



Evaluation of Iceland's mechanisms for private sector collaboration

Final Report

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Executive Summary

1. Introduction

This evaluation report assesses MFA's support to and collaboration with the private sector under the *Policy for International Development Cooperation for 2019-2023*. Its purpose is to feed into the future development of private sector collaboration. Undertaken between May and November 2022, the evaluation's scope encompasses the support granted to Icelandic private sector companies through three financing facilities since 2019, with special focus dedicated to the role and management of the facilities themselves. The evaluation process was designed, conducted, and reported to meet the needs of the intended user — MFA Iceland.

2. Private sector collaboration results

With total commitments of ISK 324 million over four years, the Sustainable Development Goals Partnership Fund has funded 24 development projects aiming to support the Sustainable Development Goals. It has involved 23 Icelandic private sector companies and projects in 16 countries. These projects represent a wide range of sectors with fisheries being the largest single sector with almost a third of the projects (five) - we have defined one sector as "sustainable management" which is larger but broad. One project focuses specifically on women and is defined as a gender project. The average grant size has been a little over 13.5 million ISK which is a little less than half of what the de minimis rule allows; likely due to the small grants window (with a cap of 2,000,000 ISK) being embedded in the Fund.

Development Seeds (Próunarfræ) has financed two projects since its inception in 2021, in Congo, Gambia, and Uganda.

The Technical Assistance Program has financed at least 56 assignments in the period 2020-2021, where Icelandic experts have done work in at least nine different countries plus several "global" projects, at a total cost of 105,908,456 ISK.

The narrow scope in terms of time, target group, and geography naturally limits the scale of outcomes that can be expected. Nevertheless, if assessed as an effort contributing to the SDGs using the private sector as a channel and additional resource for development cooperation resources, the private sector portfolio represents a respectable one.

3. The future strategic framework for private sector collaboration

Going forward, MFA can enhance its strategic approach, its tools, and implementation approach to better engage, leverage, and support the Icelandic private sector to implement development projects supporting the SDGs in ODA countries. This remains well in line with Iceland's *Policy for International Development Cooperation for 2019-2023*, which specifically states that "it is important to increase the leverage of public development cooperation with participation from private sector actors." This report provides recommendations for improvement regarding *inter alia* governance, management, administration, and the operations of the financing facilities, Business Iceland's role, handling the de minimis rule, Nordic cooperation, and IFI collaboration.



1. Background

Icelandic private sector companies serve as a channel for Icelandic development cooperation, especially in Iceland's work to reduce poverty and promote the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Overall, support through the private sector is guided by the *Policy for International Development Cooperation 2019-2023*,¹. The policy states among other things that:

*"Mutual responsibility and partnership in order to further the SDGs shall guide the cooperation of different parties in order to achieve set objectives. Cooperation will be undertaken with parties from various sectors, including government ministries and institutions, universities, **the private sector**, and civil society organisations."*

Furthermore, the policy includes a separate section on the private sector which says that the Icelandic private sector shall be encouraged to support sustainable development in developing countries in accordance with the SDGs.

This is well in line with an international trend towards not only mobilising and leveraging private sector finance for development cooperation, but also collaborate with the private sector to support the development of innovative solutions.

2. The Evaluation

This evaluation report assesses MFA's implementation and results of the Icelandic collaboration with the private sector to further international development cooperation. Its primary purpose is to assess how well the current structures and facilities aimed at support the private sector work, and feed into the further development of Icelandic private sector collaboration by providing recommendations for improvement. Undertaken between June and November 2021, the evaluation's scope encompasses the support granted to Icelandic companies and individual experts since 2018.

The evaluation focuses on Icelandic mechanisms for private sector collaboration to improve development cooperation support for primarily low-income countries ("LICs") and small island developing states ("SIDS"), to achieve the SDGs. This type of private sector cooperation is currently channelled mainly through three facilities:

- The **Sustainable Development Goals Partnership Fund** (hereinafter referred to as the "Fund"), which aims to co-finance projects developed and implemented by Icelandic private sector companies that support Iceland's work towards fulfilling the SDGs. The Fund, which was established in 2018, targets LICs and SIDS, but is otherwise country and sector neutral;
- The **Development Seeds** (Próunarfræ) facility, which is a grant framework managed by the Icelandic Centre for Research (Rannís) that provides grant funding for project preparatory activities. It was established in 2021;
- The **Technical Assistance Program** (TAP) which offers advisory services through Icelandic consultants to international organisations. The TA Facility has been in operation since 2017.

The evaluation is based on the OECD DAC evaluation criteria, plus thematic and crosscutting dimensions added by the MFA (gender equality, human rights, and environmental considerations).

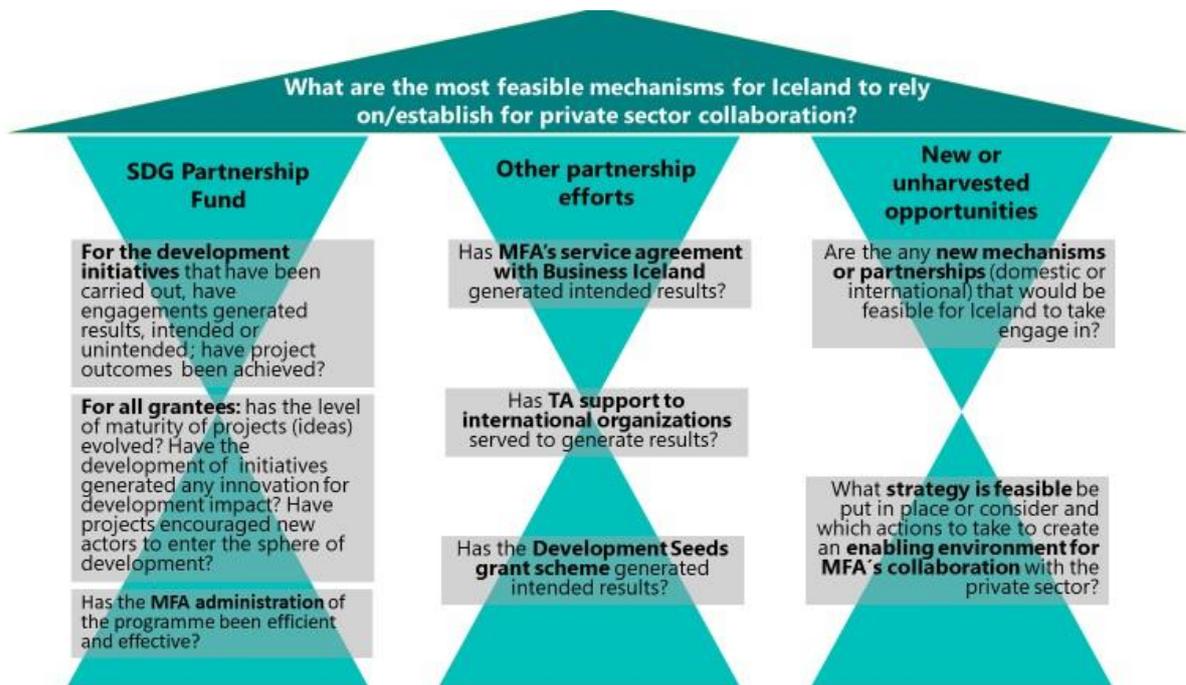
The overall objective of the evaluation has been to assess MFA's efforts in private sector collaboration, with particular focus on the Fund. The other two facilities (Development Seeds and the TAP) shall be taken into consideration as deemed relevant and appropriate by the evaluation team.

The evaluation does not cover the results of the individual projects, nor results in developing countries achieved directly or indirectly by Icelandic private sector companies. The core evaluation question in this evaluation was:

What are the most viable mechanisms for Iceland to rely on/establish for private sector collaboration?

¹ Parliamentary Resolution on Iceland's policy for international development cooperation for 2019-2023, as well as the preceding policy valid 2013-2018.

Figure 1: Core evaluation question



2.1 Methodology

The three main facilities (the Fund, Development Seeds, and the TAP) have been assessed and evaluated as one common *approach to*, albeit different *tools for*, Iceland's private sector cooperation, rather than as three separate tools. We have applied an evaluation model based on the "White Box Approach"², also following the so called "Mixed Methods Approach", meaning that it has included both quantitative and qualitative methods.

The overall purpose of the evaluation approach has been to promote learning and utility through improvement recommendations and a high level of interaction with relevant stakeholders. Thus, the evaluation process was designed, conducted, and reported to meet the needs of the intended user — MFA Iceland. The team engaged key stakeholders throughout the evaluation process to enhance utility, obtain data, validate data, create and hopefully promote future uptake.

The inception phase (see Appendix 7 for report) involved defining relevant evaluation questions for the purpose of providing useful recommendations, as well as identifying available data and sources and how to approach these. To enhance utility, the evaluation process included a high level of participation by both MFA and private sector stakeholders, and informal learning opportunities consisting of critically reflective discussions amongst the stakeholders through meetings, one project field visit, and a workshop, and interim debriefings.

