

EVALUATION SYSTEM DESCRIPTIONS

WISEGRAD EVALUATION MEETING II

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**ZAKOPANE
SEPTEMBER 28-30, 2005**

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CZECH REPUBLIC

1 Evaluation and Monitoring

1.1 Monitoring system description

Short description of monitoring system

Procedural description

Monitoring is organised separately at different levels (CSF and OP).

- “CSF monitoring unit” prepares aggregated data sets for management and evaluation at strategic/national level (for national and EU purpose).
- Operational programmes monitor implementation at their operational level (this includes financial and project monitoring) together with intermediate bodies.

Technical description

The IT monitoring system (MSSF) consists of 3 levels.

- Central level is operated by “Dpt. of monitoring” and the function is to sort & aggregate data from OPs (lower levels). This central data source is for “CSF monitoring unit” use.
- Second level is administrated by OP intermediate bodies and used for financial & project monitoring of OPs.
- Third level presents a tool for electronic application used by final beneficiaries.

1.2 Relation between monitoring system and evaluation

Are monitoring and evaluation issues located within the same or separate units?

- Monitoring and evaluation are separate units at CSF level.
- Operational programmes do have joint unit for both activities.
- Technical operation of MSSF is provided by separate MRD dpt.

Is there any formal way for the evaluation staff to have an access to a monitoring system (if yes – please describe) or are monitoring information presented to them on request?

- CSF evaluation unit has access to the central MSSF level. The access to other (lower) MSSF levels is problematic, very limited and in major cases impossible
- Majority information is provided on request where operational programmes do their best not to provide anything.

1.3 Usefulness of a monitoring system for an evaluation purpose

Is the monitoring system useful for an evaluation purpose? If yes – please describe in what way? If not – why?

- The monitoring system provides complete information. Project application is fully electronic and enables access to persons.
- The problem is with access rights where operational programmes do enable CSF experts to enter their levels.
- The problem is not only with access to system but also with stability, flexibility and data sort/search.

What kind of problems - if any – do you experience when using the monitoring system? Are access rights a problem in your country?

Within evaluation results and our practise we have identified following problems with MSSF:

- Problematic connection of MSSF levels and inflexible & ineffective apportionment of access rights (CENTRAL x MONIT, MONIT x BENEFIT, ELZA, etc.) (problematic / non-transparent access to data sources for CSF evaluation & monitoring)
- High demand of „manual“work
- Low robustness, insufficient stability & long response times (entering data; work with system)
- Functional problems of system modules (e.g. printing compositions, application generating, etc.)
- Different architectures of levels 2 and 3 (low ability of CSF operative monitoring)
- Need of flexible development of new applications

Is the monitoring system the most common source of evaluation data or you use other data sources more often (like gathering data separately in each evaluation research e.g. by surveys)?

MSSF should be the main data source but not the only. In evaluation we have used following data sources: a) desk research & thematic analysis, b) case studies, c) questionnaires, d) focus groups and e) individually managed interviews.

2 Ex-ante evaluation for the new programming period

2.1 Ex-ante evaluation process

Have any actions been taken so far concerning the ex-ante evaluation for 2007-2013 programming period (Have you already started ex-ante evaluation of the NDP or NSRF)? If any – please describe. If not – when and what kind of actions are planned? (How the ex-ante evaluation process will be organized?)

The ex ante evaluation of NDP has already started. The evaluation process comprises the socio-economic evaluation, i.e. the ex ante evaluation itself, a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and a quantitative assessment of impacts using a macromodel. When the NDP is being prepared the ex ante evaluator will play a supportive role, submitting specific analyses and their own alternative proposals. Ex ante evaluation of newly proposed OPs will follow.

2.2 The national/central unit role versus sectoral/regional institutions' roles

Will national/central unit be responsible for all programming document evaluations? If yes – in what way will the process be organized (e.g. Steering Group, one or several tenders etc.)? If not – who will be responsible for sectoral/regional operation programmes evaluation? Are those institutions already aware of their tasks? Are any activities planned to build their capacity? What kind of support they can receive from national/central unit?

Currently the Evaluation unit of SF is giving methodological support to present OP MAs and other potential future MAs (kraje ...) in a form of a core ToR. But a number and content of OPs are not set up yet (moreover General SF regulation is not approved yet).

3 On-going evaluations – best practice

Have you undertaken any on-going evaluation(s) so far? If yes – was it (were they) commissioned in compliance with public procurement rules or out of the tender procedure? What topic(s)/issue(s) did they cover? Was the methodology described in detailed in the ToR or just generally mentioned? Who did order such research(es) (Managing Authority, Monitoring Committee, evaluation unit etc)? Were recommendations made by evaluators useful and implemented? What kind of problems did appear (e.g. data accessibility connected with access/property rights, lack of or low quality of potential evaluators)?

A several on-going evaluations have been undertaken in Czech Republic till now. In the year 2004 there are two projects: Analysis and evaluation of weak points and breakdown risks of CSF implementation, in which is analysed preparedness of final potential users, quality of projects, administration of projects. Second project was an analysis and evaluation of CSF implementation external environment. Both projects have been finalised in September 2005. In this year there is a new project – partial mid-term evaluation. This project analyses the performance of the overall programme at two levels: at a level of operational programme and at a level of CSF.

Projects were commissioned in compliance with a tender procedure set up by Technical Assistance Procedure Manual.

Methodology, especially evaluation questions were described in the ToR.

