civil society organisations. In several of these countries, GTZ works together with DED on GTZ components using DED integrated experts in some cases, and in others on inde-

---

15 However, this does not apply to grassroots organisations that act as project executing agencies for cofinanced projects, but this is irrelevant here.

16 Here, the terminology is not yet in keeping with joined-up DC. If the DED development measures work together with the GTZ contribution in a component, this cannot be considered a GTZ component. In practise, however, this type of differentiation is still common.
pendent DED measures and components that are coordinated with GTZ. In South Africa, all assistance to civil society is provided entirely by DED, whereas this only applies at local level in Cameroon.

In the development measures in Cameroon, Malawi and Rwanda, national networks of civil society organisations are assisted together with DED. Here, DED provides intensive sectoral support for institution building, and GTZ intervenes in consultation with DED as regards strategic needs, for example, to draft studies, or to compile a handbook on budget analysis as was the case in Cameroon. In other development measures, civil society organisations are integrated at national level in consultation processes on new laws, but it would appear that institution building activities are rarely conducted.

In Burkina Faso, civil society organisations are almost exclusively assigned as service providers to conduct studies and training measures and provide in-process support. This practice was also observed in other countries (Cameroon, Chile, Costa Rica and Georgia), but did not comprise a key aspect of cooperation with civil society organisations. In Malawi, civil society organisations were able to apply to the development measure for funding for civic schools, public debates and social control processes, without receiving any institutional support or strategic guidelines from the measure for these activities.

Most reports only mention the private sector in passing. Whereas representatives from the private sector do of course take part in the planning process, integration in other participatory processes only occurs in a few countries, most frequently in the area of the municipal tax system.

As a result, civil society is sustainably integrated into advisory processes at both the local level through grassroots organisations and NGOs and at the national level through the promotion of individual NGOs and umbrella organisations. The success factors for participatory processes are well-known from the principles of local development and need no introduction here.

Most of the reports do not describe how the role of NGOs is strengthened at the local level, in order to exert political pressure for individual themes or foster general principles of good governance. The most interesting examples mainly revolve around advisory inputs provided by DED (in Cameroon and Malawi). Based on this experience, the clear conclusion is that intensive assistance to local NGOs is the key factor for clarifying and getting to grips with their self-image and roles, and developing a key strategic orientation (institutional capacity building). If success is to be sustainable – that is, if NGOs are to build the capacity required to draft and improve their own programmes – it is not enough to invite them to participate in planning processes and support them in this regard. The same applies to promoting NGOs and NGO networks at national level.

The biggest problem blocking the sustainability of national NGOs is funding for activities. In order to conduct activities at the national level, NGOs must have enough resources to ensure that they are taken seriously by the government. Although it is helpful to receive TC funding to finance personnel in the short term, it does cast serious doubt on sustainability.

Active and effective participation by NGOs in local and national planning and control processes has a visibly positive effect on the attitude of state and municipal organisations towards civil society. Professional NGOs are recognised and acknowledged by state and municipal authorities (Bolivia, Cameroon, El Salvador, Georgia, Malawi and Ruanda). In some countries, this resulted in NGOs that had
received assistance being explicitly requested by the government to participate in legislative procedures, and incorporate the interests of citizens (or general interests in good governance). The report on Georgia explicitly mentions that involving the NGO helped to change the political culture. This is only implicitly referred to in some other reports. The democratisation effect that arises from strengthening civil society organisations boosts the overall impact of development measures.

As the theme of civil society is not dealt with in great detail in most of the reports, it is difficult to say what role involving civil society organisations plays in achieving results at the target group level. As outlined in Section 6.3, direct results for the target group are usually achieved in the area of political participation in most development measures. However, it is not always clear in this context whether these organisations really are NGOs with a relatively wide-based membership, or whether they are just consulting offices that have chosen the organisational form of NGO for tax reasons. In Latin American countries, the reports seem to suggest that NGOs act more like European NGOs in that they represent citizens’ interests. It is assumed that these NGOs also help mobilise the population and in doing so can increase political participation above and beyond the extent targeted by the development measure. In most African countries, NGOs appear to be organisations for the elite minority rather than the general mass population. In these countries, NGOs serve as intermediaries, service providers and lobby groups and also represent political interests. In some cases they have their own networks (in particular church NGOs) and their activities help increase political participation (reports frequently cite the mobilisation of women to participate in elections as an example).

In addition to the four development measures conducted jointly by DED and GTZ (Cameroon, Malawi, Rwanda and South Africa), close cooperation between the two organisations to involve civil society is only mentioned in Bolivia. Cooperation with civil society is more evident in the evaluation reports on these development measures than in the other reports. The division of labour, at least in sub-areas of the measures conducted by DED and GTZ in Cameroon, proved very worthwhile, even if the programme partners’ approaches and views differed occasionally and prevented cooperation from being as harmonious and target-oriented as it could have been. Implementing separate DED measures in the area of civil society (Cameroon and South Africa) makes it more difficult to adopt a well-coordinated and tactical approach, and to generate synergies to mobilise local democracy. None of the reports mention an approach that involves DED and GTZ simultaneously working on one theme in a municipality, and coordinating activities internally, whereby DED could provide support to civil society and GTZ to the municipality. This would have enabled a ‘dual-track’ approach to be adopted.
7. Mode of delivery, programme design and cooperation arrangements

The development measure in Guatemala is a cofinancing arrangement with Swedish DC. Apart from a few combined financing arrangements, all development measures are ‘stand-alone’ bilateral development measures that are in line with national programmes and policies, but are not designed as an integral part of a coordinated national programme in which several donors participate. In Rwanda, an attempt to establish a sector-wide approach did not succeed, but the report does not say why. The evaluation reports make no mention of TA pooling in the true sense, and only refer to studies that are financed with other donors. Three reports allude to partners or other donors that favour German TC over TA pooling (the Philippines, Rwanda, South Africa).

In all cases, the services provided by GTZ cover seconded experts and the short-term assignment of international and local experts. All development measures except for Chile use local subsidies and funds to support capacity development measures. In four development measures, local subsidies are also used to cofinance local and municipal development projects17 (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Georgia). The amount of funding earmarked for local subsidies varies considerably – between EUR 41,500/p.a. (Burkina Faso) and EUR 575,000/p.a. (Cameroon). The examples provided offer no evidence for the existence of a consistent or systematic approach to determining the amount of local subsidies, which can also not be justified by the different type of tasks carried out. A logical explanation would be if development measures that pursue an approach geared to the objectives of local development were to receive more funds for local subsidies than others. For Costa Rica, however, only about EUR 50,000/p.a. was earmarked, whereas EUR 545,000 was allocated for Guatemala (in addition to more than EUR 1,000,000 from Swedish DC).

The implementation of municipal pilot projects to promote learning is a distinct advantage, if not a necessity, for comprehensive capacity development at the local level.18 However, in the majority of development measures, not enough TC funds were available to run these pilot activities. This element of capacity development could therefore not be implemented in cases where no support was provided by either FC or other donors for this type of practical, experiential learning (Cameroon, Malawi). This mode of delivery was therefore not appropriate.

All of the reports confirm that long-term advisory services and the assignment of short-term experts are appropriate. The elements of sectoral, process, and organisational advisory services implemented were also regarded as appropriate in almost all development measures. All reports stress that decentralisation reform processes are highly complex and comprise a strong element of all three advisory elements. Long-term support and the flexible use of advisory instruments are therefore vital, and were provided in most cases. In Chile, the number of experts seconded during the first phase was considered to be too high, and more local experts could have been assigned in both Burkina Faso and Chile.

None of the reports dispute the fact that TC is a suitable instrument for providing services. As the objectives systems described in the offers almost exclusively target capacity building, in

17 This may also be the case in Bolivia and Rwanda, but is not clearly specified in offers and reports.

18 These are municipal projects that require external financing and allow all local actors to learn and practise their roles.
the author’s opinion, they are highly suitable for TC. However, efforts to link FC with capacity development must be stepped up and additional combined financing arrangements sought.

As regards the formal elements of programme design, the assignment of long-term experts, and the overall long-term prospects for advisory services receive particular mention (Costa Rica, El Salvador and Georgia). It seems, however, that these elements must be linked with a methodology that enables advice to be provided on a ‘peer-to-peer’ basis (Chile), plays a moderating role, offers options for partners, and opens up opportunities for action, among other things by linking processes across different levels and actors (Bolivia, Cameroon and Costa Rica). This in no way means that only methodologically trained moderators should be assigned, as shown by the high level of satisfaction among partners in Georgia and Serbia with short-term experts who have practical experience and know how to deal with specific situations hands-on. It is obvious from the description of the different success factors that a specific advisory logic is used (must be used) for each country, each partner and each stage or development phase, and that the advisory process must be managed in a flexible and differentiated manner if results are to be achieved.

The development measures in Chile and Serbia (only) advised on relatively limited areas of decentralisation reform. This facilitates success, as many problem areas are excluded, and activities and funds can focus on a few specific aspects. It can also be assumed that the partner side has a specific sectoral interest in this type of development measure. On the other hand, the holistic approach adopted in countries such as Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Malawi – which is fundamentally correct, although the will and ability to reform are doubtful – can only succeed if the outputs provided by German DC implementing organisations are synchronised well and are combined with effective policy dialogue that is coordinated between all German actors. In this context, responsibilities must be clarified not just on the German side, but for partners and other donors too.

Support for well-coordinated policy dialogue must be based on a differentiated approach, in order to take account of the different capacities (or interests) of partners for steering the reform process. The partner country must play a leading role in joint policy dialogue, to ensure that the process amounts to more than just negotiating trade-offs. For projects/programmes, this means that the value orientation of German DC must be tapped into, in order to steer advisory services if the partner country lacks direction in this regard. In specific cases in this context, the problem of advisory services not being geared towards a country’s priorities will arise time and again. This means that although, formally speaking, these services are less relevant and the partner government may believe that they interfere with the country’s sovereignty, they are still crucial if value orientation is to be preserved.

The development measures in Burkina Faso and Ghana meet the formal requirements of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness insofar as they integrate elements of the partner side’s objectives system into the measure’s objectives system. For example, the components that contain key elements of the decentralisation implementation strategy are identical in Burkina Faso, and in Ghana, all overall objectives indicators were taken from the national decentralisation monitoring system. Of all the measures evaluated, these two were among the least successful as regards advisory services provided at the national level. Therefore, adopting this type of formalised approach
when drafting objectives systems by no means guarantees good results at the macro level. Although it may appear obvious, it must be mentioned that sufficient funding must be available, given the wide variations in resources available to the development measures (Burkina Faso, Costa Rica).

The most important success factor for donor coordination is revealed in the reports on the measures in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Georgia, Malawi, the Philippines and South Africa: the partner country itself must manage donor coordination. This is already the case in Georgia, the Philippines and South Africa, and is viewed as the biggest shortfall in the other reports mentioned above. The reports show that donor coordination is least effective where donors coordinate activities themselves. With regard to cooperation between the development measures and other donors, the management and moderation skills of the relevant representatives receive particular mention, as do good interpersonal skills (Chile, Burkina Faso and the Philippines).

Although most reports view donor coordination as a key factor for success, in reality, this situation is somewhat lacking. Almost all reports compare the relevance of the development measure in relation to the Paris Declaration, but make no mention of this in their analysis of donor coordination.