As mentioned above, the evaluator applied a mixed methods approach and evaluated based on evidence collected through document review, quantitative data analysis, interviews, a workshop with project companies, and two electronic surveys. The evaluation method has focused mainly on qualitative analysis which has been deemed the most appropriate method to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the financing and collaboration tools.

² Rogers, P.J. and Fraser, D. (2003), "Appreciating appreciative inquiry", in Preskill, H. and Coghlan, A.T. (Eds), Using Appreciative Inquiry in Evaluation, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

The evaluation ran from June to November 2022 and consisted of three main phases – the inception phase; the data collection phase; and the synthesis and reporting phase. The evaluation team has collected data and information through the following:

- **Documents** collected by MFA were reviewed. The evaluation team received 2,199 documents from the MFA (of which some are duplicates) and has reviewed a large selection of these, including:
 - Reports, data, and background information relating to the cooperation with Business Iceland, and the Development Seeds (Próunarfræ) facility;
 - Agreement and project document templates, regulations, forms;
 - Project agreements;
 - Documents relating to the SDG Fund for the period 2018-2021 (a total of 1,637 documents in 354 folders);
 - New documentation for the latest round of applications, along with updated data on number of approved projects;
 - Latest project reports submitted in the summer 2022. See Appendix 9 for a list of documents.
- The documents include **quantitative data** on project financing, such as number of project applications received, and number, type, and size of grants, and the number of calls for proposals.
- **Interviews** were conducted with:
 - Ten MFA staff members;
 - Two Business Iceland staff members;
 - Four current and previous members of the Fund assessment group;
 - Eight representatives from the private sector project companies;
 - Four staff members at IFIs;
 - Four staff members at Nordic Ministries for Foreign Affairs / development cooperation agencies. See Appendix 3 for a list of interviews.
- Two electronic **surveys** were sent out prior to the workshop, one survey for the Fund and one for the TAP. The surveys were sent to representatives

(contact persons) for all companies that have received funding from the Fund, and all experts/firms on the roster in the TAP. We received 11 responses on the Fund survey, and 21 on the TAP survey (see Appendices 10 and 11).

- Representatives from all companies that have received funding from the Fund were invited to a **workshop** in Reykjavík on October 4th with the purpose of validating the results from the surveys. 13 participants from eight project companies attended the workshop.
- A **field visit** was done for one of the financed projects that had come furthest in implementation and disbursement, as part of an in-depth review of the project.

The evaluation was conducted with integrity and impartiality in line with OECD/DAC evaluation standards. The evaluation applied the following five OECD DAC evaluation criteria:

- Relevance;
- Coherence;
- Effectiveness;
- Efficiency;
- Sustainability.

The rights of organisations and individuals to provide information in confidence was respected. Data and analysis were treated with fairness and professional integrity. Clear, transparent, and regular communication was undertaken with MFA throughout the evaluation.

In addition to the OECD evaluation criteria, we have looked at a dimension which is thematic, as per Iceland's evaluation policy: the extent that environment and climate, gender equality, and human rights have been integrated into the private sector collaboration.

2.2 Limitations

Given that this is a mid-term evaluation and that the longest-running projects have been active for approximately two years, and the fact that COVID-19 has slowed project implementation, it has not been feasible to evaluate impact. Nevertheless, we allow ourselves to speculatively assess the outcome by looking at how likely it is that intended program results are

achieved. For this purpose, we have conducted two deeper project evaluations, including one field study (presented later in this report).



3. Iceland's Private Sector Collaboration

3.1 Overview of the Policy for International Development Cooperation 2019-2023 and Support to the Icelandic Private Sector

As further presented in Appendix 1, Iceland's policy for international development cooperation for 2019-2023 provides the overall framework for the support channelled via the Icelandic private sector, with a special focus on supporting the SDGs. The focus on the SDGs is expressed by saying that the private sector shall be encouraged to

contribute to international development cooperation "in accordance with the SDGs...". Iceland's overarching goal of poverty reduction is also clearly alluded to by saying that interventions should be in the form of income and employment generating investments and projects that increase prosperity.

As outlined in more detail below, private sector collaboration for international development cooperation is financed through three facilities which focus on different steps or modalities:

Iceland's Policy for International Development Cooperation 2019-2023 states that:

"It is important to increase the leverage of public development cooperation with participation from private sector actors, which could, for instance, multiply allocations to development cooperation through direct investments. It must be stated that this does not mean that funds earmarked for development will be spent on business development or for overseas expansion of business enterprises. Emphasis will be placed on adding value through Icelandic expert knowledge that can be used in development activities and on making it available through work carried out by the Icelandic authorities. Iceland's commitments to the OECD/DAC shall be used as a basis for private sector partnerships ".

Development seeds

- Early-stage grants (max 2 MISK)
- Innovative ideas for international development projects
 - Max 12 month implementation period

SDG Fund

- Up to 200,000 EUR (de minimis) for feasibility studies or project implementation
 - Up to three year implementation period
- Pre-FS window of max 2 MISK within the Fund

TAP

- Roster of experts in five areas
 - MoUs with internal organisations that can draw on the experts
- Short- and long-term assignments possible

3.2 The SDG Partnership Fund

The Fund was set up in 2018 to improve Icelandic international development cooperation through private sector collaboration. The Fund was originally founded as a three-year facility with the possibility of extension based on its results. Up to 400 million ISK of the 2018-2021 development aid budget were allocated through the Fund.

The objective of the Fund is to foster partnership projects aiming at strengthening sustainable economic growth in *developing countries*. Eligible countries are low- and lower middle-income countries, as well as SIDS, included in the OECD DAC list. The *Rules of Procedure for the Sustainable Development Goals Partnership Fund* (hereinafter referred to as the “Fund Rules”) state the following role and aim for the Fund:

The role of The Sustainable Development Goals Partnership Fund is to encourage businesses to participate in and contribute to development cooperation. The aim of the Fund is to reduce poverty and support job creation and sustainable growth in the poor countries of the world in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Projects receiving grants shall be beneficial to and promote value creation in developing countries.”

Projects shall contribute to one or several of the SDGs, and shall as a rule contribute to SDG 8: “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.”

In summary, the Fund is available to Icelandic companies, and is open to projects that contribute to any of the SDGs and that targets an ODA country. This is a very broad approach which is uncommon to these types of financing facilities. The reason for this is good: with a small private sector, the MFA should not limit the possible projects in any thematic or geographic way. The scarcity of possible (and even more so when it comes to *probable*) applicants is limitation enough.

Projects can receive up to 50% of their total budget, with a maximum of 200,000 EUR for each project over a period of three years (which is the cap set by the EU *de minimis* rule on state support). A project shall not have an implementation period exceeding three years. According to the information provided by the MFA website³ special emphasis is placed on SIDS; however, it is not entirely clear how this translates into the scoring card when project applications are evaluated.

The Fund makes special mention of the possibility to receive funding for pre-feasibility studies of up to ISK 2,000,000 (approximately EUR 14,000). For these smaller grants the same rules and procedures apply as for larger grants, and no funds are specifically earmarked for the smaller grants. Therefore, this cannot be considered a “window” within the Fund.

Only organisations registered in Iceland are eligible to apply for grant funding, which means that the financing granted through the Fund is considered by DAC as tied.⁴ According to the “Procedures and Criteria” for the fund, the following entities are eligible:

- Privately held companies;
- Private and publicly listed limited liability corporations;
- Partnerships and cooperatives;
- Private foundations.

The Fund holds two calls for applications⁵ each year, and these have to date not been thematical. This means that they have not targeted any specific sector, SDG, geography, or similar. All calls have been open to all types of applications allowed by the Fund Rules. Each call is advertised, and a submission deadline is set before which applicants must submit their applications. Following the application deadline, the submitted applications are evaluated by an evaluation group based on the scorecard, or criteria, for the Fund. No specific criteria, or weightings of existing criteria, have been developed for each individual call for applications.

³ This information is provided to potential applicants as well as the general public via www.government.is/ministries/ministry-for-foreign-affairs/

⁴ Section 1.4 of the Fund Rules state that: “Foreign undertakings, civil society organisations and public institutions can participate in

projects but not as applicants since **grants to foreign parties are not allowed**” (author’s emphasis).

⁵ The evaluation groups has chosen to use the term “call for applications” as the term “call” is often used in similar types of funding mechanisms; for instance “Call for Proposals”.

Applications to the Fund are evaluated by a three-person assessment committee based on a scorecard with selection criteria. No specific criteria, or weightings of criteria, have been developed for each individual call for applications; the same criteria are used for every call for proposals. The assessment committee makes its recommendations to the MFA (the members are external and thus not MFA employees). The committee meets digitally, and only for project assessments. They do little or no strategic work for the Fund and do not follow up on, or get reports from, project implementation. There is no feedback loop from which external committee can learn which projects have been successful, and why/why not. Furthermore, some have little or no previous experience from development cooperation, challenge funds, or project financing.