As regards mid-term evaluation of CSF, evaluation unit of CSF orders this type of research. But mid-term evaluation of each operational programme has been ordered by its managing authority.

Recommendations made by evaluators are interesting and useful. Results were submitted to CSF Monitoring Committee, CSF Advisory Committee, Evaluation Working Group, MRD top management, and to other authorities responsible for the management of operational programmes.

Some problems really arose during performance of projects. The main of them were: insufficient access to data, in an isolated case a low quality of evaluator as well, gradual acceleration of program implementation etc.

Best practices:

Previous projects helped a lot to aim mid-term evaluation to the required direction. There is also effort to coordinate CSF and OPs closely from the beginning. Small number of evaluators makes the coordination easier. A same company appears in consortium of solvers in evaluation teams of three operational programmes.

4 Capacity building

4.1 Internal capacity

4.1.1 Independence of the national/central evaluation unit

How national/central evaluation unit is located in relation to the Managing Authority (graph chart welcomed)?

Currently the role of the national evaluation unit has been played by The Evaluation unit of SF (CSF) incorporated in CSF MA (The Ministry for Regional Development was entrusted with the task of CSF MA and its executive department is CSF Dpt.).

Is this location suitable for the evaluation unit to have certain level of independence (discretion)? Could you say the unit is independent? If not – why?

Evaluation Unit of SF is dependent neither on OP MAs nor on potential evaluators → it is independent.

4.1.2 Tasks division

How many people work in the unit? How things have changed since Valtice meeting? Are there any plans for further extension? What is the background of evaluation staff?

Is there any task division within the unit? If yes – please describe

A number of people working as Evaluation Unit's staff is 5 (incl. its head). There is no substantial change since Valtice meeting. An extension would be desirable but for the current programming period it is out of the question. The background of the Evaluation Unit's staff is mixed: it comprises economists, project managers etc. (a marketing researcher, a regionalism specialist).

There is a certain task division but regarding to a small number of staff the other have to be able to cover for anyone from their colleagues.

4.1.3 Capacity building activities

What kind of actions are undertaken for capacity building (domestic/foreign trainings, conferences, society membership etc.)? Are this actions financed by national budget or Technical Assistance? Are they a part of more general plans/programmes for capacity building (eg. for public administration or for Managing Authorities) or just for evaluation staff? Is staff turnover a problem for you?

The Evaluation Unit organises both domestic and foreign trainings and takes part in conferences. When commissioning trainings the experience in evaluation and ability to arrange an interactive learning is preferred. These actions are co-financed from national and SF technical assistance sources. A concise Czech Evaluation Manual based on EC (Tavistock's) Evaluation Guide was issued by effort of Evaluation Unit in the end of the last year and next extensive texts will follow in the next month. The evaluation capacity development is incorporated in CSF Evaluation Plan. A threat of a staff turnover seems real everywhere in state administration positions.

4.2 External capacity

4.2.1 Evaluation market capacity

How do you assess the evaluation market in your country? Is it „good enough” (in terms of a number of independent evaluators and their competences) to be able to carry out evaluation research on SF's intervention (mid-term update, on-going, ex-ante for 2007-2013)?

The tradition of evaluation is not very long in CR. It results in a rather limited evaluation market. There are some branches of foreign firms with a good reputation and also some domestic firms experienced in pre-accession evaluation. Ad hoc teams composed of consultancy firms staff and senior experts from CZ universities or from abroad arise. It can be said that the Czech evaluation market can cover all common kinds of evaluations required by SF (mid-term update, on-going and ex-ante for 2007-2013).

4.2.2 External capacity building

What kind of actions are undertaken to build/enhance external evaluation capacity?

To achieve external evaluation capacity enhancement the above described activities have been undertaken.

Evaluation Unit of Structural Fund

HUNGARY

1 Evaluation and Monitoring

1.1 Monitoring system description

Short description of a monitoring system

It was clarified in Chapter 21 that a unified IT system has to be developed for the monitoring of the Structural Funds (SF) and Cohesion Fund (CF). This IT system should collect and systematically order programming and implementation data and indicators of the projects and programmes. It should also support management and provides information about the current status of the projects and programmes as well. The information system must be comprehensive, unified and exclusive, containing the EU supported programmes.

EMIR:

The **Unified Monitoring Information System** (the Hungarian abbreviation is EMIR) was developed to manage and monitor subsidies coming from the European Union to Hungary within Structural and Cohesion Fund projects and applications.

The Unified Monitoring Information System supports the whole project-cycle:

The system applied is a central system common to the whole organization of Managing Authorities, Paying Authority, and Intermediary Bodies with secure access via internet and dedicated data access rights for each user within each organization.

The different modules (registration, projects/tenders in CF and appraisal in SF, contracting, financing, accounting, monitoring, audit and control, irregularities) are built in the system on a modular basis.