Close cooperation between German TC and FC is often strived for when establishing funds for municipal infrastructure. This was the case in Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, El Salvador, Ghana and Malawi. In Bolivia, Ghana and Malawi, these efforts were successful and usually ran smoothly, whereas no specific cooperation measures materialised in this context in Malawi and El Salvador. The reports do not clearly specify why this is so. In Burkina Faso, TC/FC cooperation is evaluated harshly, listing reasons such as personality factors, the lack of a joint planning strategy, and different corporate interests. In Cameroon and Malawi, infrastructural funds (or at least the FC contribution to the fund) have not yet become operational. Whereas the factors influencing failure are relatively clear, the reports do not specify success factors for TC/FC cooperation. Although KfW conducts activities at the local level in Georgia, Guatemala, the Philippines and South Africa, it does not cooperate with TC in this context.

Cooperation between GTZ and DED in the area of civil society is discussed in Section 6.4, and will not analysed again here.

It would appear that the reports clearly view the different working cultures\textsuperscript{19} of DED and GTZ as a key problem, which above all requires additional coordination effort. The form of cooperation varies from country to country. In Burkina Faso, Ghana and Guatemala, the DED experts are completely integrated into the components, whereas in Cameroon, Malawi and South Africa, DED independently implements development measures within the framework of a joint programme or based on the cooperation agreements concluded. The cooperation agreements only covered specific aspects in Malawi.

Cooperation in Cameroon was organised in an unusual manner within the framework of drawing up a joint programme proposal. Whereas the joint programme includes a fourth component assisted solely by DED (civil society), this component is not mentioned in Part B of the GTZ offer. This means that GTZ is not justified in allocating funds to support civil society, and DED would have to finance its activities on its

\textsuperscript{19} The reports do not define this term. It is taken as referring to the sum total of different procedures, working methods and other characteristics that define the different organisations.
own, which it is unable to do, however. Furthermore, no joint plan of operations was drafted. No solution had been found for this problem at the time the evaluation was conducted. Given this problem, the efficiency of the programme was downgraded to a rating of 'unsatisfactory'.

Despite these obstacles, both programme partners in Cameroon coordinated some joint thematic areas well, and in Malawi and South Africa too, and complementary activities were conducted. The experience gained in Cameroon and Malawi was particularly interesting, where DED provided long-term advisory services to partner organisations (meso level), whereas GTZ only provided assistance in strategic areas.

The principle of 'joined-up DC' cannot be truly recognised in any of the development measures, as significant coordination problems still exist in all cases, and in some there are clear differences in the working cultures. At the time the evaluation was conducted, DED's new planning, monitoring and evaluation process had not taken effect to any great degree in any of the measures. Statements on cooperation with FC tend to be vague and non-committal. As only two of the development measures were conducted as joint programme proposals, little can be said about this instrument. It is difficult to say whether efforts to work towards 'joined up DC' proved worthwhile.
8. Contract and cooperation management

The reports are extremely cautious when assessing project steering. They state that most of the development measures are managed professionally, with no specific details being given, except that management reacts flexibly to changes in the framework conditions (Bolivia, Costa Rica, Serbia). Four reports do not evaluate project steering (El Salvador, Georgia, the Philippines and Rwanda). Implementation problems that stem from project steering are mentioned in three development measures (Burkina Faso, Ghana and Malawi). In Malawi, the use of an extremely demand-oriented approach, which impinged on success, was criticised. This point is also touched upon in the report on the development measure in the Philippines, but no details are provided. Both measures were unable to strike a suitable balance between establishing their own strategy and demand orientation. Another factor comes into play in the case of Burkina Faso, where centralistic decisions were made that were neither transparent nor flexible, and lacked clarity for both partner organisations and regional staff. The development measure in Ghana is critised of pursuing an overall approach that is made up of one-off, isolated actions, which may be explained by the fact that five different project managers were assigned over the five-and-a-half year term.

The reports rarely mention steering by BMZ. The premature termination of components (regional/local economic development in Chile and Cameroon) is viewed critically from the partners’ perspective and as regards the success achieved above all in terms of poverty impacts. The Burkina Faso report questions the donor coordination approach used by BMZ (delegation of significant elements to TC programme manager/priority area coordinator) and the Malawi report voices reservations about political dialogue (reaction to the postponement of municipal elections). Assigning programme managers from the TC measures to fulfil priority area or donor coordination functions in some cases (these tasks were delegated although they should have been carried out by the relevant embassies or DC officers) was thought to overload the relevant programme managers and other donors, and clash with their existing roles. Other reports also implicitly refer to this type of role conflict and additional workload.

In some Latin American development measures (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala) and in Georgia, funds were earmarked for cofinancing municipal development projects, whereas in African countries local subsidies were only allocated for capacity development measures, and participation in municipal development projects was explicitly ruled out. This approach stems from BMZ steering. The reports merely suggest that FC should finance municipal infrastructure projects, which did not happen in some cases. As a result of this steering decision, some development measures were unable to fulfil their mandate as regards capacity development, as it was not possible to adopt the ‘learning-by-doing’ approach in specific municipal projects.

Significant shortfalls in funding provided to the development measures in Burkina Faso and Costa Rica should also be viewed as a steering problem, particularly against the backdrop of the very ambitious project/programme design.

Several reports mention that synergies with FC were left untapped, and that a better relationship could have been forged (see Section 7). This issue is only explicitly correlated with BMZ steering in the report on Burkina Faso.

The selection of the partner organisation in Ghana is of general interest, although it is just one isolated case. Once advisory services had
been provided at national level as well, a division at the ministry that had previously served as a partner organisation for an FC development measure was chosen as the partner. This choice made sense, as it ensured continuity. The problem was, however, that this division is the Project Management Unit (PMU) for implementation projects assisted by all donors, and has no role to play in drafting policy, nor does it have any interest in doing so. Other, more relevant divisions felt isolated by the development measure, which would help explain to some degree the clear lack of interest in advisory services at the ministry.

Six development measures mention specific steering bodies approved by DC and the partner side (Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Georgia, Guatemala and Malawi). Only the Costa Rica report assesses this body positively. The steering bodies were never set up in Burkina Faso, Georgia and Guatemala. In the other development measures, activities with the partner side are steered at an informal level, which would evidently indicate that there is little interest in setting up official structures, and that these should only be established when explicitly requested by the partner side, or other circumstances require that a supervisory body be established that is not linked with the partner side through any direct working relationship.

A well-functioning monitoring system is vital for steering development measures. Such a system would appear to be in place in all development measures except for Ghana and Malawi (the report on Rwanda provides no information in this regard). The fact that these two development measures are the only ones to have received an overall rating of ‘unsatisfactory’, however, certainly has nothing to do with the lack of a systematic monitoring system. The lack of such a system is more likely to be another indication of weaknesses in project/programme implementation.

As most of the M&E systems in the development measures would appear to be geared solely towards indicators, any assessments the reports make as regards effectiveness are frequently based on observations and anecdotal evidence. In almost all cases, monitoring is oriented towards the indicators, and by no means adequately reflects the complex objectives that took a lot of time and effort to draft.

Most of the development measures regard cooperation with the partner side as positive and purposeful. In Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Ghana, cooperation has been hampered by a lack of interest in advisory services (in Burkina Faso and Ghana) and by the very limited absorption capacity at the national level (Cameroon). Clear links can be established between this situation and weak statehood in these partner countries, as discussed previously (see Section 6.1). Two of the reports mention that although the partner side is very interested and cooperation has been positive, political priorities lie elsewhere, for the reasons outlined above (Bolivia and Serbia; see Section 6.1).

All relevant reports criticise the significant additional coordination effort involved in working with subcontractors in some cases. In Bolivia, the report outlines how inflexible contracts between GTZ and subcontractors and the prioritisation of short-term interests by these subcontractors, compared with the more long-term approach adopted by GTZ, resulted in components not being adequately networked. Inadequate networking is also referred to in the report on Burkina Faso. In Burkina Faso and Cameroon, unexpected changes in staff affected the provision of services. The reports on Burkina Faso and Chile note that some (or in the case of Burkina Faso, all) of the tasks to be carried out by subcontractors could have been
conducted by local consulting firms, and that awarding contracts to international companies was not justified. In the other countries, the professionalism of subcontractors is not queried, and in some cases is even praised (Guatemala, the Philippines). However, this still does not constitute grounds for concluding that it was worthwhile subcontracting certain parts of development measures from a sectoral viewpoint or for reasons of efficiency.

Six of the evaluated development measures were designated as having no potential for public-private partnerships (PPP-0). The offer for the development measure in Costa Rica was written before it was common practice to assign such markers. The development measures in Burkina Faso, Chile, Ghana, Guatemala, the Philippines and South Africa were awarded the marker PPP-1. Only the report on Chile provides details, and explains how the measure implemented the approach as planned. However, all of the measures implemented in this context were local PPPs between the Chilean Government and local private enterprises. The programme in El Salvador was the only development measure to be awarded the PPP-2 marker, as a planned PPP measure was taken over by a development measure that was drawing to a close, and a corresponding component indicator drafted. Implementation did not go to plan, and the report believes that the basic assumptions underpinning the programme concept were too optimistic.
9. Summary of conclusions and lessons learned

9.1 Cross-sectoral experience

Twelve of the fourteen evaluated projects/programmes can be assessed as successful. The average overall rating of the DAC criteria in all projects/programmes is 2.4, which is regarded as ‘good’. The key reasons for the poor average rating received by one project and one programme have more to do with implementation than with the concept.

All development measures are considered to be relevant in terms of official policy, government declarations and the legal framework. The following characteristics of the development measures were identified as success factors:

- Building the capacities of local government must form a key element of government policy.
- The project/programme works closely with the responsible ministry or other state commissions and bodies on implementing and further developing policy.
- The programme concept is closely linked with the government’s strategy for implementing decentralisation, where formal linkage plays a less significant role than content-related and organisational linkage in the reform process.
- The programme concept is implemented in very close consultation with the partner organisation, both at the strategic and operational level.
- The programme concept corresponds to German DC priorities and values.
- The project/programme has at least an indirect relevance to poverty reduction, which clearly strives to improve conditions for the population.
- The very flexible design of the measures, which allows them to adapt to fluctuations in the political conditions, thereby ensuring that they remain relevant.

Key factors influencing failure that result in the rating being downgraded are the lack of political will to reform, and temporary shifts in the partner governments’ priorities. However, the author of this report believes that this does not do justice to projects/programmes that reacted flexibly and tried to address these problems by tweaking measures, in order to ensure that they remained relevant and continued to drive decentralisation reform. It could be argued that this in turn should improve the relevance rating, in terms of value orientation (see Section 5 ‘Concept of sustainable development’). Even if the Paris Declaration attributes the leading role to the partner country, projects/programmes that promote basic principles of German DC should not become less relevant because partner governments fail to keep joint agreements or temporarily have to deal with more important things (such as conflict and political survival). The answer to the key question for ‘relevance’ (Are we doing the right thing?) must also be a resounding ‘yes’ in such cases.

The effectiveness of the development measures is assessed by reviewing the achievement of indicators. Most of the reports also try to identify additional, unintended results that are not covered by the indicators.

The reports identify the following aspects as success factors for effectiveness:

- sound and realistic planning (in particular realistic indicators) and good monitoring, in order to deal flexibly with unplanned developments
• selection of an appropriate intervention zone, to ensure that staff have clear orientation, that 'production' objectives are transparent, that partners are clear about the prospects of receiving support, and that the relationship between pilot measures and the broad-based effects is evident
• good intermediaries that are able to carry out and continue tasks independently, at least once corresponding capacity development measures have been conducted
• good synergies between components and with other development measures, in order to take advantage of synergy potentials
• the ability to adapt flexibly to the strategies used by partners
• the direct usability of the services provided, which meet the practical needs of the municipal administration in particular

In addition to the exact opposite situation described in the success factors listed above (unrealistic planning, and so on), factors that determine failure and cannot be influenced by the project/programme include above all (1) a change in staff at selected bodies and authorities, (2) a lack of will to reform, contrary to bilateral agreements and (3) general political crises. In Guatemala, and in all African countries, the level of basic education is so low that intermediaries do not always have the desired expertise.