3.2.1 Governance and Management

The Fund is governed by the MFA, with the highest-ranking decision-maker being the Minister for Foreign Affairs. It is the minister who formally makes each investment decision, i.e. signs off on the recommended approvals.⁶ In theory, this means that the minister has sole power to decide which companies receive funding for their proposed projects. In practice, projects and project companies are qualified by a team at the MFA and evaluated by an external evaluation group (see below), before recommendations are made to the minister. It is therefore unlikely that the minister would approve a project that has *not* been recommended (i.e. little risk for nepotism), nor that the minister would, without good cause, reject a project that has been recommended (i.e. little risk for negative bias). Nevertheless, the nominal power of the minister is significant and could be mitigated by a clear delegation of authority to a group of people (see our recommendations later in this report).

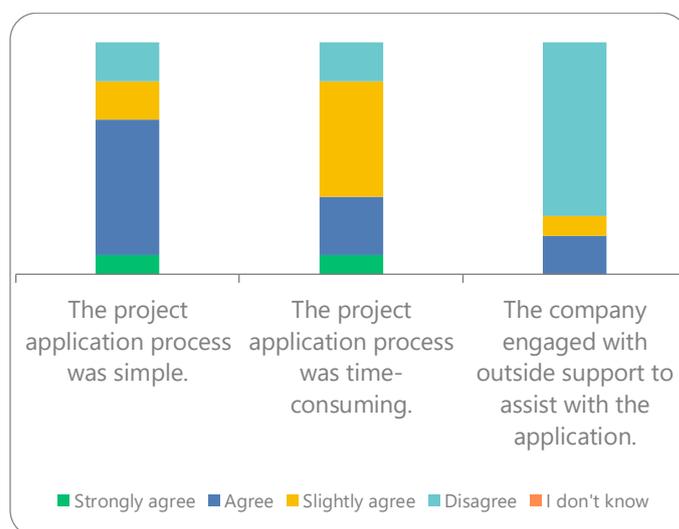
The Fund is managed by a Fund Manager, who is an MFA staff member. The Fund Manager position is part of the regular staff at diplomat level at the MFA and thus also part of the rotation scheme at the ministry. Rotation generally takes place every three years; however, depending on needs and organisational changes within the MFA certain positions may require a change in staff more often than that. This leads to a nominal change in

Fund Management at least every three years (however, in practice there may be more; over the four years since the Fund’s inception there have been three Fund Managers, and a fourth has recently taken up the position as this report is being drafted). As there are no other staff members working specifically with the Fund, other than from a purely financial perspective (MFA financial administration staff assist with disbursement and financial reporting), the institutional memory is by and large more or less lost in its entirety every three years. There is a requirement that a leaving staff member hand over properly to their successor; nevertheless, one must consider the practical reality: the leaving staff member shall in its turn receive similar hand-over at their new position, and MFA staff members generally have limited time and resources to spend on handing over “old” assignments as they are required to take on their new responsibilities immediately upon transferring as a result of a rotation.

3.2.1.1 The application process

Seven out of the 11 respondents in the Fund survey agree that the application process was simple; and four agree or strongly agree that it was time-consuming. Three of the companies used external support to draft the application.

Figure 2: Application process



⁶ This is governed by the “Rules for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on grants for civil society organisations and private sector companies

participating in development cooperation” (no 1035/2020) dated 21 October 2020.

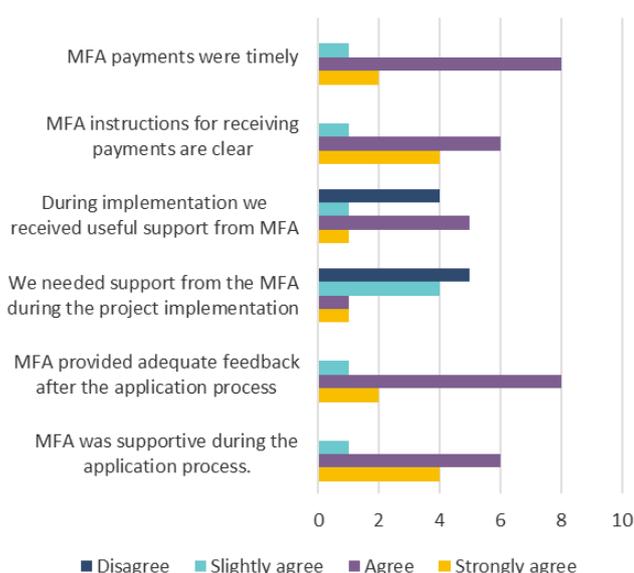
In the evaluator’s experience a simple and not too time-consuming application process facilitates the submission of project proposals from less experienced companies, such as those that do not have previous experience from international development cooperation.

Workshop participants were generally happy about the project application process, and they agreed that it was important to keep it simple and straightforward. However, they pointed out that the feasibility study application (window for smaller grants) was unnecessarily complicated as it is the same as for larger projects. As the nature of a feasibility study is that many factors are unknown, some felt that the information required was too specific. They pointed out that it was very helpful for them to receive detailed feedback on their applications.

3.2.1.2. The role of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs during application and project implementation

Fifty-five percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that the MFA was supportive during the application process and stated that they received adequate feedback after the application process. Almost all companies agreed or strongly agreed that the MFA’s instructions for submitting payment requests and receiving payments are clear and that payments have been timely.

Figure 3: MFA role

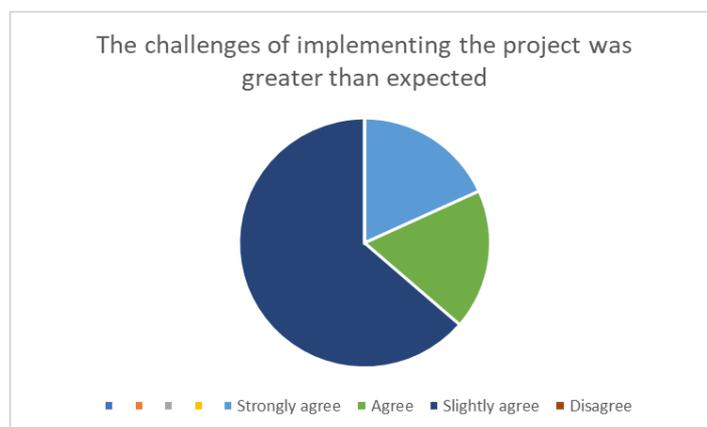


⁷ On a scale from 1-6 with 1 being highest, 64% scored 3, 2, or 1 on financial and 55% for cultural, and global shipping/delivery,

3.2.1.3 Challenges of implementing international development cooperation projects

Closely related to the support offered by the MFA are the challenges that respondents reported to have faced during the project implementation, which were diverse; what was an obstacle to some was no problem for others. This points to the importance of experience from similar types of projects, or support from actors with such experience. The major challenges that respondents seem to have faced mostly were cultural challenges (e.g. working with local partners and experts), financial obstacles (e.g. unforeseen costs, inflation, etc.), and global shipping and delivery.⁷

Figure 4: Challenges of project implementation

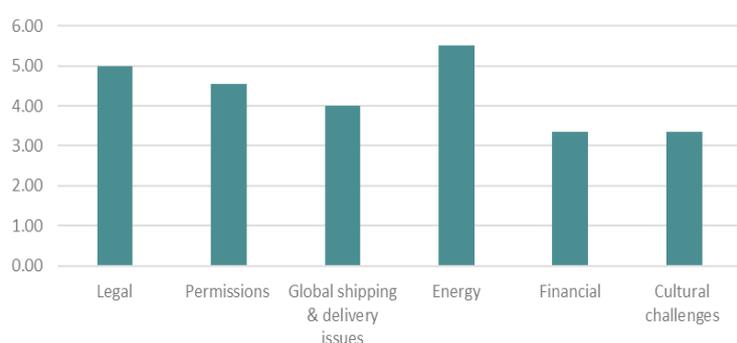


Four agreed that the challenges of implementing the project turned out to be greater than expected, pointing again to the importance of experience on these markets and in developing country context). Seven slightly agree whereas no one disagrees. Looking at those that have scored 1 or 2, i.e. the two highest priority obstacles, we see that most face cultural and financial challenges. In the evaluator’s experience these two may be closely related and point to a lack of experience from working in developing country contexts: the cultural challenge we believe speaks for itself, whereas the difficulty in financial planning for these types of projects likely results from unforeseen costs for field work, and the lead times one must take into account in development project planning as there will be delays in interactions with local authorities and partners.

respectively (compared with 10% for energy, 20% for legal, and 36% for permissions).