- **Registration**
 - Registration of supporting documentation according to each application (incoming, outgoing), project, or tender
 - Basic data of beneficiaries and other institutions participating in the process
- **Module called Project and Tenders in CF/ Appraisal in SF**
 - Tracking of the whole project selection procedure (SF)
 - Support the tender selection and evaluation procedure (CF)
 - Manage all public procurement types via the defined system of status points based on the national legislation of public procurement (CF)
- **Financing**
 - Recording of invoices, annual, periodic accounts
 - Handling draw-down, payment, order of transfer, bank account circulation
- **Monitoring the progress and maintenance of projects**
 - Recording progress and maintenance reports, track the exact physical and financial progress of the projects
 - Comparison of project output planned (accepted indicators) and achieved

- **Audit and control**
 - Provides information to support on the spot checks, 5-15% checks, internal audit, system audits
- **Irregularities**
 - Information about irregularities
 - actions taken to investigate and correct irregularities
 - generating irregularity report
- **Accounting**
 - Double-entry bookkeeping. On request of the PA the financing module and the accounting module of the system are using different and separate databases, although the master data is the same. The financial information (e.g. the invoices) is recorded in the financing module and is electronically transferred to the accounting module's database. The record keeping in the accounting module is performed by MAs. The financing and accounting module will operate with an on-line connection, and there will be a full consistency between the financing and accounting data, using the data recorded in the financing module.
- **Help-desk**
 - User's Manual, Communication between the users and the developer

The system is operational, and is capable of gathering reliable statistical and financial information on implementation and to serve as the basis for certifications of expenditure under 2004-2006 programmes.

The monitoring, audit and control and irregularities modules will be introduced by the first half of 2005.

1.2 Relation between monitoring system and evaluation

Are monitoring and evaluation issues located within the same or separate units?

Is there any formal way for the evaluation staff to have an access to a monitoring system (if yes – please describe) or are monitoring information presented to them on request?

Monitoring function is located at a separate Department supervised by the CSF Managing Authority. Evaluation staff has access to the EMIR system, relevant data are available at any time.

1.3 Usefulness of a monitoring system for an evaluation purpose

Is the monitoring system useful for an evaluation purpose? If yes – please describe in what way? If not – why? What kind of problems - if any – do you experience when using the monitoring system? Are access rights a problem in your country? Is the monitoring system the most common source of evaluation data or you use other data sources more often (like gathering data separately in each evaluation research e.g. by surveys)?

Minor obstacles can be experienced when feeding data into the EMIR system. Several parts of data have limited access for defined groups which cause sometimes difficulties in achieving and using them. Source of data for evaluation purpose is based rather on an individual data gathering, surveys and interviews. Evaluation processes rely mainly on these kind of information sources.

2 Ex-ante evaluation for the new programming period

2.1 Ex-ante evaluation process

Have any actions been taken so far concerning the ex-ante evaluation for 2007-2013 programming period (Have you already started ex-ante evaluation of the NDP or NSRF)? If any – please describe. If not – when and what kind of actions are planned? (How the ex-ante evaluation process will be organized?)

Development Policy Cabinet has decided on the Operational Programmes and Managing Authorities for the 2007-2013 programming period. According to the new EC Regulations ex-ante evaluations for OPs (Convergence Objectives) are obligatory, for NSRF is especially recommended. In accordance with the Regulations ex-ante evaluations have to be commenced in the end of November. After considering the most important needs and alternatives, the National Development Office (NDO) has decided on the following issues:

- Conducting ex-ante evaluation on the NSRF;
- Conducting ex-ante evaluations on group of OPs but individual evaluations on the regional OPs;
- All evaluations has to be financed from the NDO budget (instead of financed by the MAs);
- Only one comprehensive Strategic Environment Assessment for all OPs.

2.2 The national/central unit role versus sectoral/regional institutions' roles

Will national/central unit be responsible for all programming document evaluations? If yes – in what way will the process be organized (e.g. Steering Group, one or several tenders etc.)? If not – who will be responsible for sectoral/regional operation programmes evaluation? Are those institutions already aware of their tasks? Are any activities planned to build their capacity? What kind of support they can receive from national/central unit?

NDO will arrange public procurement for the ex-ante evaluations regarding OPs. Costs will be financed from the NDO budget and NDO will be the final acceptor of the reports. Relevant MAs will be included in the process in the framework of Steering Groups. Separate contracts will concern each OP-group (supervised by the same Managing Authority), however, regional OPs will be evaluated separately. Average cost of an OP ex-ante evaluation in the 2004-2006 programming period amounted 200.000 EUR. Laying emphasis on cost effectiveness we estimate to conduct all the evaluations at approximately 1,2-1,4 M EUR.

3 On-going evaluations – best practice

Have you undertaken any on-going evaluation(s) so far? If yes – was it (were they) commissioned in compliance with public procurement rules or out of the tender procedure? What topic(s)/issue(s) did they cover? Was the methodology described in detailed in the ToR or just generally mentioned? Who did order such research(es) (Managing Authority, Monitoring Committee, evaluation unit etc)? Were recommendations made by evaluators useful and implemented? What kind of problems did appear (e.g data accessibility connected with access/property rights, lack of or low quality of potential evaluators)?

Connected to the current CSF we are conducting an evaluation focusing on the institutional framework and implementation of the CSF. We contracted this work by a public procurement procedure. The detailed description of tasks was included in a ToR, on which basis the applicants have applied their offers. The ToR was drafted and completed by the CSF MA and our Department together. The work now is on, we have received the first draft version of the report. The ex-post policy evaluations mentioned in the paragraph 4.1.3. of this document, are now under the ToR preparation phase. We are setting up the Evaluation Steering Committees and working together with the relevant ministries.

4 Capacity building

4.1 Internal capacity

4.1.1 Independence of the national/central evaluation unit

How national/central evaluation unit is located in relation to the Managing Authority (graph chart welcomed)?

Is this location suitable for the evaluation unit to have certain level of independence (discretion)?

Could you say the unit is independent? If not – why?