In some projects/programmes, the number of pilot municipalities for testing instruments whose results should then be used by partner institutions to generate broad-based effects was deliberately restricted (e.g. in Serbia and South Africa). This is regarded as the classic concept of pilot measures. If the partner side is able to independently disseminate the instruments used (maybe with a certain amount of capacity development), all results can be regarded as direct, and should be reflected in the indicators. In cases where the partner side lacks both capacities and resources, however, and these elements cannot be adequately built by the project/programme, which is the case in 'typical' African countries, broad-based effectiveness depends on factors that are outside the measure's reach. In terms of the pilot municipalities, it is not always clear whether the project/programme concepts took adequate account of the capacities of the partner side to independently apply lessons learned and generate broad-based effects.

None of the development measures were able to provide reliable data to assess the impact, and the ratings were compiled using anecdotal evidence. Very few indirect results were identified, and it is difficult to identify factors influencing success (or failure) based on the reports. The most important indirect results are at the level of the use of instruments and handbooks that were developed with the help of projects/programmes and were used outside the intervention zone. These are disseminated by intermediaries that are not involved in the joint development measure. There are indications, however, that these activities did not generate the same benefits, as the project/programme did not provide any sectoral support in this context.

As was the case for impact, the measures were unable to provide enough data to assess efficiency. The cost-benefit ratio could only be calculated in one development measure. Microeconomic efficiency, which equates to the efficiency of service provision, is regarded as satisfactory to good in almost all measures, based on the experience of the evaluators. This is mainly attributed to professional management of the projects/programmes. In general, combined financing is also considered to boost efficiency. However, none of the as-
sessments take account of the overall effort required, and these statements must therefore be viewed with a certain degree of caution.

None of the reports analyse macroeconomic efficiency, which is not surprising, given the lack of data.

The following key factors are considered to influence failure in terms of efficiency, which includes delays in the achievement of results:

- the significant effort required to coordinate activities with German implementing organisations involved in the projects/programmes, in most cases DED
- the significant effort required for coordination with subcontractors assigned to implement components/sub-components
- the use of international experts and subcontractors in cases where local personnel could have delivered the same quality
- over-optimistic planning

Most of the reports are cautious when assessing the sustainability of results. This is primarily because all development measures are still being implemented. According to the reports, all development measures are geared towards the concept of sustainability, and only a few measures fare badly as regards implementing corresponding measures.

The following aspects are cited as key success factors for sustainability:

- consistent ownership of the decentralisation process by policymakers and partner institutions, citizen participation and good governance
- the use of long-term strategies to develop personnel and institutional capacities of municipalities, ministries, institutions at the meso level and the private sector (service providers)
- the involvement of local institutions in standardising training measures on decentralisation
- the legal and institutional mainstreaming of roles, procedures and mechanisms
- the active political participation of the population in local decisions
- scrutiny of the government at all levels by an informed public (and functioning civil society organisations)
- development measures are designed and implemented in line with the needs and interests of target groups and intermediaries
- local economic development, as this helps municipalities to secure income to carry out their tasks
- implementation of a multi-level and multi-actor approach

The lack of funding available to partners, in particular municipalities, but also to intermediaries that are to generate broad-based effects, is viewed as the biggest risk to sustainability. The inability to predict political processes is also regarded as a key risk factor.

Poverty reduction is mainstreamed to a greater degree in objectives systems (objectives and indicators) and in the implementation of development measures that also incorporate local development elements. These projects/programmes are all located in Latin America, and were the only ones that conducted an independent poverty analysis.

Eleven development measures work towards reducing the political dimension of poverty by strengthening political participation. Most of the development measures aim to achieve direct results in terms of the political dimension of poverty, by pursuing measures to promote participatory planning processes and open up municipalities to participatory scrutiny, and to some extent through civic education and
awareness-raising activities. In one development measure (Chile), the poverty marker assigned seems too ambitious, whereas the opposite applies in two others (Costa Rica and El Salvador), particularly when compared with the only development measure that was assigned the marker SUA.

It is clear from all reports that the appropriate gender markers were assigned. The following aspects are praised:

- the systematic integration of gender aspects in three projects/programmes
- structural results where the development measures played a part in having gender aspects included in handbooks and guidelines at the national level.

Overall, however, the following significant shortfalls were encountered when it came to taking account of gender aspects:

- Eight development measures did not conduct a gender analysis.
- None of the development measures had drafted its own gender strategy.
- Only eight development measures fulfilled the criteria of the G-1 marker they were assigned.
- None of the development measures implemented a gender-oriented monitoring system.
- Projects/programme-specific gender officers can only carry out their tasks if they have unwavering and constant support from the project/programme manager.

As regards strengthening the partners’ capacity to act,20 four development measures were assessed as ‘good’, eight as ‘satisfactory’, and two as ‘unsatisfactory’. Success at the macro level received the poorest rating by far. Key success factors were:

- intensive support to partners for applying newly acquired skills;
- the drafting of handbooks and guidelines;
- the use of national training institutions to generate broad-based effects as well;
- strong motivation on the partner side;
- a strong will to reform at the macro level;
- a ‘well-developed’ initial situation, in other words, the partner organisation has already built its capacity to act to a certain degree.

Key factors influencing failure include:

- weaknesses in management and internal problems (particularly noticeable at municipal associations);
- the extreme politicisation of all public institutions;
- a lack of sufficient financial and personnel resources, in order to mainstream innovations and independently sustain them.

For the most part, all development measures conformed with the three principles of sustainable development. Some concessions must be made with regard to the holistic approach, as not all development measures deal with all levels, and the programme concept does not always include the different dimensions of decentralisation. In some countries, the project/programme concepts do not deal with the economic role that municipalities play, which does little to help consolidate the “municipality” as an administrative unit. The process orientation of projects/programmes is particularly prevalent, and weaknesses have more to do with implementation problems than with structural issues. All development measures

---

20 See Section 4.3 for an explanation of how the strengthening of partners’ capacity to act was assessed.
pursue a highly value-oriented approach. Neither the reports nor the development measures themselves deal with corruption in enough detail, however.

9.2 Regional and sector-specific experience

All projects/programmes reflect the framework conditions in their results chains in a transparent manner. The majority of projects/programmes try to shape the framework conditions, either by helping to improve the regulatory framework, or by triggering change processes that ultimately aim to change the administrative or political culture. As regards the manner in which these themes are treated, no regional differences can be detected from the objectives systems of the development measures.

No significant regional differences can be identified either in terms of the achievement of results at the micro level. Capacity development of the municipal administration and the strengthening of political participation are possible to more or less the same degree in all regions. The funds and human resources available to municipalities, which are probably very different in 'typical' African countries than in Latin American countries, may influence the results level and sustainability too, no doubt. However, the reports do not provide any details in this regard.

The degree to which a lack of political will in some cases (which is more noticeable in 'typical' African countries) influences the achievement of objectives at the micro level tends to be of little consequence. A lack of resources and weak statehood in 'typical' African countries are of greater consequence at this level, and jeopardise sustainability. A similar situation applies to the promotion of institutions at meso level (municipal associations, municipal supervisory authority, educational institutions).

Results at the macro level generally depend on the political framework conditions and the level of statehood, and are difficult to influence. Whereas no reports mention that projects/programmes helped put decentralisation on the political agenda, development measures outside 'typical' African countries seemed more successful in bringing about change at macro level. It is noticeable in all regions, however, that positive experience at micro level tends to increase the capacity to act at national level.

Of the framework conditions that cannot be influenced in the short term at least, the level of statehood in partner countries has the greatest influence on whether projects/programmes succeed or fail. Weak state structures, a lack of financial strength at the government level, a poorly developed political culture and corruption are all factors that occur more frequently in 'typical' African countries. The objectives systems do not always realistically reflect the degree to which these factors can be influenced. The projects/programmes have very little scope for effectively intervening in these systems, which are shaped to a large degree by material interests.

Serious risks are posed by potential changes to the framework conditions such as governmental elections, conflict and other unforeseeable political crises. In countries where experience with municipalities is short-lived and human resources are weak ('typical African' countries), municipal elections frequently result in the election of completely new municipal councils and staff, which wipes out capacity development efforts. Although changes of this kind did not threaten decentralisation reform in any of the countries reviewed, they did delay the achievement of objectives and increase the effort required in this context. In at least one
country, however, there were reports that conditions improved after elections. The lack of statehood in some countries posed a risk for the sustainability of results.

Most development measures support the development of capacities for the representation of political interests at the local level by promoting participatory planning and control processes. At the national level, most of the development measures provide assistance to municipal associations. Only a limited degree of success was achieved in this context, however. This is partly due to the close ties between some associations and the political elite, and in some African countries to distinct management deficits that could not be influenced by the development measures.

In three African countries, NGO umbrella organisations and networks are supported that incorporate their interests at the national level into sub-aspects of decentralisation reform. Here, DED assigns experts to support ongoing capacity development and provides funding for national personnel and equipment, whereas GTZ provides complementary inputs by supporting strategic individual aspects. In all three countries, pilot measures are conducted to identify the umbrella organisations’ capacity to act. Currently, all umbrella organisations rely on donor funds to finance key personnel and some activities. The sustainability of results is still questionable.

Most reports consider that the multi-level approach is being successfully implemented. Networking of the levels is usually assessed as positive, whereby the pilot measures that allowed roles between the levels to be practised are given a particular mention. Methodologically, this was achieved by initiating and supporting learning and communication processes. Thematically, this approach was most frequently used in municipal development planning, followed by financial administration and the municipal supervisory authority. Experience gained in this field at the local level was processed, and used to draft diverse handbooks and guidelines that were used at the national level and in municipalities outside the intervention zone.

The most important success factor for incorporating locally acquired experience into national discussion processes is the provision of a clear mandate by and the coordination of activities with the partner organisation that will process this experience. The partner side was involved in this process from the very start. In projects/programmes that implemented pilot measures without an explicit mandate to do so, i.e. that tried to use a multi-level approach without prior agreement among all involved levels, acceptance at the national level was significantly lower and standardisation or dissemination of these measures was hindered or completely impossible.

Successful multi-level approaches do not support each level to the same degree, but instead tailor interventions in line with demand, needs, opportunities, interests and content. They are organised so that they allow a close relationship to be forged with the partners, and are flexible enough to react as required to fluctuations in economic and other framework conditions (changes in staff, political problems and so on), and sometimes only work with some partners at a distance, if appropriate.

The report on Bolivia takes a look at the relationship between the multi-level approach and the development measure’s component/organisational structure. The question is to what degree does the component structure of the development measure – or the organisational structure, which is often based on the component structure – partially cancel out or at the very least reduce the effect of the multi-level approach. Although the information provided in the evaluation reports does not allow
any definite conclusions to be drawn, some experience is outlined that demonstrates the particular type of challenges that this approach poses for internal communication mechanisms and management capacities in the development measures.

The target groups are not assigned to the direct results level of any of the results chains. Most objectives systems assign them to indirect results, others – with longer results chains – to the level of highly aggregated results. This corresponds to today’s understanding of TC, which is based on a structural approach. The majority of the development measures do, however, achieve direct results at target group level by promoting political participation. Target groups are also directly addressed through certain cross-cutting themes. Latin American development measures have enough resources to cofinance municipal projects, and thus achieve direct results among target groups. This is not the case in African countries.

Civil society is sustainably involved at the local level in almost all development measures through grassroots organisations and NGOs, by promoting political participation. At the national level, only a few development measures promote individual NGOs and their umbrella organisations. In several development measures, DED is primarily responsible for the institutional promotion of NGOs, whereas GTZ only supports strategic one-off actions. The reports clearly show that intensive assistance to local NGOs is the key success factor in allowing them to clarify their self-image and practise their roles, and develop a key strategic orientation (institutional capacity building). The instrument of advisory services complements these activities well, even if different working cultures and the need to safeguard corporate identities mean that increased coordination efforts are still required in most development measures.