It was initially surprising to the evaluator that so few scored legal issues highly. Nevertheless, considering the early-stage character of the projects, few would be engaged in e.g. setting up local companies, bringing products to market, etc. We estimate that these obstacles would be graded higher if the projects were at a later stage of development as there would likely be more compliance requirements with local laws and regulations. All expect their projects to be successfully concluded.

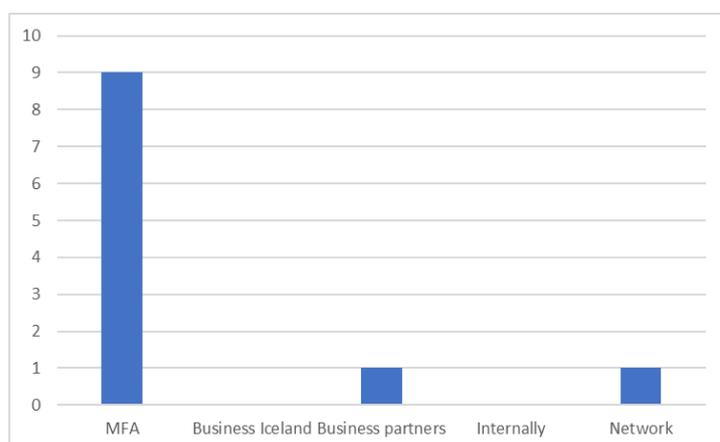
Figure 5: What, if any, obstacles during project implementation have you faced? (1 = highest priority, 6 = lowest)



3.2.1.4 Marketing

As for marketing and the collaboration with Business Iceland, according to the Fund survey nine out of the 11 respondents heard about the Fund from the MFA. None of the companies or experts had received this information from Business Iceland. This should partly be due to the fact that the MFA agreement with Business Iceland came in place only in 2021; nevertheless, it is in Business Iceland's interest to promote opportunities for project finance for the Icelandic private sector regardless of such agreements.

Figure 6: Source of Fund information



Evaluation of Iceland's mechanisms for private sector collaboration

3.2.2 Assessment Group and Criteria

Project applications are assessed by an assessment group consisting of three members. These are appointed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, generally for a three-year period. The assessment group assesses projects against set criteria and makes recommendations to the MFA. Prior to such assessment the MFA shall qualify applicants, meaning that the MFA shall review applications and investigate whether the applicants meet the minimum requirements set by the Fund. Only those that do shall be sent to the evaluation group.

The following criteria, developed by the MFA, are used in the assessment:

- The value and importance of the project for government policy in the field of international development cooperation and the goals of the relevant partner countries.
- The career and professional background of the applicants and other partners.
- The likelihood of the applicant reaching the objectives of the project.
- The financial basis of the project and/or whether the applicant has received other grants for the same project.

Further assessment criteria are presented in the following image:

Figure 7: Funding and number of projects

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	Weight	Weight
Capacity and competence of applicants		40%
Expert knowledge, technological solutions and company strength in respective field	15%	
Financial capacity	15%	
Experience and knowledge with regard to participation in international projects	5%	
Contribution and strength of partners in developing country	5%	
Quality of project		60%
Relevance of project	15%	
Financial basis and project inspection	15%	
Developmental impact and results	15%	
Additionality	5%	
Sustainability	10%	

All these criteria (i.e. the four listed above, and those in the table), are outlined in the fund's Rules of Procedure. It is not entirely clear how they relate to one another.

One may also question the rationale of certain criteria. For instance, is “Relevance of the project” in the table the same as point one in the list above, and if so, are the donor and recipient country’s policy and goals more important (and thus relevant) than the impact on poor people in the field? Further, while experience in international project is indeed positive, it says little of a company’s readiness for working in a developing country (exporting to other Nordic countries does not prepare one for implementing a project in Benin).

Following the group’s assessment, a focus group at the MFA shall discuss the grants before passing recommendations on to the Minister.⁸

3.2.3 Reporting

The fund Rules of Procedure state that project companies must submit progress reports on the implementation of their project. There is no standard template for such reports; however, there are five points which *should* be included:

- A front page displaying the project title, name of the applicant, date of issue, period covered by the report and the names of the authors of the report.
- A comparison between the project plan and the actual results.
- A summarized comparison between expenditure and budget.
- Assessment of issues and risk factors which could impact the project results.
- Assessment of the necessity to update action plans, resources and expected results, including proposals for actions to minimise risk.

These points do not encourage project companies to include a narrative of the project status, images, or anything similar which could be used by the MFA for their own reporting and marketing (more in this in the recommendations later in this report).

Project reports shall be submitted at least once every six months during project implementation. In addition, an

⁸ This is according to the *Rules of Procedure for the Sustainable Development Goals Partnership Fund* section 4.3; nevertheless, the evaluator is under the impression that the assessment group’s recommendations are sent more or less directly to the minister after a qualification check by the MFA.

annual report shall be submitted. In practice this should mean that one of the two progress reports submitted each year makes up part of the annual report. There is no guidance in the rules as to what should be included in the annual reports.

Following the completion of the project a final project report shall be submitted.

Project companies are required to immediately report on any situation which impedes the implementation of the project, as well as on any illegal activity, corruption etc. that comes to the company’s attention.

Another important topic is the Fund’s reporting to the MFA/government and the public. There seems to be no such formal reporting, meaning that there is no reporting on project progress, Fund financing, etc. on an aggregate level. The Fund has no board to report to, and there are no requirements that the Fund reports on project progress. Financial reporting is done internally by the MFA which also manages disbursements, and it is not clear to whom commitments and disbursements are reported internally nor how this data is used.

Furthermore, there seems to be little reporting to the public. The Fund is financed using public funds, meaning taxpayers’ money. While there is information about the Fund on the MFA’s website, there seems to be no or little information on the projects and their progress, impact, beneficiaries, and so on, other than an announcement on the MFA website following each approval round on projects that have been approved.

3.2.4 Operations to date

The Fund has had eight calls for applications thus far. As of June 2022, the Fund had approved financing for 24 projects, out of a total of 54 applications. So far, 324,178,000 ISK has been approved for these projects⁹, with an average grant size of a little over 13.5 million ISK, and a median grant size of just below seven million ISK.¹⁰

⁹ Based on the data reviewed as part of this evaluation, the approved sums in ISK correspond to EUR 2,257,358 when using the exchange rates effective at the time of each approval.

¹⁰ The big difference between the average and the median is likely the number of “small” grants, at two million ISK each.

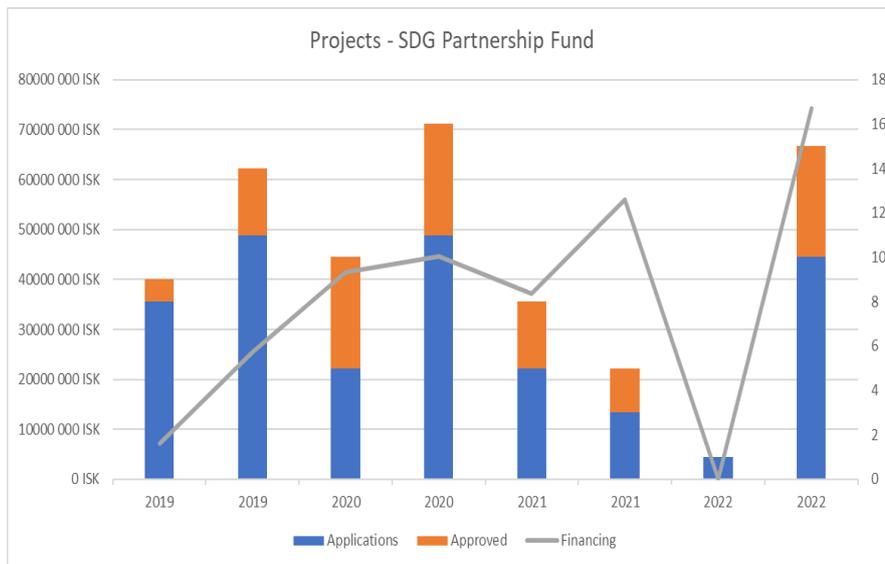


Figure 8: Funding and number of projects

The diagram on the left shows the total number of applications per call (bars), the number of approved applications (amber), and the financing approved per call (grey line).