Minister for European Affaires supervises the National Development Office (NDO). Department for Analyzing, Evaluation, Modeling – under the Vice-Presidency responsible for Development Policy Formation – has 14 colleagues. Apart from carrying out evaluation we contribute to the preparation of the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) and Operative Programmes (OPs) 2007-2013 working on analysis of situation and indicator-system related issues.

Managing Authorities of the different Operational Programmes – based at different ministries – are also responsible for evaluation. Since NDO functions as CSF Managing Authority, Vice-Presidency responsible for Co-ordinating of the CSF is also dealing with carrying out evaluations. Our department is independent from the implementation since it is organisationally outside of the CSF Managing Authority.

Tasks of the department in connection with evaluation:

- Ex-ante evaluation of the NSRF and OPs;
- Support to the update of the mid-term evaluation done by the old member states;
- Policy evaluations of the previous development programmes;
- Interim evaluation of the PHARE programmes;
- Evaluation of 7 chosen NUTS 4 regions;
- Preparing guidelines for evaluating processes;
- Improving evaluation capacity in Hungary;
- Mid-term evaluation of the CSF implementing system co-operating with the CSF Managing Authority.
- Yearly report on development policy activities that is partly an ongoing evaluation partly summarizes the results of ex post evaluations-

4.1.2 Tasks division

How many people work in the unit? How things have changed since Valtice meeting? Are there any plans for further extension? What is the background of evaluation staff? Is there any task division within the unit? If yes – please describe

Evaluation activity at our department is supervised by Gábor Balás, Deputy Head of Department. The persons responsible for evaluations are economists, with longer or shorter evaluation experience.

The members and tasks of the unit:

- Anna Mariánovity (head of unit): management, ex-post policy evaluation, mid-term evaluation of the CSF implementing system;

- Sándor Csengődi (programme manager): ex-post policy evaluation, evaluation of 7 NUTS 4 regions, mid-term evaluation of the CSF implementing system;
- Anita Kováts-Szócs (programme manager): ex-post policy evaluation, PHARE interim evaluation, mid-term evaluation of the CSF implementing system;
- Attila Béres (programme manager): ex-post policy evaluation, mid-term evaluation update ;
- Gyula Szőke (programme manager): ex-post policy evaluation, PHARE interim evaluation.

4.1.3 Capacity building activities

What kind of actions are undertaken for capacity building (domestic/foreign trainings, conferences, society membership etc.)? Are this actions financed by national budget or Technical Assistance? Are they a part of more general plans/programmes for capacity building (eg. for public administration or for Managing Authorities) or just for evaluation staff? Is staff turnover a problem for you?

- Having evaluated the former national structural policies we plan to conduct ex-post policy evaluation in close co-operation with line ministries. Targeted fields are various programmes, measures funded by the government in the past 5-10 years. The topics especially concern education, regional development, energy, culture, R&D, etc. We are now in the preparatory phase, drawing the ToRs, and setting up the Evaluation Steering Committees. First result can be expected in winter. These activities have twofold objectives: on one hand we can gain recommendations and experiences from the evaluation reports which can be compiled in the next programming work. On the other hand they would enhance the evaluating culture involving relevant ministries and independent evaluators as well. The mentioned evaluation activities are mainly financed from Technical Assistance budget of the NDO.
- As our institution is obliged to co-ordinate the preparatory work of NSRF, we are responsible for the creation of well-defined development policies. We established a platform for the officials from ministries dealing with development policies within the framework of an Academy for Development Policy. It is actually a training course consisting of 10 events. Till the end of this year we plan to complete the 2005 session and create a forum for the development policy makers, to learn from each other and to exchange experiences. The first one was on ex-ante evaluation that took place in May, and Veronica Gaffey and Pierre Nicolas were our guest presenters from the Commission side. The second event was held in June on the topic of designing strategy. The third one has taken place in September on indicators. Kai Stryzinsky presented the view of the EC.
- Creating a common standard we drafted Evaluation Guidelines which are available for the public administration and evaluators as well.
- An Internal Network on Evaluation has been set up for one year consisting of responsible person from the different parts of the public administration. We have meeting regularly and discuss on the matters connecting evaluations.
- We have created a webpage (www.fejlesztéspolitika.gov.hu) and one section is dealing with evaluations. We gathered and published there all the evaluations reports which are available for ourselves.
- We started the development of macroeconomic modelling framework that enables us to estimate the effects of development policy actions in sectoral and regional level.

4.2 External capacity

4.2.1 Evaluation market capacity

How do you assess the evaluation market in your country? Is it „good enough” (in terms of a number of independent evaluators and their competences) to be able to carry out evaluation research on SFs intervention (mid-term update, on-going, ex-ante for 2007-2013)?

The ex-ante evaluations on 2004-2006 National Development Plan have enhanced competition between evaluator companies and created needs and a small market for this activity. Although there are evaluations in the public administration, they have been written rather on an individual basis, it cannot be found a concept or a harmonised workplan in the background. They have definitely contributed to a – slowly – growing evaluation market.

4.2.2 External capacity building

What kind of actions are undertaken to build/enhance external evaluation capacity?

We organise annually a large-scale evaluation conference at the end of the year. New evaluation reports and processes, evaluation techniques, best practices are on the agenda of the meeting. Representatives of the public administration and private evaluator companies as well are welcomed at the conference. We support the market building process through tendering policy: we prefer the emergence of several actors with capacity in the field.

Anna Marjánovity

POLAND

1 Evaluation and Monitoring

1.1 Monitoring system description

Short description of a monitoring system.