The biggest obstacle for sustainable capacity development of civil society organisations is the distinct lack of own funding, in Africa in particular. This means of course that it is very difficult to retain skilled personnel.

Few reports mention cooperation with the private sector apart from its involvement in local planning processes. In the development measures that do cooperate with the private sector, themes include local economic development and boosting municipal tax revenue.

9.3 Experience in relation to service provision, programme design, cooperation and contract management

In almost all development measures, the multilevel approach, flexible management systems and the simultaneous use of sectoral, in-process and organisational advice were viewed as appropriate, and in the isolated cases where these were lacking, this was regarded as a major shortfall. All reports stress that a reform process as complex as decentralisation requires significant inputs of all advisory elements, and above all needs long-term support and the flexible application of different advisory instruments. TC is regarded as the correct instrument for achieving the objectives targeted by each of the development measures.

The principle of ‘joined-up development cooperation’ has not yet been realised. Even development measures that are based on joint programme proposals lack well-coordinated planning and implementation processes, which means that synergies are not fully leveraged.

The different levels of funding available to development measures can only be justified to a
certain extent. It is hard to explain the gap in funds earmarked for local subsidies (which ranges from EUR 41,500/p.a. to EUR 575,000/p.a.) for comparable measures.

Almost all programme concepts include plans for pilot municipalities. Whereas some measures use a very clear-cut, traditional concept (small number of pilot municipalities; partner side is responsible for comprehensive dissemination of experience), the reasons for selecting pilot municipalities are not transparent enough, and the capacities of partner organisations to use the experience were assessed too optimistically or were not analysed in sufficient detail in the project/programme concept.

Successful donor coordination ultimately relies on the partner country actively taking on this task. The reports clearly show that donor coordination is not as successful in cases where it is carried out by the donors themselves.

In general, project steering is viewed as professional in the reports. Only three projects/programmes indicate that project steering is not as professional as it could be, though no specific conclusions can be drawn, as explained previously. Several reports assess project steering by BMZ quite negatively, due to problems as regards donor coordination, political dialogue, and the premature termination of programme components, which affects the programme’s success.

Only one report states that a higher-level steering body (similar to a supervisory board) works well. Most development measures never intended to establish such a body in the first place; only a minority of those that did implemented these plans.

Experience with assigning (sub-)components to subcontractors indicates that increased coordination efforts are required across the board. The reports do not allow a conclusion to be made as to whether subcontracting was worthwhile.
10. Recommendations

10.1 Cross-sectoral recommendations

The following points should be borne in mind to enhance relevance:

- The political will and real priorities of the partners should be analysed and presented more clearly when examining the project/programme context.
- The political dialogue conducted by BMZ should place greater emphasis on the theme of ‘political will’ in discussions with partners.
- The programme design should make it easier for the project/programme to shift the weighting of planned measures to the meso and micro level in the event of temporary difficulties at macro level.
- If crises suddenly arise that shift the partner government’s priority to other themes, appropriate strategies should be devised together with the implementing organisation and the partners to react to this change.
- Options should be worked out for the projects/programmes and especially for the partner government, on the one hand to continue important activities and on the other hand to do everything possible to prevent reforms from failing due to temporary problems.

The effectiveness of the development measures could be enhanced by:

- establishing realistic objectives and indicators that are geared towards the anticipated level of sustainability;
- realistic analysis of the extent to which partner organisations will be able to independently translate innovations and capacity building into actions;
- benchmarked indicators that bear in mind the major framework conditions that cannot be influenced;
- openly discussing the possibly divergent degree to which the indicators are binding, and the possible consequences for the partners on the one hand and the project/programme staff on the other if indicators are not met;
- clearly establishing the absolute number of municipalities to be directly supported in the course of the project/programme. If the number of supported municipalities is not clearly stated, an indicator like ‘80% of the supported municipalities’ is not a true benchmark;
- the long-term training of intermediaries, which is considered just as important as implementing pilot measures;
- clearly defining the required balance between demand orientation and targeted activities, and issuing corresponding guidelines.

The only recommendation that can be identified from the reports as regards improving impact is to do more to safeguard effectiveness and sustainability.

To enhance efficiency, the following aspects must be taken into account:

\[\text{21 The frame of reference for GTZ’s work is quite clearly the BMZ implementation order, and staff are judged, among other things, according to whether the planned results are achieved. However, the ’joint’ project or programme is not always included in the partners’ internal frame of reference. This means that partner staff are rarely judged according to whether the programme objectives are achieved.}\]
Efforts must be stepped up to achieve greater harmonisation within German DC.

BMZ should assume a greater role in that context and monitor the coordination process more closely.

BMZ, GTZ and DED should endeavour to reach a better general agreement on how the sectoral hierarchies are to be designed when GTZ and DED work together in different constellations.

Clearer guidelines are required in order to flesh out and implement the existing agreements between these organisations. If this is not done, coordination work is off-loaded onto the ‘project/programme level’.

The time and effort required to coordinate activities with subcontractors must be reduced by means of flexible but clear contractual arrangements.

Potential synergies between the components implemented by subcontractors and the other components should also be clearly identified in the contracts, and the relevant expectations should be stated as ‘deliverables’.

The following aspects would help to enhance the sustainability of the results achieved:

- The capacities of partners who are to continue applying the tools and procedures independently after the end of the development measure must be durably developed.

- Expectations should remain realistic so as not to merely achieve short-term results that cannot be sustained in the medium and long term.

Based on the reports, the following recommendations can be made on various themes:

- If pilot measures are to be carried out within a development measure, and these measures are to generate lessons learned and disseminate innovations (broad-based effectiveness and catalyst function), it must be clarified at the planning stage whether the development measure or partner organisations shall or must perform such dissemination outside the intervention zone or priority region. Partner capacities to independently continue these activities (human resources and funding) must be borne in mind in this context, as previously mentioned. If necessary, follow-up support must be considered.

- Existing framework conditions such as high staff fluctuation and a low level of education should not be counted as risks, but should be used as key data for designing the development measure. Only potential changes in the framework conditions should be classed as risks (elections, conflict, etc.).

- Monitoring systems are often geared exclusively to measuring indicators, which seldom cover all major dimensions of the established objectives. Monitoring systems should therefore always record data that extend beyond the measurement of indicators as well.

- Greater attention must be paid to systematically promoting service providers, most
of whom operate in the private sector and are also in a position to offer a viable product to local clients (municipalities) after assistance has ended.

The following recommendations can be made based on the fact that the above-mentioned aspects are not sufficiently considered by the projects/programmes (at least as far as can be seen from the reports):

- **Self-evaluation**\(^\text{23}\) should be put to greater use as a means of recording the results of capacity development processes. If the expected benefit is defined together with the beneficiaries before the measure is conducted, this makes it possible to record existing skills and their use, and especially to conduct evaluations to record the benefit after a specified utilisation period.

- Very few reports refer to experience through **horizontal learning** (peer learning), i.e. exchanges between actors at the same level, especially between municipalities. This should be an important advisory tool.

- **Coaching**\(^\text{24}\) is seldom mentioned, despite being a comparatively inexpensive method for supporting capacity development processes.

---

\(^{23}\) While various self-evaluation methods are conceivable, this refers especially to a process in which the beneficiaries (moderated by the project/programme) identify the concrete effects that they expect capacity development measures to have on their work before these measures commence. After an appropriate time, this is then evaluated by the beneficiaries (again, with project/programme moderation), allowing statements to be made about results and timely adjustments to be made to capacity development activities.

\(^{24}\) Without claiming to provide a general definition, coaching here should be understood as a non-intensive support process where the coach gives regular constructive feedback, and provides more intensive sporadic advice to beneficiaries as required.

### 10.2 Sectoral recommendations

These are only some of the recommendations included in the reports. Recommendations that refer to individual projects and programmes have only been included here if they are of general interest. The sectoral recommendations obviously overlap with some of the cross-sectoral recommendations.

- The **multi-level approach** must be differentiated in terms of sector and time span, and must be adjusted to the real possibilities of achieving results at the various levels, while maintaining the required flexibility.

- In cases where the **political will** is weak, activities should concentrate on the micro and meso levels, whereas **political dialogue** should spearhead activities at the macro level, in close coordination with the development measure and with roles being clearly defined.

- As an important part of activities, supporting the service provider function of municipalities should always include practical learning from the **implementation of municipal projects**.

- The **component structure** should match the thematic priority areas and should not prevent clear responsibility being apportioned for achieving indicators.

- Thought should be given to whether the direct **adoption of component objectives** and/or indicators from **national programmes** or strategies does justice to the real capacity of a TC project or programme, since this can usually only cover subsections.

- The **processing of local experience** should be based on a clear ‘mandate’ from the partner. Building on this, the required operational steps should be defined in joint
agreements so that the insights gained can also be disseminated via the partner organisation.

- In countries with scarce human and financial resources and a low level of statehood, expectations concerning the degree to which objectives can be achieved should remain modest, and much more time must be allowed for implementing decentralisation reform.

- Greater consideration should be given to the working relationships and mechanisms between municipal government and municipal councils.

- Greater use should be made of the potential influence and inherent interest in municipal services on the part of members of local groups like the Rotary and Lions Clubs.

- A clear ‘marketing’ approach should be adopted to support civic awareness. This approach should differentiate between the most important population groups for decentralisation reform, identify appropriate forms of communication and communication content for each group and thereby aim to maximise the relevant results.

- Members of groups and organisations should be prepared for effective involvement in participatory processes and receive the required capacity development to facilitate future participatory processes.

- Municipal development planning must be linked more closely with budget planning in most African countries. This means the current practice of drawing up municipal plans that are more like needs assessments must be flanked by operational planning that is based on these plans and is viable, i.e. can be financed.

- In all cases, municipal planning should be primarily geared to the municipality’s own resources (municipal income, available human resources etc.), and only then fall back on external resources.

- The potential market for service providers who could give specific advice to municipalities after the end of the development measures should be examined more closely, and service providers should be correspondingly prepared for their future tasks.

- Promotion of mergers between national NGOs should address highly specific sectoral themes (e.g. producing a handbook on budget analysis in Cameroon) in addition to general capacity development.

- The funding of local and national NGOs should be given greater consideration, and the strategic orientation of local NGOs should also be more strongly supported.

10.3 Recommendations for contract and cooperation management and cooperation arrangements

These recommendations are not directed at specific addressees since almost all of them concern several different bodies. Apportioning responsibility to certain individuals would entail the risk of other actors giving up responsibility. The recommendations concern the contract and cooperation management system and with it everyone involved who bears a share of the responsibility for improving the system.

- Policy dialogue has to be seen as part of ‘joined-up DC’. It therefore needs to be closely coordinated with the interventions of implementing organisations and included as a design element in priority area strategy papers.
• It must be ensured that overall funds and funds for local subsidies and financing are in line with the objectives and indicators, or that the indicators are adjusted to the funding level.

• The specific division of tasks between TC and FC when setting up and operating municipal infrastructure funds, which appear to be playing an increasingly important role in joint projects/programmes, should always be discussed between the relevant organisations rather than leaving such negotiations to actors in the field.

• There should be a limit to the workload imposed on the programme managers by delegating priority area coordination and donor coordination tasks to them. The role of TC should be clearly explained to and perceived by partners and other donors.

• Specific steering bodies (high-level steering committees) for the development measures should only be involved if there is a clear need for them, and not just to replace inadequate access to the political level. Good donor coordination by partners should obviate the need for such bodies.