Table 1: Applications received and approved

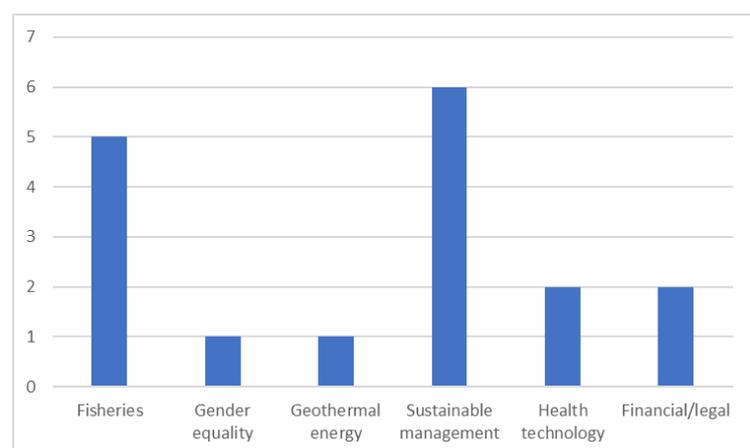
Applications	2019	2020	2021	2022
Received	8	11	5	11
Approved	1	3	5	5

Out of the 265,607,120 ISK approved, by July 2022 143,431,186 ISK, 54% of approved funds have been disbursed. Projects generally get a first disbursement upon signing the grant agreement, and the following disbursements are made against milestones. This allows for a high so-called “first disbursement rate”, as a first disbursement can generally be done shortly after signing of the grant agreement. Here, the first disbursement rate is an indication of how many projects go from approval to grant agreement signing, and if one looks at approval date vs. first disbursement date, we also have an indication on that lead time (i.e. the time from approval to signing). This is not data that the evaluator has assessed in detail; nevertheless, the limited data that we have reviewed indicates that first disbursements have been

undertaken promptly after project approval, which shows that agreement signing has been quick.

Projects have been financed in six sectors, of which the one we label “sustainable management” is broad.¹¹

Figure 9: Project sectors



¹¹ The sector includes projects for sustainable production of skyr, sustainable community development (including access to water), circular economy focusing on waste re-use, sustainable fertilizer

production, sustainable infrastructure, and creative industries for job opportunities.

The grants have supported projects in 16 countries —10 countries in Africa, 2 in Europe, 2 in Asia, 2 in North America (SIDS) (see figure below).

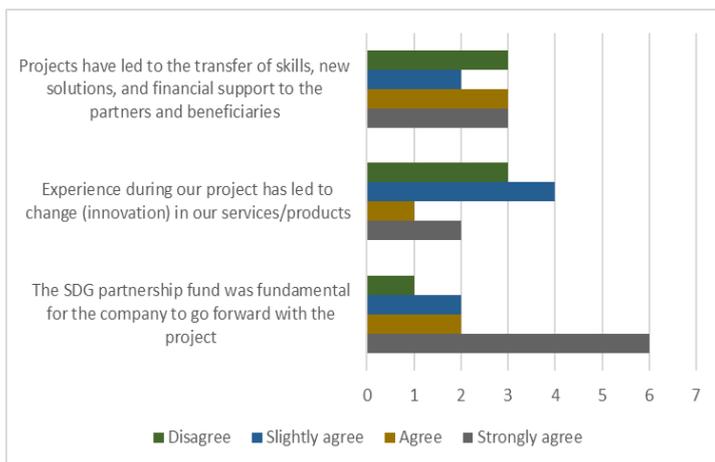
Figure 10: Project locations



3.2.4.1 Role and impact of the Fund and its projects to companies and target groups

Ten out of the 11 of the respondents in the Fund survey had **previous international experience**. However, only five had implemented any project in a **developing country** or emerging market. This means that out of the respondents alone, the Fund facilitated for six companies to get their first experience from developing countries.

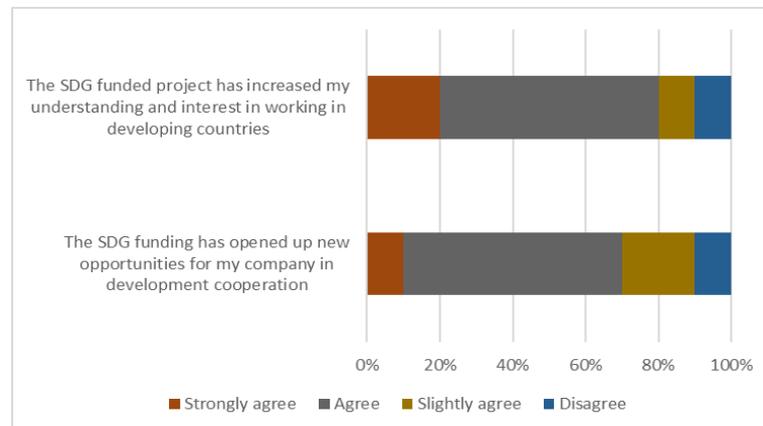
Figure 11: SDG Fund role for the project companies



Eight out of 11 respondents to the Fund survey agreed or strongly agreed that the Fund was fundamental for their company to go forward with the project. Three of them agree that the project has led to change, or innovation, in their products and service. Six agree that the projects have led to the transfer of skills, new solutions

and financial support to the partners and beneficiaries; five (45% of the respondents) disagreed or only slightly agreed.

Figure 12: Role and impact of the Fund



The **participants in the workshop** also agreed that the financing from the Fund was important to make their project ideas reality. They agreed that without the funding, it would have been difficult to convince shareholders to engage in the projects. They found that the risk mitigation that the Fund financing provides helped to convince shareholders to approve the project. Furthermore, participants found that the funding had great impact in facilitating project implementation in the partner country, due to the impact of government recognition and the credibility that the grant gives them.

3.2.5 Two case studies

The evaluation team conducted two case study projects. One (CreditInfo in Senegal and the Ivory Coast) has been assessed remotely, whereas the other (GEG Power in India) included a field trip.

Creditinfo Group – Improved Access to Finance in the Ivory Coast and Senegal



This project was developed and implemented by Creditinfo in Senegal and the Ivory Coast. The project was financed by the Fund and is to a large extent finalised. Its purpose is to establish an online tool for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to submit relevant financial data for financial institutions (primarily banks) to be able to promptly and professionally conduct financial due

diligence. The objective is to improve access to finance for SMEs. The platform has been set up and Creditinfo are currently talking to banks and authorities in Senegal in order to commission the services. The evaluation team were given a virtual tour and demonstration of the system as users.

The project is now at a stage where the digital platform has been developed and is ready to be launched. Creditinfo are rolling it out to banks in Senegal and the Ivory Coast through marketing efforts and by providing information. Two major banks have signed up, which means that the first loan applications from SMEs may be submitted early 2023.

According to Creditinfo, the financing from the Fund was sufficient to meet the set targets, and without the funding the project would not have been realised in the near future. From the data received from the MFA we can see that all funds have been disbursed and there is an “over-disbursement”, most likely resulting from currency exchange: while 23,345,000 ISK were approved, a total of 24,613,497 seem to have been disbursed (we assume that the MFA considered currency risks and took necessary measures to mitigate them).

The primary *outputs* achieved are the license from the Senegalese and Ivorian central banks, the platform which has been developed and tested, and the commitment from at least two major banks. The remaining main outputs seem to be getting additional banks and other financial institutions to commit as users, and to have loan applications submitted through the platform. Only after this may we see outcome in the form of loans to SMEs, and impact in terms of increased access to finance, in turn contributing to improved living conditions.

GEG Power – Geothermal Energy for Cooling of Fruit

A project developed and implemented by the geothermal company GEG Power in India aims to use geothermal power for heat-exchange to provide cooling services to fruit (primarily apple) farmers in the northern part of India (in the district Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh), at affordable prices and based on green energy. The objective is for the farmers to be able to offset their produce spread out over the year, thereby avoiding the dumped prices that apply during harvesting season. This will also allow for sales of domestically produced apples

in larger markets in India throughout the year, decreasing the need for imports.

GEG Power have conducted three test drillings, of which one showed very good results. At the latter site, GEG Power are currently planning for the construction of



the cooling facility. Nearby farmers are engaged and have expressed interest in purchasing the cooling services from GEG Power, who plan to establish a local subsidiary company in India for this purpose. During the field visit the evaluation team met with local farmers to verify that discussions had been held with them and that they understand the services offered, their cost, and have been able to do a cost-benefit analysis.



GEG Power also plan to conduct more test drilling since preliminary surface studies and other geotechnical data show that there should be good conditions for using geothermal energy in the area. The project has received 23,074,000 ISK in disbursements from the Fund. They are currently seeking financing for the next phase of the project, which is to establish a local company, construct the cooling facilities and commercialise the services, as well as undertake additional drilling to scale up the offered services. They have for this purpose had a fruitful first meeting with the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO), which is a possible debt or equity financier.

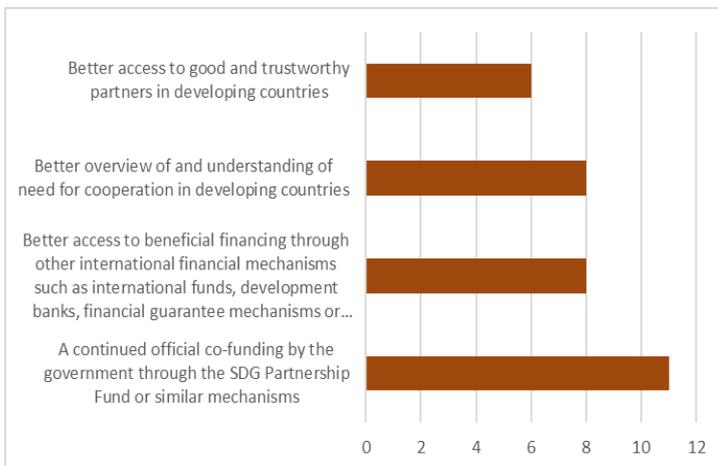
The primary *outputs* achieved are the test drilling operations and their results, as well as the information to and oral commitment from local farmers. The next step is to produce outcome in the form of the cooling facilities and

the subsequent cooling services provided to local fruit farmers. The foreseen impact is improved living conditions for farmers through increased revenue from their farming.