It was expected for the monitoring system to exist as electronic system for monitoring and control called SIMIK. All data on indicators, their targeted values, performance of programmes/measures and even on ultimate recipients (in case of ESF) on all programming levels were expected to be fed into the system. Unfortunately, due to delay, the system is not fully operated now and only ESF-related data are gathered in electronic subsystem of SIMIK called PEFS.

To ensure effective monitoring so called the Regulation on Reporting was issued in September 2004. All data are transferred in a form of paper reports from lower to higher levels of SFs implementation system.

1.2 Relation between monitoring system and evaluation

Are monitoring and evaluation issues located within the same or separate units?

Monitoring Unit and Evaluation Team are within the same Department of the Ministry of the Economy and Labour (see graph on page 22).

Is there any formal way for the evaluation staff to have an access to a monitoring system (if yes – please describe) or are monitoring information presented to them on request?

National Evaluation Unit is not designated as a body which has an access to SIMIK system. Information gathered under the Regulation on Reporting are passed to the Evaluation Unit on request.

1.3 Usefulness of a monitoring system for an evaluation purpose

Is the monitoring system useful for an evaluation purpose? If yes – please describe in what way? If not – why? Is the monitoring system the most common source of evaluation data or you use other data sources more often (like gathering data separately in each evaluation research e.g. by surveys)?

The usefulness of monitoring data for evaluation purpose in Poland is discussible. Certainly they are used to find out where the gaps in the system are and – by this – to find evaluation topics. But in all evaluation carried out so far separate data were gathered.

What kind of problems - if any – do you experience when using the monitoring system?

SIMIK is not operated now so we have to relay on paper instead of electronic system. Therefore errors are more frequent. Moreover, there is a relatively large delay between action is taken by beneficiaries and when it is reported to CSF Managing Authority. On the other hand, beneficiaries and implementing agencies comply this time-leg is too short. What is also a problem is that the layout of reports is changed too frequent.

Are access rights a problem in your country?

Yes. Although beneficiaries do not object to fill the monitoring reports out, they sometimes deny cooperation with evaluators who are seen as an additional controllers – what is even more, controllers collaboration with whom it is not obligatory. Not only beneficiaries do so. It happened that intermediate bodies deny sharing with evaluators information they gather, even if evaluators have authorization form the CSF Managing Authorities.

2 Ex-ante evaluation for the new programming period

2.1 Ex-ante evaluation process

Have any actions been taken so far concerning the ex-ante evaluation for 2007-2013 programming period (Have you already started ex-ante evaluation of the NDP or NSRF)? If any – please describe. If not – when and what kind of actions are planned? (How the ex-ante evaluation process will be organized?)

The ex-ante evaluation of Preliminary National Development Plan for 2007-2013 is already done. It was prepared by the team of experts working within the Evaluation Subgroup of the Interministerial Group for the Preparation of the NDP 2007-2013. The Subgroup was composed of:

- nine independent experts who prepared supplementary analyses for ex-ante evaluation of the draft NDP 2007-2013,
- public administration representatives – delegated by the Interministerial Group,
- four representatives of the regional administration delegated also by Interministerial Group,
- an external expert experienced in evaluation research whose job was to support the Subgroup in selecting proper ex-ante evaluation methodology.

A secretariat was provided by the National Evaluation Unit.

According to the Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 of 21 June 1999 laying down general provisions on the Structural Funds (draft Working Paper on ex-ante evaluation was not available at that time) and Polish Act of 20 April 2004 on the National Development Plan the following impact assessments were carried out:

- environmental impact assessment,
- assessment of an assumed macroeconomic effect of the NDP implementation on Polish economy,
- assessment of an assumed NDP impact on the labour market, including job opportunities for women and men,
- assessment of an assumed NDP impact on the competitiveness of the economy, including the innovativeness of enterprises.

A decision is also made to conduct the NSRF ex-ante evaluation. In contrast to the NDP, it will be contracted to the external evaluators.

2.2 The national/central unit role versus sectoral/regional institutions' roles

Will national/central unit be responsible for all programming document evaluations? If yes – in what way will the process be organized (e.g. Steering Group, one or several tenders etc.)? If not – who will be responsible for sectoral/regional operation programmes evaluation? Are those institutions already aware of their tasks? Are any activities planned to build their capacity? What kind of support they can receive from national/central unit?

Next step after national-level programming document evaluations will be to carry out OP ex-ante evaluations which prospective managing authorities will be responsible for. The Steering Group for 2007-2013 Evaluations has been established in September 2005 to coordinate and supervise the works.

The tenders will be called by:

- Managing Authorities – for present OPs which will continue,
- Department of Structural Policy Coordination (present CSF MA) – for all ROPs and new OPs.

There will be one tender for each OP, except 16 ROPs for which is expected to contract only one team for all 16 ex-ante evaluations.

Are those institutions already aware of their tasks?

Managing Authorities of present OP are aware – they are members of the Steering Group for NDP/CSF Evaluation where this issue had been discussed. As far as other prospective MAs are concerned, the level of awareness of the evaluation tasks differs.

A training sessions on evaluation for regional authorise has just started within Italian twinning project which will make them aware of their responsibility in this sphere.

Are any activities planed to build their capacity? What kind of support they can receive from national/central unit?

A guide on OP ex-ante evaluation has been prepared by the National Evaluation Unit for the MA to be used when preparing their evaluations. The Unit staff is happy to share theirs experience in evaluation conducting (including public procurement), cooperation with external evaluators etc.