• The division of labour between DED and GTZ for supporting institutions at meso level (with DED taking on intensive capacity development and GTZ only intervening in the case of strategic actions) should be stepped up and given a stronger strategic thrust within joint programmes.

• Cooperation with political foundations should be increased in those countries where cooperation with political parties might be a promising point of entry, but where the DC programmes operated by GTZ, DED and KfW cannot act in this context for fear of negative consequences when it comes to implementing their other activities.

• Greater effort should be made to create and implement synergies between components by giving adequate consideration to the corresponding mechanisms in staff job descriptions and particularly in the objectives agreed with employees.

• A coordinated dual-track approach should be pursued to a greater degree to promote municipalities and local civil society so that, in addition to fostering pressure from grassroots organisations, this pressure is thematically connected and synchronised directly with advisory services.

• It should be considered whether the current practice of awarding contracts to subcontractors according to country codes might be replaced or complemented by a system that gives greater attention to comparative advantages and efficiency.

• One alternative to the current contract awarding practice, which usually places contracts only for components or subcomponents, might be to award contracts for entire development measures to subcontractors.

• The time and effort invested in coordination with subcontractors must be reduced by means of flexible and clear contractual arrangements.

• Potential synergies between the components implemented by subcontractors and the other components should also be clearly identified in the contracts and the relevant expectations be stated as ‘deliverables’.
10.4 Recommendations regarding evaluation methodology

Assessment of the evaluation reports was hindered by a number of factors because the evaluation methodology was applied slightly differently from report to report. The following recommendations are intended to help identify possible ways to enable better comparison of evaluations and make it easier to draw conclusions from them.

Guide to deviations from the standard weighting

While it is understandable that experts attach great value to their own specialism, this cannot be used as a reason for justifying a weighting that deviates from the standard. A criterion (e.g. effectiveness) should not be given a higher weighting for diametrically opposite reasons (early on or late in the programme cycle). Clear guidelines and harmonised quality control would be useful in this context.

Alternative weighting mechanism

Rather than producing guidelines that can be equally understood by all evaluators, it would be easier to adopt a mechanism whereby evaluators provide a brief outline, separate from the report, of their reasons for weighting criteria. A committee set up by GTZ’s Evaluation Unit would then weight the criteria according to a uniform rationale. This would probably save the evaluators work and ensure that the weightings are standardised.

Weighting for impact

The evaluation reports showed that the assessment of impact in ongoing projects and programmes essentially depends on theoretical judgements of how plausible the results chain is. However, this analysis should be reserved for the section on rating the concept (Section 2.2). Since the evaluation is supposed to be based on data, facts and figures, it should be examined whether the weighting for impact should be generally downgraded to ‘less important’ for all ongoing development measures.

Unofficial policies and relevance

The different priority given to decentralisation in the official statements and agreements of some countries and the reality of their government policy led to some projects/programmes receiving a lower rating. This does not appear justified, neither from the viewpoint of the evaluated projects and programmes nor in terms of their comparability. In all cases, the projects and programmes made every effort to meet the original jointly agreed objectives all the same, by taking flexible action, and therefore ‘continue to do the right thing’. Political declarations of intent put forward by partner governments as a pretext for receiving donor funds should be questioned in the course of political dialogue and may influence effectiveness. The actual priority given to decentralisation in the programme concept must be used as a guideline for defining objectives and indicators, and this can be assessed during evaluation. However, it makes no sense to reduce the relevance rating of development measures, because the implementing organisation should be entitled to assume that the agreed objectives are binding.

Temporary changes in priority and relevance

Various kinds of unforeseen crises (conflict, political fight for survival) are often cited as reasons for a lower relevance rating. However, these are usually temporary events that should not reduce the relevance as such, since they question neither the basic commitment of the partner nor the agreed objectives.

Instead, it can be expected that the objectives will take longer to achieve, but this should be
borne in mind when rating ‘effectiveness’ rather than ‘relevance’.

**Efficiency and time/effort**

The guideline on rating efficiency is intended to prevent evaluators from reducing the efficiency rating based on the differing degrees of time and effort required to achieve the same objectives level in projects/programmes with different initial situations (e.g. in terms of capacity development). It is not possible to assess the macroeconomic efficiency in the framework of such evaluations, and attempts to do so can only provide generalised and unfounded statements. This should not be part of the evaluators’ duties.

**Previous projects and project pooling**

Some of the development measures were the result of merging previous projects. This gave them a certain level of continuity and therefore provided results that should not be the subject of evaluation but were nevertheless reflected in the ratings. It is by no means certain that a solution can be found to this problem, but better guidelines for evaluators could make it easier to draw the line more clearly and enable more uniform analysis and presentation.

**Representativity of random samples**

The different types of decentralisation projects and programmes included in the random sample for evaluation, together with their limited number, mean that the experience of less ‘typical’ projects/programmes receives less attention. It should be examined whether the random sample could not be made more homogeneous in future. In the case in point, this would have meant excluding the programme in Chile and the project in Serbia because they offer hardly any additional insights as compared with the other projects and programmes.

**Reporting specifications/Structure**

In all, although the reports largely comply with the Guidelines on evaluating the success of projects/programmes, their form of presentation varies widely and therefore makes comparison and analysis more difficult. It should be examined whether the key questions in the Guidelines and the notes in the specimen report structure could not be put to greater use for structuring the reports.

**Sectoral questions and results orientation of the evaluations**

The notes on the sectoral questions concerning Section 2.3 of the ToR on which the evaluations are based, cover four and a half pages, whereas little more than three pages are reserved for answering the questions in the evaluation reports. This imbalance is clearly noticeable in the reports in that it substantially reduces the information they provide, and consequently the level of information in this synthesis report. Strict limitation to just a few themes of special importance would have provided deeper insight. The results orientation of the independent evaluations should not preclude giving the required details of activities and methods in order to explain successes and failures. The right balance has yet to be struck here in order to make the evaluation reports more instructive for all users.
Annexes:

Annex 1: Terms of reference for the synthesis report on decentralisation
Annex 2: (Sample) Terms of reference for individual evaluations in 2008
Annex 3: Guidelines on evaluating the success of projects/programmes
I. Background and object of the evaluation

GTZ extended and optimised its evaluation system in 2005, the major innovation being the introduction of independent evaluations on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The Evaluation Unit commissions independent research institutes and consulting firms to conduct these evaluations in order to review GTZ’s work from an external perspective. These institutes and firms in turn contract the services of one international and one national evaluator from the partner country. Each year, GTZ commissions about 30 independent evaluations (interim, final and ex-post evaluations) in specific thematic areas. In 2008, the priority areas were ‘decentralisation’ and ‘water’. Uniform evaluation criteria and a uniform assessment grid enable comparison of the evaluations.

After the Evaluation Unit has accepted the evaluation reports submitted by the evaluators, each year it arranges for a synthesis report to be compiled for each thematic area (a comparative study of the evaluation reports). These serve to promote institutional learning at GTZ and to report to BMZ. The results contribute to knowledge management at GTZ and can also be used for PR activities.

The object of this synthesis report is:

14 evaluation reports from 2008 on the priority area 'decentralisation':
- 12 interim evaluations (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ghana, Georgia, Guatemala, the Philippines, Rwanda, Serbia, and South Africa)
- Two final evaluations (Chile and Malawi)
- No ex-post-evaluations were assessed.

II. Objectives of the synthesis report

The evaluation aims to:
- summarise the results of the 14 individual evaluations;
- identify recurring strengths, weaknesses, and factors determining success and failure. In cases where deficits are identified, it is to be clarified whether these are due to an omission or to missing documentation in the reports.
- identify cross-project/programme lessons learned and recommendations;
- promote the increased use of evaluation findings by addressees and the active incorporation of these findings into the evaluation process (learning café).
III. Tasks

To evaluate and process the 14 evaluation reports from 2008 in the thematic priority area decentralisation, and compare them from a quantitative and qualitative viewpoint.

The questions to be answered are derived from the following report structure:

Contents

Summary

1. Introduction
1.1 Background, objectives and object of the synthesis report
1.2 For the reader’s guidance

2. Objectives and activity areas
- Provide a brief summary of each project/programme evaluated.
  
  Key questions:
  - Which are the main objectives pursued by the projects/programmes?
  - Over the course of time, can trends be established in the objectives systems of the evaluated projects and programmes?
  - What are the differences between the decentralisation projects/programmes evaluated (approach and outputs)? What similarities exist between them (common denominator)?

3. Rating according to DAC criteria (See also the definition and key questions for DAC criteria in Annex 3: ‘Guidelines on evaluating the success of projects/programmes’)

3.1 Relevance
3.2 Effectiveness
3.3 Impact
3.4 Efficiency
3.5 Sustainability

25 Rationale for this question: There are stark differences between some of the 15 projects/programmes evaluated. In some cases, they ‘only’ deal with municipal development, and do not provide national policy advice.
In each of these areas:

- Rating (average and distribution) and weighting (average and distribution) of the criterion in the reports
- Reasons for weightings that deviate from the standard (factor 2)? Were these reasons convincing?
- Reasons for good and poor ratings (frequency)? Can ‘patterns’ be identified from them, i.e. factors determining success or failure?
- Conclusions

3.6 Synopsis of Sections 3.1 to 3.5

- Overall rating (average and distribution) in the reports
- In how many cases did (poor) ratings of individual criteria lead to a downgrading of the overall rating?

The ratings assigned in the individual evaluations must be used for the analysis (Sections 3.1 to 3.6). In other words, the ratings must not be changed within the framework of this synthesis report.

4. Rating of cross-cutting development themes

4.1 Poverty reduction and MDGs

4.1.2 Mainstreaming in development strategies (in the field)

4.1.3 Poverty marker used in the offers and its distribution

- Design: To what extent do/did the development measures comply with these markers?
- Was the project/programme design differentiated according to target groups, and was a poverty analysis performed? Were poverty analyses used for the project/programme design?
- In how many development measures were poverty impacts achieved?
  - Did the project/programme promote the participation of poor people in economic and political processes?
  - Does the project/programme have positive results in terms of poverty reduction?
  - Does the project/programme help to remedy structural problems identified by the national poverty reduction strategy?
  - Were questions of equitable distribution addressed, and if so, how? (Was not part of the TORs)
  - How many people have benefited from the poverty impact or will do so in future?
• What are the reasons for achieving and not achieving poverty impacts? 
   Can ‘patterns’ be identified from them, i.e. factors determining success or failure? Are there findings that are specific to given regions?

• Conclusions

4.2 Gender equality

• Gender markers of the development measures (distribution)

• To what extent do/did the development measures comply with these markers?
  • G1 and G2: Was the project/programme design gender-responsive and was a gender analysis conducted (gender-based analysis of the initial situation)?
  • Was the G-0 marker awarded on the basis of a gender analysis? (Note: This was obligatory for development measures that started as of the end of 2005.)
  • Are there conclusive examples of the mainstreaming of the gender aspect in decentralisation projects/programmes?

• How many development measures achieved ‘adequate’ gender impacts?
  • Do women and men make an equal contribution to shaping the project/programme?
  • Do women and men derive equal benefit from the project/programme?
  • Did the project/programme help to reduce structural gender discrimination and thus to achieve a positive change in the gender ratio? Was one gender discriminated against? Was this made up for by positive measures?
  • What are the reasons for achieving and not achieving gender impacts? 
    Can ‘patterns’ be identified from them, i.e. factors determining success or failure? Are there findings that are specific to given regions?

• Conclusions (also in terms of how gender-responsive aspects can be mainstreamed in decentralisation projects/programmes).