3.2.6 Stakeholder reflections on the Fund

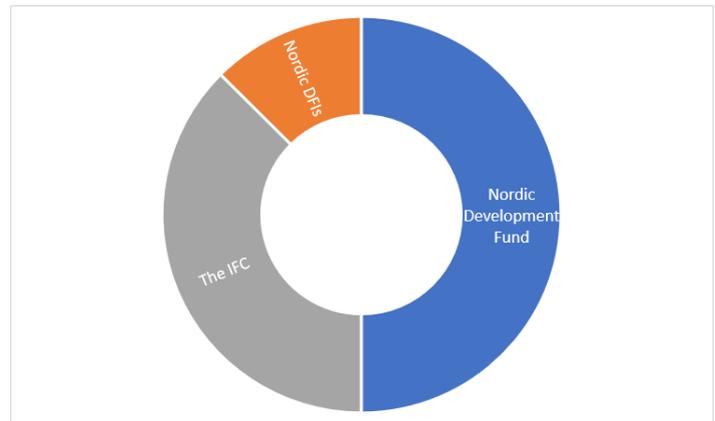
When asked what they think are important factors for private sector projects in development cooperation to become successful and sustainable, all 11 respondents to the Fund survey agreed that **continued co-funding from the public sector (MFA) through the Fund or similar mechanisms is important**. Most (eight) furthermore agreed that better access to financing with beneficial terms through other international financial mechanisms such as international funds, development banks, financial guarantee mechanisms, etc., and a better overview of and understanding of the need for cooperation in developing countries, are important. Only six of the 11 respondents agreed that better access to good and trustworthy partners in developing countries are an important factor for private sector projects in development cooperation to become successful and sustainable.

Figure 13: Factors for successful projects



When asked which other financial mechanisms are most interesting for their company, half selected NDF, 38% selected the IFC (World Bank), and only 13% selected the national DFIs of the Nordic countries. None selected guarantee mechanisms. It should however be noted that in the workshop participants pointed out that they did not know these mechanisms enough to answer this question properly.

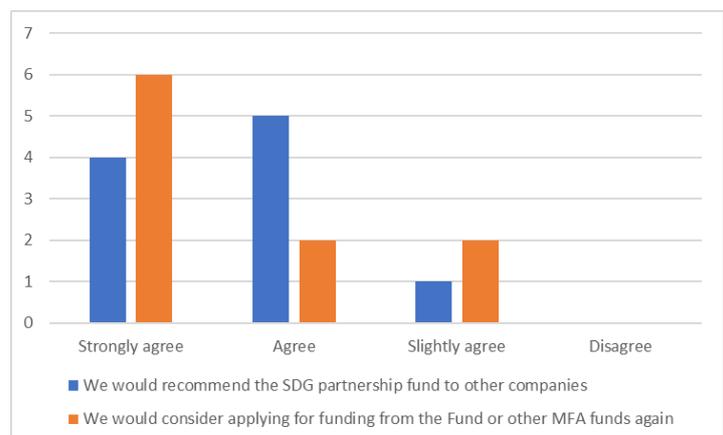
Figure 14: Other financing options



The companies expressed a need for more information about and access to regional and international financing institutions and solutions. As discussed earlier in this report, the evaluator does not consider NDF a viable option for private sector companies to approach for project financing, and thus it should not have been presented in the survey; instead, NEFCO would have been a better choice. This points to **a need for more knowledge in the Icelandic public sector on financing solutions**, and more information from the MFA, Business Iceland, and others to the private sector.

Ten respondents to the Fund survey would recommend the Fund to other companies; one answered that they did not know. Similarly, 10 respondents would consider applying to the Fund or other MFA financing facilities again, whereas one did not know.

Figure 15: Fund



The **participants in the workshop** found it important that the Fund (or other financing facility replacing it) be kept

in Iceland, and within the MFA, rather than being outsourced. The proximity to the Fund Manager/MFA and the support they received were important. Furthermore, they found that the Fund being within the MFA provided connections and opened doors in the project implementation phase, which may be lost if the Fund was outsourced. Participants would be happy to receive additional guidance from the Icelandic embassies and consulates in or close to the partner country. Particularly, they thought it would be very helpful to have support from the MFA in facilitating permits.

3.3 Development Seeds (Þróunarfræ)

The Development Seeds (Þróunarfræ) facility (hereinafter referred to as “Development Seeds”) is an early-stage grant facility for projects in developing countries, established in 2021. Overall, it has very similar criteria to the Fund, albeit for earlier stages of development. The maximum grant amount is two million ISK and a project may last no longer than 12 months. To be eligible, a company must have been registered within the last five years (meaning it can be no “older” than five years; however, certain exceptions apply).

3.3.1 Governance and Management

Development Seeds is part of the Technology Development Fund (Tækniþróunarsjóður), which is governed by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation. It appoints a six-person board to administer and manage the fund and its various financing tools (of which Development Seeds is the one primarily focused on international development cooperation). Development Seeds is managed by the Icelandic Centre for Research (Rannís), and is open for applications at all times. Allocations are communicated to applicants at least twice every year.

3.3.2 Operations to Date

To date, only two project applications out of six that have been submitted have been approved for financing:

- A project conducting a feasibility study to look at the possibility to implement software for improved air traffic safety in developing countries, and in the

Democratic Republic of the Congo in particular. This would improve safety and allow Congolese aircraft operating agencies to meet the legal safety requirements of the European Union so that they can fly to Europe and the US, opening further possibilities for trade and travel. The feasibility study has been finalized but no report seems to have been shared with the MFA to the evaluation team’s knowledge. It is therefore difficult to evaluate the success of the study and future feasibility of the project. The applicant applied for funding to the SDG Fund in June 2022; they did not receive funding at that time but were encouraged to apply again.; and

- A project conducting a feasibility study for agrisolar solutions in Gambia and Uganda. The Icelandic company Ecosophy, a climate tech startup working with environmental data, developed and managed this project in cooperation with local counterparts. The evaluation team held a meeting with Ecosophy: the company is highly satisfied with the funding received, as well as the application process and the fund administration. However, they would potentially have benefited from more engagement from the MFA in their project, its progress, as well as assistance in identifying next steps. While Ecosophy believe that the results of the Development Seeds-financed activities are positive, they have not been able to identify a way forward to demonstrate the findings. They perceive that there is a gap between Development Seeds (and similar early-stage funding) and the funding facilities available for project implementation, such as the Fund. While early-stage funding facilities target start-ups and new ideas, the project implementation funding facilities require that project companies have experience, a stable financial position, etc.

Project companies that have received funding from Development Seeds are encouraged to seek additional funding, if initial results are positive, from other financing tools¹² within the Technology Development Fund.

¹² The Technology Development Fund provides financing for five different “stages”: Fræ, Sproti, Vöxtur, Sprettur, and Markaður. Freely

and briefly translated, this means from seed, through growth, to market.

3.3.3 Reporting

According to the rules and instructions for applicants¹³, the only reporting requirement seems to relate to the submission of a final report at the end of the project (no later than 12 months from the start of the project). According to one of the two successful applicants to date, more engagement from the MFA could potentially have benefited the project, especially when trying to identify next steps. Brief reports during project implementation could have provided a channel for this, and at the same time allowed the MFA, or Rannís, to receive early warning of any obstacles etc.

Similar to the Fund, there seems to be little or no reporting on an aggregate level. However, since Development Seeds was established in 2021 and only two projects have been approved, there has not been much need for such reporting.

3.4 Technical Assistance Program

The TAP in practice functions as a type of roster of experts, financed by the Government of Iceland, which can be used by the World Bank and currently three United Nations agencies:

- The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO);
- The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD);
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The TAP provides technical experts in the following fields:

- Fisheries;
- Gender equality;
- Geothermal energy;
- Hydropower energy;
- Land restoration and sustainable management.

The MFA has a list of consultants, both from private and public entities (e.g. universities and government agencies) which can be called upon for assignments.¹⁴ This can be done on relatively short notice, which is often of

¹³ [TS Reglur-Frae Throunarfrae utgafa2.pdf \(rannis.is\)](#)

¹⁴ The MFA may also use this list of consultants to access experts for its own projects in development cooperation, which increases its attractiveness to the experts.

high value to the organisations using the experts. The list of consultants is managed by the Icelandic Central Public Procurement agency. Interested consultants send an expression of interest to the agency to be admitted to the list. There are two seniority levels of consultants in the TAP:

- Class A consultants have at least 20 years of experience in the profession; and
- Class B consultants have at least 10 years of experience in the profession.