3 On-going evaluations – best practice

Have you undertaken any on-going evaluation(s) so far? If yes – was it (were they) commissioned in compliance with public procurement rules or out of the tender procedure? What topic(s)/issue(s) did they cover?

One on-going evaluation has been already completed. It was on the impact of social infrastructure projects within IROP (Integrated Regional Operational Programme) on socio-economic development and achieving programming document objectives. As the cost of the research was (under)estimated on less than 6 thousand euro, it was contracted out of the public procurement procedure.

The next research is on assessing readiness of regional authorities to take a role of a OP managing authority. It was commissioned in accordance with the Public Procurement Act. Actually, the contract will be signed in a few days. It is expected for a final report to be ready within 3 months.

Was the methodology described in detailed in the ToR or just generally mentioned?

In both cases methodology was very detailed.

Who did order such research(es) (Managing Authority, Monitoring Committee, evaluation unit etc)?

Two researches mentioned above were ordered by the National Evaluation Unit i.e CSF Managing Authority. Other on-going evaluations were conducted for: EQUAL Initiatives (assessing of partnership developments) and ESF (obstacles for NGO in using SFs). Others are expected.

What kind of problems did appear (e.g data accessibility connected with access/property rights, lack of or low quality of potential evaluators)? Were recommendations made by evaluators useful and implemented?

As it was mentioned in Section 1, there is sometimes a problem with data access. Insufficient knowledge of the SFs among evaluators is also a challenge as their recommendations are quite frequently built on misunderstanding of the EU support mechanism. What we also often found, there is nothing new and unknown in the evaluation reports, however they are useful for accountability.

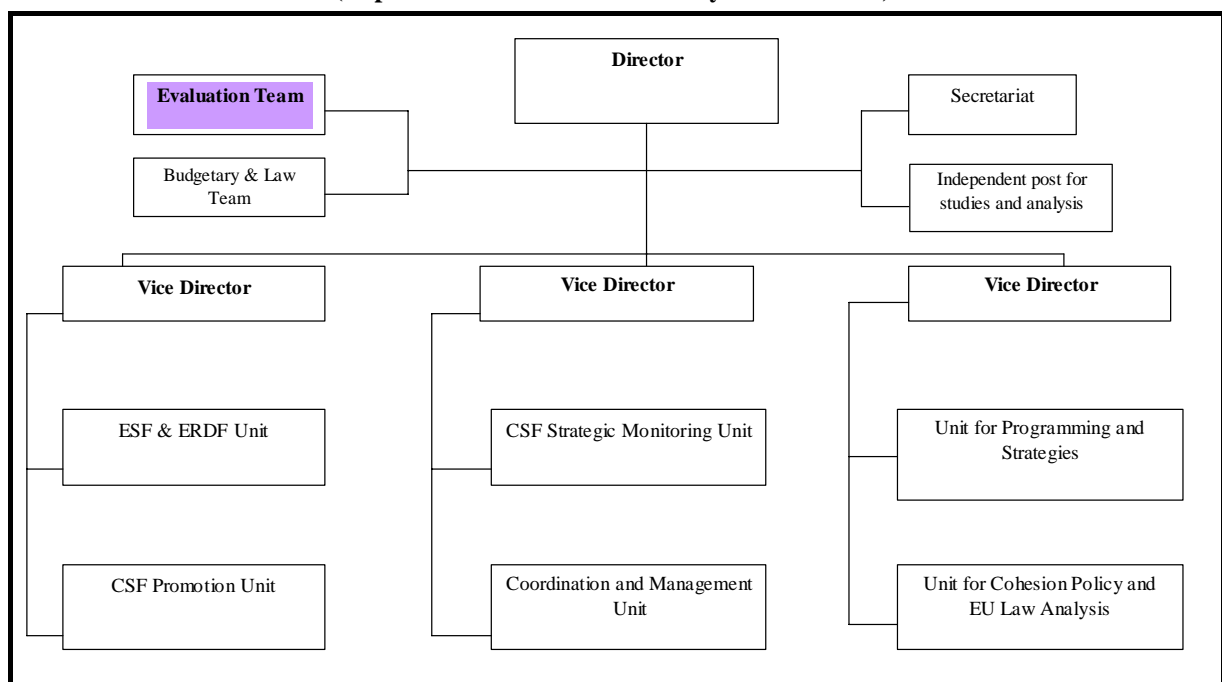
4 Capacity building

4.1 Internal capacity

4.1.1 Independence of the national/central evaluation unit

How national evaluation unit is located in relation to the Managing Authority?

**Figure 1. CSF MANAGING AUTHORITY
(Department for Structural Policy Coordination)**



*Is this location suitable for the evaluation unit to have certain level of independence (discretion)?
Could you say the unit is independent? If not – why?*

As National Evaluation Unit is located within CSF Managing Authority, it is not independent at all. Therefore is not allowed to carry on any evaluation on their own.

4.1.2 Tasks division

How many people work in the unit? How things have changed since Valtice meeting?


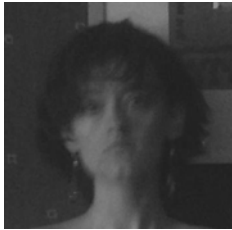


There are 3 people employed to work in the Unit. The only change since Valtice meeting is that there has been one person contracted for temporary post financed by Technical Assistance. She has been working since February 2005.

Are there any plans for further extension?

It is expected to extend the Unit by one till the end of 2005. Unfortunately, a recruitment procedure has not started yet.