• Conclusions

4.3 Effects on the partner’s capacity to act (capacity development)

(See Chapter 3 of the evaluation reports, above all)

• In how many development measures were (very) good/satisfactory/inadequate successes achieved in terms of capacity development, and at which levels (individual, institutional, society as a whole) were these successes achieved?
  • Did the advisory services have an effect on the partner’s capacity to act?
  • Did it prove possible for pilot approaches to be successfully multiplied or adjusted by the partner structures?
• Did the development measures have an effect on the design of national policies and laws, and the stakeholders’ ability to shape such policies and laws? And on interaction between the state, the economy and civil society?

• What are the reasons for successful/unsuccessful capacity development? Can ‘patterns’ be identified, i.e. factors determining success or failure? Are there findings that are specific to given regions?

• Conclusions

5. Concept of sustainable development

• To what extent and how frequently did the work method used by the projects and programmes reflect GTZ’s concept of sustainable development (holistic, process-oriented and value-oriented approach)?
  - Holistic approach: linkage of economic, social and ecological objectives dimensions; sectoral, organisational and policy advice; the micro, meso and macro levels
  - Process-oriented approach: help for self-help; establishing transparency of actors’ interests; promoting the interaction of state, civil society and the private sector
  - Value-oriented approach: promoting democracy, the rule of law and human rights; gender equality; good governance; a social and ecological market economy

• Conclusions

6. Regional-specific and sectoral assessment

6.1 Comparison between regional-specific and global elements (including stages) - significance of the setting/reform environment

• How and why do regional and country-specific elements manifest themselves in approaches used in decentralisation projects/programmes and their results?

• What are the political conditions that determine whether decentralisation is put on the political agenda in a partner country, and what effect do these conditions have (success factors, obstacles)?

• How high are the risks posed by environmental conditions (realistically speaking): What factors in the reform environment/setting are viewed as posing a risk to decentralisation?

• Why do these factors have a different effect as regards the level of risk? Why, for example, do projects/programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean seem to be more successful than those in Africa)? Can ‘standard’ risks be identified? What are the consequences for the relevant decentralisation approaches?

• What role do the different stages/maturity levels play in the decentralisation processes of countries/regions?
• To what degree is the government's political will a success factor or an obstacle? How and why does the setting in partner countries positively or negatively influence the success of a project/programme?

6.2 Capacity development for representation of political interests (consensus-building and decision-making) in the decentralisation process

• How do the projects/programmes use capacity development to support actors and processes, in order to put decentralisation on the country's long-term political agenda?

• How do the projects/programmes support different interests (interest groups), in order to enable these to be successfully incorporated into consensus-building and decision-making in decentralisation reform? To what degree have these efforts been successful?

6.3 Partnerships based on a multi-level-approach

(cf. Section III e on processing the ToRs, for example), questions 1, 3 and 4)

• Micro/meso/macro level: To what extent has a multilevel approach proven successful? How successfully networked are the different levels? Do the individual dimensions of decentralisation differ, and if so, why?

• What success factors determine whether advisory services to the networked local, regional and national levels are sustainable (elevator principle)?

• How do the projects/programmes ensure that national policy advice is designed so as to incorporate the experience and knowledge of the decentralised levels?

• How do the projects/programmes ensure that capacity development measures at the decentralised level take account of and communicate national regulations?

• Target groups: Are we really reaching our target groups? How are we doing this?

• At what level are target groups addressed?

• How do the projects/programmes convincingly prove that they achieve results at the target group level?

• What success factors achieve results at the target group level, what are the obstacles, and what role does the participation of civil society and the private sector play in this context?

6.4 Involvement of non-governmental actors (civil society and the private sector)?

(cf. Section III e on processing the ToRs, for example), question 6)

• How are civil society and the private sector involved in the decentralisation approach or project/programme approach? What role are they assigned in this context? What are the success factors for sustainable involvement?

• How are the results of the project/programme consolidated as a result?
• Has cooperation with civil society - in particular in the DED-assisted projects/programmes - proven worthwhile?

7. Mode of delivery, programme design and cooperation arrangements

• Which modes of delivery were appropriate and why? Was technical cooperation the appropriate instrument? Were prerequisites for programme-based approaches (e.g. sector-wide approaches) created?
• Are there findings, especially in Africa, that indicate whether BMZ's preference for using technical assistance pools and/or sector baskets is more successful than DC via direct contributions?
• Which elements of programme design or of the approach used are success factors for optimising results? Which elements hamper positive results? Please provide reasons for your answer. Which prerequisites must be in place so that these success factors can be replicated for other countries/regions?
• What success factors determine whether the different modes of delivery and approaches used by donors work together effectively? How important is cooperation with other implementing organisations/donors for the success of a project/programme?
• In general, how were DC/IC partnerships and their quality rated? (Cooperation and delineation between FC/TC, joined-up development cooperation, donor coordination and GTZ’s role, requirements of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness).
• What obstacles hinder partnerships or result from them? Why do these obstacles occur?
• Compared with other projects/programmes, how successful has 'German joined-up development cooperation' been?
• Which particular strengths and weaknesses were (frequently) observed? Do partnerships increase and reduce the project’s/programme’s efficiency?
• Do partnerships differ as regards the individual dimensions of decentralisation? Why? What are the advantages?

8. Contract and cooperation management

• Which particular strengths and weaknesses were (frequently) observed? What conclusions have you drawn as a result?
• How was cooperation with partner institutions assessed? Which particular strengths and weaknesses were (frequently) observed? What recommendations can be made, if any?
• When did it prove worthwhile to implement measures with subcontractors (instead of with GTZ staff)? (Is there pressure to award contracts to subcontractors? Is it always expedient?)
• Were PPPs considered? If so, what do they achieve?
9. Summary of conclusions and lessons learned

9.1 Cross-sectoral experience

9.2 Regional experience

9.4 Other experience

10. Recommendations
(Derived from chapters 3 - 9)

10.1 Cross-sectoral recommendations

10.2 Regional recommendations

10.3 Recommendations for contract and cooperation management

10.4 Other recommendations
Annex 2: (Standard) Terms of reference for individual evaluations

I. Background

Independent evaluations are conducted either during the term of a project/programme, or on completion, or in the form of an ex-post evaluation between two and five years after completion of promotion. The evaluations are steered by the Evaluation Unit. As a rule it commissions independent research bodies, institutes affiliated to universities or consulting companies to perform the evaluation. These in turn place an international expert and a local expert under contract, who evaluate the projects/programmes jointly. In addition to their own sector-specific expertise, the local expert is also able in particular to add the perspective of the partner country.

It is envisaged that 30 independent evaluations in various regions will be performed each year. The random samples each year are taken from thematic priority areas so that it will subsequently be possible to issue comparative and overarching statements. The priority themes in 2008 are decentralisation and water. The evaluation described here is part of the thematic priority area decentralization.

II. Object of the evaluation

[Brief description of the context in the country]

[Brief description of the project/programme including the prior history and any continuation within the framework of a programme, etc.]

III. Objective of the evaluation

The evaluation aims to assess the success of the project/programme. The assessment is based on five blocks of questions.

a) Assessment according to international evaluation criteria

The success of the project/programme is to be described and assessed on the basis of predefined evaluation criteria (based on facts and figures): relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability (see also Guidelines on Evaluating the Success of Projects/Programmes in the annex).

b) Assessment of the project/programme in terms of poverty reduction and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

The evaluation of the project/programme should include an assessment of the extent to which it contributes (evidence-based) to reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
Key questions:

- Was the project/programme concept differentiated by target group, and was a poverty analysis available?
- Has the project/programme fostered the involvement of the poor in economic and political processes?
- Has the project/programme had positive results in terms of reducing poverty?
- Does the project/programme help overcome structural problems identified in the national poverty reduction strategy?

c) Assessment of the project/programme in terms of promoting gender equality

The project/programme evaluation should include an assessment of the extent to which it promotes gender equality (evidence-based).

Key questions:

- Is the project/programme concept gender-differentiated and was a gender analysis available?
- Do women and men make an equal contribution to shaping the project/programme?
- Do women and men benefit equally from the project/programme?

d) Assessment of the project/programme in terms of promoting sustainable development

The project/programme evaluation should include an assessment of the extent to which it promotes sustainable development (evidence-based).

Key questions:

- Is it apparent that the project/programme uses a holistic approach (linking the economic, social and ecological dimensions of objectives; linking sectoral, organisational and policy advice; linking the micro, meso and macro levels)?
- Is it apparent that the project/programme uses a process-based approach (help for self-help; establishment of transparency of actors’ interests; mediation of the interaction between the state, civil society and the private sector)?
- Is it apparent that the project/programme uses a value-based approach (promotion of democracy, the rule of law, human rights; good governance; social and ecological market economy)?

e) Sector-related assessment of the success of the project/programme

The evaluation of success on the basis of the above criteria should in particular include an assessment of the project/programme according to theme-specific issues (based on facts and figures). Additional explanations to particular questions are in italics respectively.
These are:

1. **Linking advice on decentralisation policy with local and regional capacity development in the various phases of the policy cycle**

The central issue is how the programme or project can succeed in linking the policy field "capacity development of sub-national governmental actors" with advisory services to national political actors throughout the policy cycle (planning/setting of political priorities, financing, implementation and control) in accordance with the multi-level approach. How can elements of multi-level governance be sustainably incorporated into the different forms of decentralisation (political, administrative and fiscal)? Do the advisory services address the key development issues of poverty and gender in line with managing for development results?

**Additional explanations**

The multi-level approach employed in decentralisation programmes and projects aims to create linkages between the various levels of government (national, regional and local). The objective is to contribute to vertical checks and balances via multi-level governance. How does the programme/project address this scope? Is emphasis placed on specific phases of the policy cycle (planning/setting of political priorities, financing, implementation, control)? Is there a noticeable link between advice on national decentralisation (regulatory-policy structures and procedures) and the promotion of regional or local development? What respective weight is given to national decentralisation (political, administrative, fiscal) and to support for regional and local development? Are the links between decentralised political, administrative and fiscal structures institutionalised in line with the multi-level governance approach? What form do financial relations take within the state? Does the programme/project succeed in advising on questions of both vertical and horizontal revenue allocation? What factors impede and promote these advisory services? Which methods and instruments does the programme/project employ to practice multi-level governance, and with what degree of success? How does the programme/project decide whether to offer broad-based advice on aspects of multi-level governance, to provide advice rather on a selection of themes or to concentrate on a single issue in depth? Does advice on multi-level governance address poverty-related and distribution-related results? Does the same also apply to HIV/AIDS? How does the advice support national development strategies (including poverty reduction strategies) that take into account local and regional priorities?

2. **Division of labour between the various German development cooperation (DC) instruments, particularly technical cooperation (TC) and financial cooperation (FC)**

The central issue is how the portfolio or modes of delivery are designed. How are the potentials of the various German DC instruments effectively used to provide policy advice and promote capacity development related to the different forms of decentralisation or in the different phases of the policy cycle?
**Additional explanations**

Are the potentials of German DC harnessed by a division of labour? In which areas of decentralisation (political, administrative, fiscal) is this particularly effective? Which phases of the political cycle lend themselves best to a division of labour? What are the advantages and disadvantages of jointly institutionalising multi-level governance, and where do the instruments complement each other? Do all implementing organisations pursue the dimension of multi-level governance? If not, which scope is are prioritised by which implementing organisations to change structures and regulations between political and administrative levels?

**3. Experience-based and knowledge-based policy design**

The central issue is how the quality of steering reform can be improved. Can it be proved that the exchange of knowledge and experience is effectively incorporated and institutionalised in policy advice and policy processes for decentralisation? Does this exchange reflect distribution or gender equality criteria, and are these contents also translated into policies? Are various actors or external knowledge sustainably involved in this "iterative" learning process?