All consultants in the TAP may thus be regarded as *senior*.

3.4.1 Governance and Management

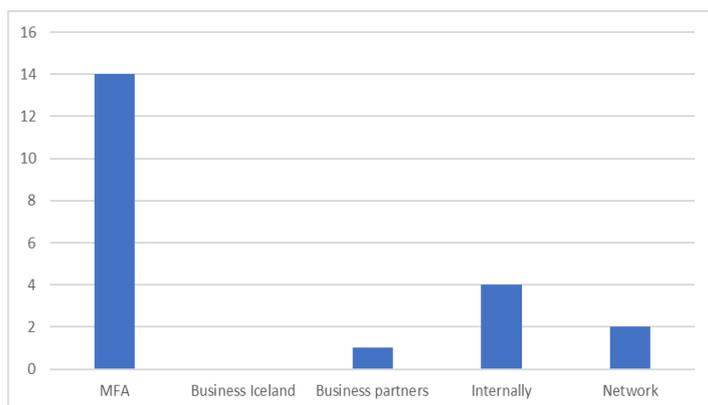
The TAP is governed and managed similarly to the Fund; the MFA governs the program. In terms of management, the TAP falls under the responsibility of the Fund Manager (i.e. the same person managing the Fund), who is part of the rotation scheme with a change in staff at least every three years. There seems to be little need for any decision-making in the day-to-day operations of the TAP; the Fund Manager receives a request including TOR from any of the organisations that have an agreement with the MFA to use the TAP, identifies suitable CVs, and sends them back to the organisation in question. The requests are brief and do not include information on the underlying project, objectives, results, etc. It seems the international organisations do not report on the results of the assignments or the projects.¹⁵

Thus far, the demand has not been so great as to deplete the available funds. On the contrary, the evaluation team's understanding is that the MFA would appreciate if the TAP was used more by the organisations.

As for marketing and the collaboration with Business Iceland, according to the TAP survey, 14 out of the 21 respondents heard about the Fund from the MFA. None of the companies or experts had received this information from Business Iceland.

¹⁵ Information from interviews with World Bank staff.

Figure 16: TAP information source



3.4.2 Operations to date

The TAP has mostly been used by the World Bank so far. Assignments can have any length and scope but is typically 50-200 hours¹⁶. One notable exception is a one-year secondment to FAO of a fisheries expert which has been financed by TAP.

The evaluation team met with three World Bank staff members who used the TAP. The World Bank seem very satisfied with the setup and are even proposing that other donors follow Iceland’s example of supporting World Bank (and other organisations’) operations. According to the interviewees, the TAP is a win-win: it is tied, which is a “unique” opportunity for Icelandic experts to get international experience. At the same time, it is an easy mechanism for access to unique expertise since it allows the World Bank to use “real” experts, i.e. not academics or senior people that meet World Bank procurement qualifications nominally but does not necessarily have up-to-date practical experience. Instead, on the roster are people actively working in the sector of expertise.

The process is simple: the World Bank (or any of the three UN agencies which have entered into agreements relating to the TAP) send a request, including brief Terms of Reference, to the MFA. The MFA identifies suitable

experts and submits one or several proposed CVs to the requesting party to choose from.

One issue that the World Bank team has experienced relates with staff rotation – when there is a change in staff responsible for the TAP, either at the World Bank or at the MFA, operations within the TAP have to start from square one, as new people learn about the TAP, how it works, how to promote it, build a network, etc. Here again, the recurrent rotation in the MFA poses a problem. After the latest MFA rotation there were delays in allocating experts as the new Fund Manager needed to find relevant documents etc. before potential consultants could be offered. Similarly, when there is change in staff at the World Bank things may fall between chairs– the TAP was “asleep” during an extended period last time there was a change to a person in the fisheries sector who did not have experience from the TAP.

Another point raised by the World Bank is the level of seniority required to be accepted to the TAP: the most junior consultants still need at least 10 years of professional experience in the relevant sector. The World Bank has sometimes experienced a need for more junior consultants with adequate technical expertise and experience to assist with straightforward tasks. However, the consultants offered by TAP are generally very senior and thus sometimes over-qualified, charging an unnecessarily high rate. The TAP could be a good way for more junior experts in Iceland to gain international experience.

Furthermore, our interviews with World Bank staff show that there is limited knowledge within the Bank of the opportunities offered by the TAP. The interviewees were not aware that the TAP could be used for land use management, and one of them had only recently learnt that there were more sectors than fisheries eligible for support.

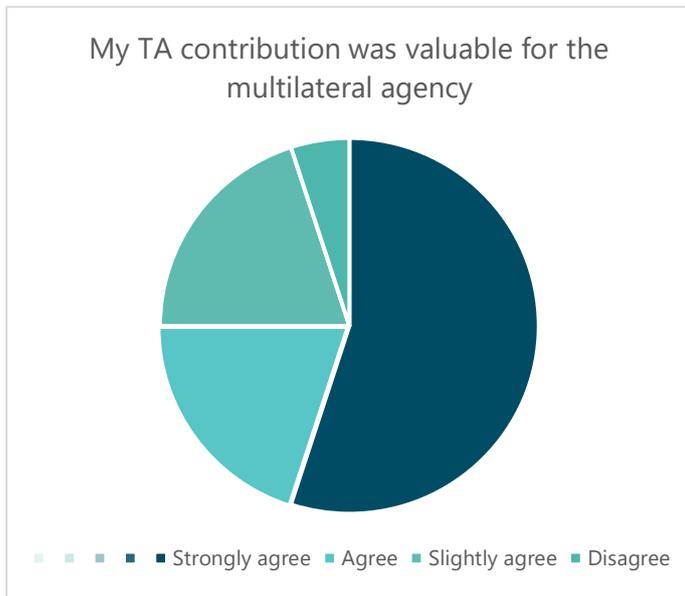
3.4.2.1 Role and impact of the TAP to experts and beneficiaries

For the TAP, 15 out of 21 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their contributions, i.e. the assignments they had carried out, were valuable to the international organisation (and thus, we assume, for the development

¹⁶ [Government of Iceland | Technical Assistance Program in Sustainable use of Natural Resources](#)

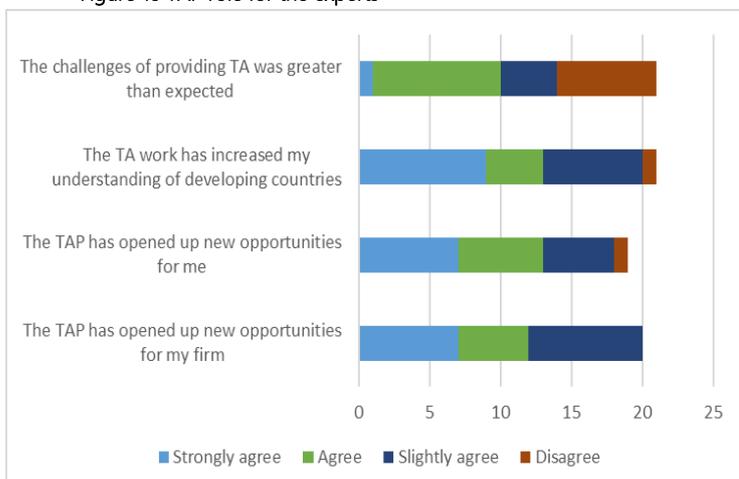
project and the developing country). One answered they did not know. It could be interesting to find out from the five that only slightly agreed (four) and disagreed (one) why they do not think their contributions were very valuable.

Figure 17: Impact of the TAP



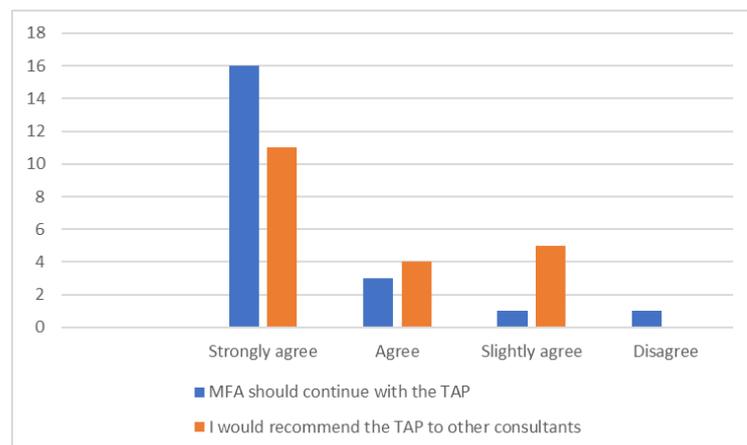
Of the experts in the TAP, 10 out of 21, i.e. almost half, had **no experience** of working for any of the concerned international organisations. 12 of the experts agreed or strongly agreed that the TAP has **opened up new opportunities** for them and/or their firms and has increased their understanding of developing countries. Thus, many experts have gained their first experience from working with these international organisations and likely also from developing countries.