What is the background of evaluation staff? Is there any task division within the unit? If yes – please describe.

There is no clear task division within the Unit. However educational background makes some people prepared to deal with particular issues better than with others. One can find further information in the table below.

	Elżbieta Opałka 	Kinga A. Komorowska 	Stanisław Bienias 	Edyta Tarasek 
Background	geography	regional development, social geography	economy, evaluation	economy, regional development
Tasks	coordination, ex-ante evaluation	external cooperation, capacity building	HERMIN model (coordination), on-going evaluations	Technical Assistance

4.1.3 Capacity building activities

What kind of actions are undertaken for capacity building (domestic/foreign trainings, conferences, society membership etc.)? Are this actions financed by national budget or Technical Assistance? Are they a part of more general plans/programmes for capacity building (eg. for public administration or for Managing Authorities) or just for evaluation staff?

The training cycle has been organized for members of all evaluation units located within Managing Authorities. It was composed of 3 section: general information, major project evaluation and audit & control. It was financed through Technical Assistance.

Two internships (one to two weeks) were organized for National Evaluation Unit staff – in Wales (within British twinning) and Italy (a part of another PHARE project).

People are also learnt English as a part of TA project to improve language skills of CSF Managing Authority employees.

Two members of the Unit conduct post-graduate studies. There are financed by TA.

As far as regional level is concerned, the basic training has just started within Italian twinning projects.

To make people aware of importance of evaluation, 3 conferences were organized: general one in Autumn 2003, one for potential external evaluators in April 2004 and the last in September 2005 on role of evaluation in decision-making process in public administration. They also were financed by TA.

Is staff turnover a problem for you?

Unexpectedly, it is not. However, due to competitive salaries in private sector, such a possibility should be taken into consideration.

4.2 External capacity

4.2.1 Evaluation market capacity

How do you assess the evaluation market in your country?

Generally, it is poor. There are only few firm taking part in tenders – the same ones for the evaluations contracted by different evaluation teams.

Is it „good enough” (in terms of a number of independent evaluators and their competences) to be able to carry out evaluation research on SFs intervention (mid-term update, on-going, ex-ante for 2007-2013)?

As mentioned above, the number of companies is not high enough to carry out all expected evaluations. The quality is even a bigger problem. Just in 2005 consultancy companies started to learn what evaluation is and professional evaluators take up Structural Funds.

4.2.2 External capacity building

What kind of actions are undertaken to build/enhance external evaluation capacity?

There is the Consultancy Group for SFs Evaluation established. It involves evaluation commissioners and potential external evaluators in experience and information exchange to enhance effectiveness of evaluation system in Poland as well as quality of researches. Two meetings were held so far. During the first one, methods, techniques and ways of data gathering for evaluation purpose were presented and the coordination system for planned evaluation activities was discussed. The meeting held in April 2005 was focused on consultation of “Evaluation of the National Development Plan and Operational Programmes in Poland – Manual”. The Group members were also invited for the Evaluation Conference in September 2005 on role of evaluation in decision-making process.

The website of National Evaluation Unit is the other way of building external capacity where all documents prepared by the Unit are published. Moreover the “Evaluation of the National Development Plan and Operational Programmes in Poland – Manual” has been prepared and circulated to central and regional authorities, potential evaluators and socio-economic partners. Some other documents are also prepared in paper versions, e.g final report on the NDP 2007-2013 ex-ante evaluation.

Kinga A. Komorowska

SLOVAKIA

1 Evaluation and Monitoring

1.1 Monitoring system description

Short description of a monitoring system

The IT monitoring system covers the processing of all programmes, initiatives and cohesion fund. Presently the ITMS supports 4 OPs – OP Basic Infrastructure, SOP Industry and Services, SOP Human Resource Development and SOP Agriculture and Rural Development. In addition, we have 2 single programming documents for objective 2 and 3 for Bratislava region, Equal and Interreg IIIA. ITMS deals with all areas of SF we create the flexible system. For each program structure and for each process group a specific workflow has been set up. Currently there are about 150 Workflows implemented in the ITMS and about 1100 data fields can be collected within each project.

The ITMS was based on 4 principles:

- Precise structure of access rights
- Competencies disjunction
- 4 eyes principle
- principle of memo materials for decisions

1.2 Relation between monitoring system and evaluation

Are monitoring and evaluation issues located within the same or separate units?

Both are executed on the CSF Managing Authority level.

Is there any formal way for the evaluation staff to have an access to a monitoring system (if yes – please describe) or are monitoring information presented to them on request?

There is no restriction concerning the access of the ITMS. Persons employed at the managing authorities can request a password in order to login the ITMS and we provide it to them. External companies are not allowed to access it.

1.3 Usefulness of a monitoring system for an evaluation purpose

Is the monitoring system useful for an evaluation purpose? If yes—please describe in what way? If not-why?

It is utilizable. The only problem is that the ITMS isn't filled in sufficiently. The individual managing authorities did not ensure a satisfactory loading of ITMS by indicators and the rest of the figures inserted in the ITMS are insufficient as well.

What kind of problems - if any – do you experience when using the monitoring system? Are access rights a problem in your country? Is the monitoring system the most common source of evaluation data or you use other data sources more often (like gathering data separately in each evaluation research e.g. by surveys)?

We are using beside the ITMS, annual reports and on-going reports that are being prepared for the national monitoring committee.