**Additional explanations**

Does the programme/project succeed in feeding the experience and knowledge gained from pilot projects in the regions and communities into the national policy advice process? Can this element of experience-based and knowledge-based national policy design (steering of decentralisation and capacity development system) be sustainably institutionalised? Which barriers are particularly noticeable? Which factors facilitate such institutionalisation? How is the aspect of "learning loops for policies" conveyed? Which actors are involved in this iterative learning process across the different levels? Are they only governmental actors? How are sector ministries and downstream authorities or the lead organisation responsible for decentralisation involved in this learning process? When selecting pilot projects at regional or local level, are only regional or local interests taken into consideration, or the interests of the national government too? Does the programme/project approach also include elements to assess the distribution results as a basis for policy design? Does the programme/project succeed in shaping the negotiation process for selecting the exemplary (pilot) learning processes in such a way that all stakeholders, especially those from disadvantaged and poor population groups, are brought on board as far as possible? Which actors can be easily involved in this process, and which cannot? Which methods and instruments does the programme/project use to ensure that all actors participate in this negotiation process? How does the programme/project succeed in keeping the stakeholders involved in this exemplary learning process throughout the entire term of the pilot projects? What role does external knowledge play in advising on policy design? How does the programme/project succeed in tapping the exemplary knowledge of other donors and involving these in the policy design process?
4. Linking deconcentrated and decentralised administration

The central issue is how the different administrative actors interact at the various levels. How does the programme/project succeed in harmonising the administrative structures and procedures? Can specific sectoral administrations be identified that are specially suitable candidates for the reform process, and if so, why?

Additional explanations

Does the programme/project succeed in harmonising the various tasks of the political and administrative actors at the respective levels? Does it take adequate account of the balance between deconcentrated and decentralised administration in order to secure a contribution to a coherent policy process? Does the programme/project gear its efforts solely to the "tasks assigned" or to "better services and public goods"? Which sectors lend themselves best to harmonising deconcentrated and decentralised administration; has the programme/project selected these sectors? Are the sectors the drivers of change? Which arenas offer themselves to the programme/project for advice on balancing the political priorities of deconcentrated tasks and decentralised tasks? What is the ratio between technical orientation and needs orientation issues when advising on deconcentrated and decentralised administration? Does the programme/project succeed in advising on the relationships between deconcentrated and decentralised administration throughout the policy cycle? Does the programme/project succeed in gaining access to the deconcentrated administration bodies that issue directives, and if so, to which? Is there a balanced relationship between policy advice and implementation advice?

5. Capacity development for the representation of political interests (consensus building and decision-making) in the decentralisation process

The central issue is how capacities can be sustainably developed to implement political decentralisation. How can the programme/project succeed in doing this on a sustainable basis? Which actors and arenas are key, and why? Is equal advisory support provided for the processes of articulating interests and representing interests, and which difficulties can be identified? Are the interests of marginalised groups such as women and poor people, and their representation, considered within capacity development?

Additional explanations

Does the programme/project succeed in indicating to the regional and local stakeholders the various arenas in which they should position their interests? Can it be assumed that the programme/project shapes capacity development in this thematic area such that the interests of actors are taken into account within the policy design process also in future (degree of institutionalisation)? Which methods and instruments does the programme/project use? Are the actors’ interest groups equally advised at national and regional level? Which criteria are applied to select the various political arenas, and are all the necessary actors (drivers of change) included in this selection? Does the selection of the arenas cover reform themes that may have a structural impact? Is the interest group advised at the right point in time and in the right arena? Are the capacities of political and administrative actors equally devel-
oped to contribute to the process of consensus building and decision-making? How is advice on consensus building and decision-making provided at the various levels? Does the programme/project succeed in implementing the multi-level approach if the central interest groups at the various levels belong to different political camps? Can it be presumed that the deficit in political problem-solving capacity is the same at all levels, and how can this be substantiated?

6. Involvement of non-governmental actors (civil society and private sector)?

The central issue is which non-governmental actors are involved in the work of the programme/project, and how. Which civil society tasks and private-sector actors are mainly worked with, and why? Are the service packages of the programme/project in this area sustainably aligned with the criteria of poverty reduction and gender equality? How does the programme/project succeed in advising on cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors, also where reservations exist?

**Additional explanations**

Does the programme/project work together with different types of non-governmental organisations? Does it take advantage of the whole range of possible civil-society groups (interest groups, service providers (knowledge broking/further training/public goods and services), watchdogs) in the various advisory fields (especially multi-level governance and knowledge-based policy advice)? How are disadvantaged and poor population groups taken into consideration as actors, and empowered to voice their interests in the political decision-making processes? Is cooperation with individual groups particularly difficult or easy? Which reservations does the national, regional and local level have about cooperation with non-governmental actors? At which points of entry does the programme/project successfully act to dispel these reservations? When does this succeed? How does the programme/project help non-governmental actors to move from being cooperation partners of the programme/pilot project to legitimised stakeholders in the political and administrative system (national, regional, local)?

How can the involvement of non-governmental actors be sustainably and effectively institutionalised in state reform programmes/projects at all levels? Are traditional actors (traditional rulers) successfully involved? Are individual political and administrative levels (national, regional, local) particularly suited for involving non-governmental actors? Are the non-governmental actors adequately involved in all phases of the policy cycle? How does the programme/project succeed in measuring the sustainability with which non-governmental actors are involved? Which prerequisites must the non-governmental actors meet to be adequately involved at the respective levels (national, regional, local) of policy design? How does the programme/project succeed in tapping the potential of non-governmental actors to achieve broad-based, sustainable results?

IV. Implementation

a) Responsibilities

The **Evaluation Unit** is responsible for planning and steering GTZ’s annual independent evaluation programme. The subcontractor is **Institution X**. It places an international expert and a national expert
under contract for the purpose of this evaluation. The institution is responsible for conducting the indi-
vidual evaluation, for quality assurance and for reporting on the evaluation.

b) Inputs

The institution shall provide the following inputs:

- inspect and analyze relevant documents
- produce an inception report, which also reflects on the available e-VAL results and the original facts and figures as documented in the appraisal report, base-line data and specified indicators. The draft of the inception report for discussion with the Evaluation Unit is to be written in German, while the final version is to be written in the commercial language of the given country as the working basis for the team of experts. The inception report must be submitted no later than three weeks before the departure of the international expert. In certain cases, if good reasons are given, it is possible to plan an inception phase in the country of assignment prior to the evaluation.
- draw up the terms of reference for the partner country’s national expert
- select and contract the national expert
- arrange for the international expert to attend a one-day preparatory seminar on basic aspects of evaluation at GTZ
- Before the evaluation is conducted in the partner country, the selected international expert shall take part in preparatory talks with representatives of the Evaluation Unit, the regional division responsible and the Planning and Development Department (P+D).
- prepare, organise and implement in-country data collection
- hold a meeting with the German Embassy and the GTZ Office in the partner country, if at all possible at the start of the mission
- document the provisional evaluation results and recommendations for the final presentation on location
- prior to the return to Germany of the international expert, present and discuss the provisional results of the evaluation with partners and GTZ employees on location
- produce a draft report (in which the results obtained and recommendations made by the international and national experts are incorporated) in German (alternatively, by arrangement with the Evaluation Unit, also in English) within five weeks of return
- attend an evaluation meeting at GTZ
- assess the national expert
- produce the final version of the main report (no more than 45 pages for summary and chapter 1 to 6, plus front pages, table of contents, abbreviations and annexes, MS Office 2003 and PDF; see specimen format for reports) in German (alternatively, by arrangement with the Evaluation Unit, also in English) within three weeks of the evaluation meeting, and produce a brief report (summary
and tabular overview of the main report including an overview of the facts and figures relevant for the assessment of the results) in German and in the commercial language of the given country.

- provide quality assurance for the reports and their foreign-language versions (inception report, main report and brief report)
- provide quality assurance for organisation and implementation of the evaluation as well as technical backstopping for the experts

**GTZ** shall provide the following inputs:

- make the necessary documents available
- hold preparatory talks with the institution and the expert and organise and run a one-day preparatory seminar for the experts
- announce and introduce the evaluation mission to the relevant partners and important contacts in the country of assignment
- on request, provide logistical support through the local GTZ Office (reimbursement of costs through the commissioned institution in accordance with contractual agreements)
- organise and run the evaluation meeting with the involvement of the responsible sectoral and regional divisions, and in the case of cooperative projects/programmes also the other development cooperation organisation
- approve the inception report and the evaluation report (including foreign-language summary)
Annex 3: Guidelines on evaluating the success of projects/programmes

1 Preliminary remarks

This document is a guide to evaluating the success of projects/programmes implemented by GTZ. It contains the central evaluation criteria, the key questions devised to examine the criteria, and an assessment grid devised to obtain an overall rating.

The evaluation criteria, which were developed in a working group operating under the name “Evaluierung aus einem Guss” and are binding for its members, are based on the five criteria agreed within the OECD-DAC: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, overarching development-policy results (impact) and sustainability.

Furthermore, key questions were devised which represent important points of reference for assessment of the evaluation criteria.

The rating of a project/programme according to the individual evaluation criteria is given on the basis of a six-point scale (exception: a four-point scale is used for the sustainability criterion).

Explanation of terms:

**Development measure**: The term “development measure” used in this document encompasses the following terms: project, programme, program-based approaches, and development intervention.

**Results**: The term “results” used in international debate and in this document includes the outputs, the use of outputs, the direct and indirect results and the highly aggregated results.

---

26 A group of the Evaluation Departments of BMZ (lead), GTZ, KfW, DED and InWEnt created to harmonise and coordinate evaluation activities.

These guidelines are also based on the rationale and concepts of the GTZ results model. \(^{28}\)

The GTZ results model (Example: a project in the field of agricultural credit)

---

**Basis of the assessment**

The evaluation of a development measure requires systematic examination of the underlying cause / effect-hypotheses. This examination is carried out in the following stages:

- The quality of the results chain of the development measure is investigated and as-sessed (including rationale for the assessment). \(^{29}\) This includes, for example, examining the plausibility of the cause / effect-hypotheses and the level to which the objectives are to be achieved. (formulation of objectives and indicators)

- If the cause / effect-hypotheses and the objectives of the development measure are judged to be consistent, they are taken as the basis for the evaluation of the project/programme.

---

\(^{28}\) See also “Guidelines on Offers”, GTZ November 2006 4 The objectives and indicators defined in the offers are binding and are applicable here, not the information given in any other project documentation.

\(^{29}\) The objectives and indicators defined in the offers are binding and are applicable here, not the information given in any other project documentation.
• If the cause / effect-hypotheses and the objectives of the development measure are judged not to be consistent, the evaluators develop their own hypotheses, objectives and indicators which appear to them to be more appropriate. These then form the basis for evaluating the success of the project/programme. General remarks on assessment

All that is assessed is the development-policy effectiveness of the project/programme as defined in the evaluation criteria.30

What is assessed is primarily the situation as it can be measured or established at the time of the evaluation. Exceptions are explained in Section 2 in the descriptions of the relevant evaluation criteria.

Results that are difficult to estimate at the time of the evaluation must be plausibly inferred and described using proxy indicators or by verifying central assumptions about the results chain.

2 The five evaluation criteria

2.1 Relevance Are we doing the right thing?

The extent to which the objectives of the development measure match the needs of the target groups, the policies of the partner country and partner institutions, the global development goals and the German Government’s basic development-policy orientation.

Key questions for assessing relevance31

• To what extent is the development measure suitable for addressing central development issues for the partner country and target groups (differentiated according to gender, ethnic group, parties to a conflict), and specifically poor population groups?

• To what extent is the development measure in compliance with the (sector) policies and strategies of the partner country (national plans, PRSP etc.) and the partner institutions?

• To what extent is the development measure in compliance with international themes, standards, conventions?

• Does the project or programme have a high or low priority for the responsible institutions in the partner country or for civil society? How is this apparent?

30 The overall success of the development measure is not to be equated with the quality of the work performed by GTZ and its implementation partners. For example, good management on its own does not necessarily lead to overall success.

31 The relevance of the project/programme is assessed as of the time at which the conceptual approach was formulated or adjusted. A concept adjustment that was not carried out, despite being necessary, is also relevant to the assessment, however.
• Does the development measure comply with the client’s basic development-policy orientation?  

• Which of the cross-cutting issues are relevant? How far are these taken into consideration in the design of the project or programme?

• To what extent is the development measure targeted at poverty reduction and the MDGs?

• To what extent does the project or programme fit into the country strategy, priority area and programme definition, and the sector strategies?

• To what extent is the project or programme in line with GTZ’s concept of sustainable development, i.e. to what extent does it contribute – through a holistic project approach, through process orientation and through value orientation – to ensuring that the results of the project/programme and the developments in the partner country can be sustainable?

2.2 Effectiveness

Are we achieving the objectives of the development measure?

The extent to which the intended direct results (objectives) of the development measure are being achieved (comparison of actual situation with targets).

Key questions for assessing effectiveness

• To what extent are the objectives of the development measure being achieved (comparison of actual situation with targets on the basis of the defined indicators)? Are any limits critical to success for achieving the objectives being undershot or overshot?

• What are the decisive reasons why the objectives are or are not being achieved?

• To what extent do the political partners (lead executing agency in the partner country and BMZ) and the implementing organisations (national implementation partners and GTZ) have a positive or negative influence on the achievement of objectives?

• What unintended positive and negative direct results have occurred? How should these be assessed in the overall context? What is the response to these?

32 Currently these are: poverty reduction, fostering gender equality, participatory development and good governance, environmental protection and conservation of natural resources, crisis prevention, combating drug abuse, rural development, and conservation of tropical forests. See also BMZ homepage: http://www.bmz.de/en/index.html

33 See also GTZ homepage: http://www.gtz.de/en/top-themen/15534.htm

34 When evaluating ongoing projects or programmes, the appraisers assess the effectiveness in terms of the degree to which the objectives have been achieved at the time of evaluation, i.e. whether the project/programme is within the objectives corridor. In final and ex-post evaluations, the effectiveness is assessed on the basis of the degree to which the objectives were achieved at the end of the project or programme.

35 The assessment is made on the basis of the objectives and indicators that are considered appropriate; see also the explanations on the “Basis of the assessment” on Page 2 of this document.
2.3 Overarching development results (impact)

Are we contributing to the achievement of overarching development results?

The extent to which the project or programme contributes to achieving the intended over-arching results and produces other indirect results.

Key questions for assessing overarching development results (impact)

- What (positive and negative) changes at the level of indirect results can be observed in the wider sectoral and regional environment of the development measure?
- Which of these changes can be plausibly attributed to the project/programme at various levels (population, sector, institutions and regulations)? For example: 36
  - How far are important barriers to development being structurally eliminated or reduced through the project/programme?
  - How are the living conditions or development opportunities changing?
  - How is the project/programme strengthening the ability to solve problems of the target groups (of the project/programme and others), intermediaries and institutions?
  - What contributions is the project/programme making towards achieving overarching development goals (e.g. Millennium Development Goals and implementing the Millennium Declaration, structural reduction of poverty - e.g. promotion of pro-poor growth, pro-poor governance)?
  - What results are being achieved in terms of other cross-cutting issues: gender, environmental protection and conservation of natural resources, participation and governance, crisis prevention and conflict sensitivity?
- What contributions can the development measure realistically make to the achievement of these indirect results (expected level to be achieved by the project/programme)?
- How is the actual contribution of the development measure to the achievement of these indirect results assessed?
- What are the decisive reasons why indirect results are or are not being achieved?
- To what extent is the effectiveness of the development measure positively or negatively affected by other policy fields, strategies or interests (German ministries, bilateral and multilateral development partners)? What consequences has the project/programme drawn from this?

---

36 Depending on the individual circumstances, the examples listed here for indirect results may also be direct results, in which case they have to be taken into account under the “effectiveness” criterion. In order to decide whether a result is direct (“effectiveness” criterion) or indirect (“impact” criterion), the question has to be answered whether achievement of the result can be attributed causally to the development measure (direct result) or whether the development measure is making plausibly explicable contributions to the achievement of the result (indirect result).
• What broad impact is being achieved: e.g. suitable as a model, structural changes, replication of approaches and scaling-up?

2.4 Efficiency

*Are the objectives being achieved cost-effectively?*

A measure of the degree to which the resources invested in a development measure are appropriate compared to the outputs and results achieved.

**Key questions for assessing efficiency**

• What **resources** is the development measure using for the various forms of modes of delivery (long-term experts, short-term experts, procurements, operating and administration costs, training courses, local subsidies and financing contracts, other contributions)?

• To what extent is the **structure** of the development measure (e.g. project, programme structure, program-based approaches) appropriate for achieving the outputs and results cost-effectively? What structure might make it possible to do this more efficiently?

• To what extent are the objectives and outputs/activities of the project or programme **coordinated** with or complementary to those of others, or designed for task-sharing (joined-up German Development Cooperation, program-based approaches such as SWAp, basket funding or budget support)?

• To what extent is there adequate **coordination** between donors? In what ways is this encouraged or hindered?

• To what extent is the **composition of the modes of delivery** - personnel concept and personnel assignment, provision of materials and equipment, training, funding - cost-effective, i.e. how far are internal resources being used efficiently?

• What **alternatives** are there to the modes of delivery employed, and which (if any) would be more efficient?

• To what extent have the outputs been produced cost-efficiently (cost-benefit ratio)? What alternatives are there, and which (if any) would be more efficient?

• To what extent are the direct and indirect **results** achieved efficiently in terms of microeconomic, macroeconomic and sector-specific standards?

• Are the outputs and results achieved at the correct **time** and within a reasonable period?

2.5 Sustainability

*Are the positive results durable?*

A measure of the probability that the positive results of the development measure will continue beyond the end of assistance.
Key questions for assessing sustainability

- What period is appropriate/realistic for the continuation of the results, and which critical minimum requirements for success in this period (expectations of sustainability) are appropriate for the project or programme?

- What approaches, instruments, methods or concepts are lastingly used, institutionalised or further developed by the target groups, partner institutions or other actors? How is this done?

- How will the results for the target groups, partner institutions and partner country continue beyond the end of assistance? How far can the (direct and indirect) results of the project/programme be maintained, or is an improvement or deterioration to be expected?

- To what extent are the requirements for sustainability met?
  - To what extent are (organisational, personnel, financial, economic) resources and capacities available in the partner country (in the longer term) for maintaining the results achieved? To what extent is the required ability in place to adapt to changing frame-work conditions and solve associated problems?
  - How should the four dimensions of sustainability (economic, political, social and ecological) and their risks and opportunities be assessed?
  - How do these dimensions of sustainability interact? Under the specific conditions, to what extent is the result balanced, stable and capable of modification in the longer term?

- What are the key risk factors for longer-term sustainability of the results? How is the evolution of these factors assessed?

- Operationalisation of the four dimensions of sustainable development to assess sustainability:
  - Economic: how are the achieved outputs and results secured at the microeconomic or macroeconomic level? How stable or capable of modification are they in terms of the pace of economic growth (local, regional, national, global)?
  - Political: how is the project or programme contributing to a fair and peaceful balance of interests? To what extent are changes in the political culture and changes in behaviour, attitudes and awareness apparent in the target groups and partner institutions? To what extent and in what way is ownership on the part of target groups and institutions necessary and existent? To what extent is the legal framework in place that is necessary for changes? To what extent is the political will for change identifiable?
  - Social: how is the project or programme contributing to greater equality of opportunity, social justice, improved access to social services and resources?
  - Ecological: in what way is long-term ecological viability ensured? What risks are there of lasting negative environmental effects emerging in the long term?

---

37 In specialist debate it is common to distinguish between three dimensions: economic, social and ecological sustainability. To provide a more differentiated description, in this document social sustainability is broken down into political sustainability (societal level) and social sustainability in the narrower sense (individual level).
3. Assessment grid

3.1 Assessment of the individual evaluation criteria

A six-point scale is used to rate the project or programme according to four of the criteria, namely “relevance”, “effectiveness”, “overarching development results” (impact) and “efficiency”. The scale is as follows:

1. very good rating, significantly better than expected
2. good rating, fully in line with expectations, no significant defects
3. satisfactory rating, falling short of expectations but with positive results dominant
4. unsatisfactory rating, significantly below expectations, and negative results dominate despite identifiable positive results
5. clearly inadequate rating: despite several positive partial results, the negative results clearly dominate
6. the project/programme is useless, or the situation has deteriorated on balance

A rating of 1-3 indicates a positive assessment, a rating of 4-6 an assessment that is not positive.

The “sustainability” criterion is rated on the following four-point scale:

1  (very good sustainability)
   The overall success of the project/programme (positive to date) will continue unchanged or even increase with a high degree of probability.

2  (good sustainability)
   With a high degree of probability, the overall success of the project/programme (positive to date) will only minimally decrease but will overall remain significantly positive (normal situation – to be expected).

3  (satisfactory sustainability)
   The overall success of the project/programme (positive to date) will decrease significantly but remain positive with a high degree of probability. This also applies if the sustainability of a project/programme is assessed as inadequate up to the point of evaluation, but will evolve positively with a high degree of probability, so that the project/programme will achieve positive overall success.

4  (inadequate sustainability)
   The overall success of the project/programme is inadequate at the time of evaluation and there is a high degree of probability that it will not improve. This also applies where the sustainability has previously been rated positively but there is a high degree of probability that it will decline seriously and no longer meet the requirements for level 3.
**Overall rating**

The overall rating is calculated from the assessment and a weighting of the five individual criteria which is determined for each specific project. The rating is given on a six-point scale:

1. very good rating, significantly better than expected
2. good rating, fully in line with expectations, no significant defects
3. satisfactory rating, falling short of expectations but with positive results dominant
4. unsatisfactory rating, significantly below expectations, and negative results dominate despite identifiable positive results
5. clearly inadequate rating: despite several positive partial results, the negative results clearly dominate
6. the project/programme is useless, or the situation has deteriorated on balance.

An overall rating of 1-3 shows that a project or programme was successful, a rating of 4-6 shows it was unsuccessful. However, projects/programmes can only be rated as “successful” if the direct results (effectiveness), indirect results (impact) and sustainability are rated at least “satisfactory” (3). 38 A decision is made and justified for each criterion whether it is “particularly important” (weighting 3), “important” (weighting 2) or “less important” (weighting 1) in the specific context of the project/programme. In the absence of a special reason which makes it more or less important, a criterion is held to be “important” (weighting 2). Ratings and weightings are always expressed in whole numbers, rounded up or down in accordance with the usual rules of mathematics. 39

---

38 In exceptional cases a rating of 4 for sustainability is acceptable for a “successful” project/programme if this has been planned from the start and was inevitable for the project/programme and still appears acceptable at the time of evaluation because of the great development significance of the project/programme. In such instances the weighting for the “sustainability” criterion must be “1”.

39 The Evaluation Unit has developed an Excel macro for calculating the overall rating; only the values for the rating and weighting of the individual criteria need to be entered in the macro, which then calculates the overall rating.

---

**Example of an overall rating for a project/programme:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) Criterion</th>
<th>(2) Rating for criterion</th>
<th>(3) Weighting for criterion</th>
<th>(4) = (2) x (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overarching development results (impact)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall rating: total (4) / total (3)**

Example: 32 / 11 = 2.9 => overall rating 3