2 Ex-ante evaluation for the new programming period

2.1 Ex-ante evaluation process

Have any actions been taken so far concerning the ex-ante evaluation for 2007-2013 programming period (Have you already started ex-ante evaluation of the NDP or NSRF)? If any – please describe. If not – when and what kind of actions are planned? (How the ex-ante evaluation process will be organized?)

Ex-ante evaluation process has started in 20 April 2005 by evaluation of socio-economic analysis & macro-economic analysis. The ex-ante evaluation of NSRF has started at the beginning of June 2005 and will last till December 2005. The whole process has an interactive form.

2.2 The national/central unit role versus sectoral/regional institutions' roles

Will national/central unit be responsible for all programming document evaluations? If yes – in what way will the process be organized (e.g. Steering Group, one or several tenders etc.)? If not – who will be responsible for sectoral/regional operation programmes evaluation? Are those institutions already aware of their tasks? Are any activities planned to build their capacity? What kind of support they can receive from national/central unit?

Responsibility for ex-ante evaluation process will be on the authority who will prepare the operational programme. National, regional unit who will become the managing authority for operational programme will be known in October 2005 when Slovak government make the decision. After this action we will deal with administrative capacities for evaluation.

3 On-going evaluations – best practice

Have you undertaken any on-going evaluation(s) so far? If yes – was it (were they) commissioned in compliance with public procurement rules or out of the tender procedure?

We executed the evaluation of the NDP and presently we started the evaluation of indicators. Both of them were commissioned in compliance with public procurement rules.

What topic(s)/issue(s) did they cover?

“On-going evaluation of the implementation progress of the NDP”

“On-going Evaluation of Indicators and Systems of Management, Monitoring and Implementation with Emphasis on Horizontal Principles within NDP”

Was the methodology described in detailed in the ToR or just generally mentioned?

The ToR described the methodology in details.

Who did order such research(es) (Managing Authority, Monitoring Committee, evaluation unit etc)?

The Managing Authority decided upon the evaluation and the Committee of evaluators set up the conditions.

Were recommendations made by evaluators useful and implemented?

The major recommendations were accepted by the MAs although they made their own suggestions as well concerning reallocations of financial resources and the government agreed upon them.

What kind of problems did appear (e.g data accessibility connected with access/property rights, lack of or low quality of potential evaluators)?

The evaluation was done by an external evaluator, had access to IT Monitoring system of each MA and was provided with all necessary information. The only difficulty was to lift the most recent information from the ITMS caused by a two week delay in inserting data.

4 Capacity building

4.1 Internal capacity

4.1.1 Independence of the national/central evaluation unit

How national/central evaluation unit is located in relation to the Managing Authority (graph chart welcomed)?

Slovakia is the only Member state that has no separate evaluation unit. In spite of this fact there is a Committee of evaluators (consisting of people responsible for evaluation at each managing authority) who decides upon the execution of different evaluations on national level. The head of this committee is employed at the CSF department and represents Slovak interest at the Working group for evaluation in Brussels.

Is this location suitable for the evaluation unit to have certain level of independence (discretion)?

Basically there are no obstacles causing difficulties to execute evaluation reports but the approval of the minister is inevitable.

Could you say the unit is independent? If not – why?

The evaluation is executed under the CSF department but its activities are independent of the CSF decision making.

4.1.2 Tasks division

How many people work in the unit?

On the CSF level there are 2 people directly involved with evaluation. As mentioned earlier the committee of evaluators having approx. 14 members is responsible for evaluation on the national level.

How things have changed since Valtice meeting? Are there any plans for further extension? What is the background of evaluation staff?

There are some plans to set up an independent evaluation unit, but has to be discussed under which government institution (office of government, ministry of finance, ministry of construction).

Is there any task division within the unit? If yes – please describe

No, everything is executed by 2 people at the CSF department. Ex-ante evaluation is executed in a different independent department but same division as CSF department.

4.1.3 Capacity building activities

What kinds of actions are undertaken for capacity building (domestic/foreign trainings, conferences, society membership etc.)?

Before the evaluation of NDP was launched, there was a 3 day long training for people from each MA and for the future there are already certain plans to invite EU and Slovak experts to train the same people including people at agencies involved in activities concerning SF.

Are these actions financed by national budget or Technical Assistance?

Evaluations are being financed from the Technical Assistance and the trainings partly from the national budget and TA.

Are they a part of more general plans/programmes for capacity building (e.g. for public administration or for Managing Authorities) or just for evaluation staff?

They are part of the both mentioned reasons as there is certain insufficiency to execute all activities at the CSF department.

Is staff turnover a problem for you?

So far it was not, but as we consider it for a possible threat, we are going to train more than one person at each MA in order to avoid major difficulties connected with staff turnover.

4.2 External capacity

4.2.1 Evaluation market capacity

How do you assess the evaluation market in your country?

As we belong to those MS who joined the EU only in 2004, we certainly do not have the amount of experience and knowledge as the old MS do, but there are quite many experts who have experience evaluating PHARE projects and executing evaluations in different financial institutions.

Is it „good enough” (in terms of a number of independent evaluators and their competences) to be able to carry out evaluation research on SFs intervention (mid-term update, on-going, ex-ante for 2007-2013)?

We have a very positive experience with the on-going evaluation we have done recently and hope to continue the same way in the future. Regarding ex-ante for 2007-2013 is the same.

4.2.2 External capacity building

What kind of actions are undertaken to build/enhance external evaluation capacity?

We executed public procurement for each evaluation so far.

Erika Tornóczy