Figure 18 TAP role for the experts



Nineteen out of the 21 respondents to the TAP survey agreed or strongly agreed that the MFA should continue with the TAP whereas one disagreed and three slightly agreed. 16 agree or strongly agree that they would recommend the TAP to other consultants.

Figure 19: TAP



3.4.3 Brief comments on the findings from the TAP survey and workshop

- Most companies have heard about the TAP from the MFA. Again, Business Iceland – Heimstorg was an option among the possible answers, and it should be noted (again) that **none of the respondent answered that they had learnt about the TAP from Business Iceland.**
- It is positive that Iceland can offer experienced experts. However, it also means that there may be fewer experts who are offered a *first* experience with an international organisation. **If the TAP included more junior experts, it could help more Icelandic experts gain international experience** (i.e. those that do not have such experience today).
- From our interviews we have learned that the **international organisations highly appreciate the TAP.** We see from the survey results that also the private sector experts do.
- Less than 10% of the respondents are female.

4. Assessment

The following sections assess and provide conclusions in relation to the evaluation questions (as revised in the Inception report).

4.1 Effectiveness

- *For the development initiatives that have been carried out:*
 - *To what extent have engagements generated results, intended or unintended?*

The objective of the Fund is to **foster partnership projects** with the private sector in Iceland aiming at strengthening sustainable economic growth in developing countries, while contributing to the SDGs. 54 applications had been received at the time of drafting this report, of which 24 had been approved. According to Statistics Iceland there were more than 77,000 registered enterprises in Iceland in 2021; obviously many of these are inactive, and of those active there are of course few that have activities that would fit the development cooperation context. However, 54 out of 77,000 is 0.07%. In fact, some companies have submitted more than one application, which means that the actual percentage is even lower than that. This is not a statistically significant measure of success in any way, but it does point to a potential: there are many private companies in Iceland that could potentially support the government's efforts in international development cooperation. Most have likely never heard of the financing offered by the MFA.

According to the Fund survey several of the respondents had no or little experience from developing countries or emerging markets. This suggests that **the Fund has reached companies and development projects that would likely not otherwise have been pursued by those companies.**

The projects that have been financed indeed seem to have generated results to a satisfactory extent. In the Fund survey for instance, **eight out of the ten respondents** to the statement *"We expect the SDG funded project to be successfully and timely concluded"* agreed or fully agreed.¹⁷ **Five out of eleven** Fund survey respondents have adapted their products and/or services to the developing country,

and **three state** that their project has resulted in some product or service change/innovation. **Six say** that they project has led to transfer of skills, new solutions, and/or financial support to partners and beneficiaries. 15 out of 21 respondents to the TAP survey believe that their assignment had value to the international organisation that led the assignment.

From our interviews, and based on the number of applications, we have learned that few Icelandic companies are aware of the Fund's and Development Seed's existence and the opportunities they offer. **We conclude** that the Fund should engage in more marketing, and that that a dedicated Fund website could be an effective channel to promote the Fund to companies and the public (taxpayers), make it easier to find relevant information, and help promote Iceland's role and efforts in private sector collaboration to like-minded donors who will get a better understanding of Iceland's work and therefore be better able to identify synergies and ways to cooperate more closely. The current website is a sub-page under the government website (head website is www.government.is, and then the Fund site is via Topics → Foreign Affairs → International Development Cooperation → Private Sector Collaboration, and then the Fund. We believe that from a marketing perspective much is gained from a direct and simple web address, such as www.sdgfund.is. Further, it does not contain any information on the projects that have been financed, results, financial reporting, case studies, project images, or similar information.

The TAP has generated more results as it provides the expertise required by the international organisations and offers quite a number of Icelandic experts the opportunity to work with these organisations and in developing countries. However, we understand from our interviews that the MFA would appreciate a **higher degree of usage** of the TAP, and the organisations could likely to **better work in promoting** the program internally. Our interviews with World Bank staff members show that there is limited knowledge in the bank of the various MoUs under the TAP and what support can be offered.

¹⁷ One abstained from answering this question.

- *Have project outcomes been achieved?*

The evaluation team has only reviewed three projects in depth: two financed by the Fund and one financed by Development Seeds. These have been successful and met the targets set out in the project applications. For other projects we have only reviewed applications and reports which indicate that in general the projects have met their targets, although this has not been independently verified. In some cases, extensions or changes in activities have been granted due to COVID-19.

At the program level the **outcome for the Fund has been achieved**. We have identified relevant *outcomes* such as companies getting new opportunities, becoming more interested in working in developing countries, development of innovative solutions, and the mobilisation of additional resources in the form of Icelandic expertise, all contributing to the Fund' objective, i.e. to foster partnership projects with private sector actors in Iceland that aim at strengthening sustainable economic growth in developing countries, while contributing to the SDGs. A similar objective (and thus outcome) can be assumed for Development Seeds; however, with only two projects approved it is difficult for the evaluator to assess it as achieved. There is no quantitative target with number of projects, number of SDGs, amount of leveraged funding, etc. for either facility. Therefore, our assessment is that **the outcome has been achieved for the Fund, but it is too early to say that it has been achieved for Development Seeds**.

There is no formalised reporting required by the Fund to the MFA. Such reporting would likely put some needed emphasis on project M&E, as well as development and reporting on project and program indicators.

For the TAP we have not found an expressed purpose or objective anywhere. However, the program is quite straightforward in making available Icelandic expertise in certain sectors for selected international organisations. We therefore assume that the objective may be formulated as: *leverage private sector expertise for development contributing to the SDGs and provide Icelandic experts opportunities to gain more experience in developing countries.* (We do not assume any quantitative targets, other than that any annual allocation to the TAP should be demand-based and ideally be used for eligible and effective assignments.) The outcome is the evidence that the Icelandic resource base has been strengthened (i.e.

individuals get new opportunities thanks to the TAP experience). On output level, several assignments have been called-off from the TAP and carried out by Icelandic experts, and the interviewees from organisations that have used the TAP are very satisfied with both the program and the support they have received from the experts. Further, 76% think that the TAP has increased their understanding of developing countries. We estimate that **at least 52 separate assignments** were called off from the TAP during 2020 and 2021. However, if one assumes a quantitative target saying that "as much as possible of the allocated funding should, on an annual basis, be used for relevant and effective assignment", that outcome has not been met to a satisfactory extent, and **more internal marketing is needed in the international organisations**.

- *What factors contributed to the results achieved?*

Since the evaluation did not review many projects in depth, it is not possible to assess factors that have contributed to the successes and results of the individual project success and results. From the two Fund-financed projects reviewed by the team, factors that have significantly contributed to project success include the previous experience from working in the project countries, strong local presence, and overall international experience. This is however not to say that the companies that lack such experience have failed; we have no such information. Our general view is however that experience from, and field presence in, developing countries is a strong success factor in development cooperation projects. The participants in the workshop also generally agreed that a strong local partner is very important to make their projects successful.

For the financing facilities, the focus on the Icelandic market combined with simple and straightforward application, implementation, and reporting processes are likely factors that have contributed to the success. The fact that the Fund and Development Seeds are clearly meant for Icelandic companies means that applicants will feel there is a much greater chance of success, i.e. the risk (input) versus reward calculation is more advantageous. Indeed, **workshop participants** clearly stated that the financing should remain under Icelandic management, preferably the MFA's. Combined with a relatively low workload in applying for the financing, along with an expectation that the MFA or Rannis will reach out for clarifications, an application for the Fund or

Development Seeds represents a relatively low cost for an Icelandic company.

- *To what extent have interventions transferred skills, new solutions and financial support to partners and beneficiaries?*

It appears that the Fund has transferred skills and solution to some extent. According to the project reports that have been submitted to the Fund (both progress reports and final reports), most projects have been moderately successful to successful. Further, six of the 11 respondents to the Fund survey agree or strongly agree that their projects have transferred skills, new solutions, and financial support to partners and beneficiaries, and 15 out of 21 respondents to the TAP survey agreed or strongly agreed that their contributions, i.e. the assignments they had carried out, were valuable to the international organisation (and thus, we assume, for the development project and the developing country).

Project applications are assessed against the financing facilities' score cards and objectives, and will only pass if they, among other things, can demonstrate a contribution to poverty reduction in some manner. However, it remains to be seen whether this will translate into poverty reduction in the longer term.

- *To what extent have the private sector mechanisms contributed to the emergence of new actors, innovative project approaches, and more robust project proposals from the Icelandic private sector?*

Five of the companies that responded to the Fund survey had no previous experience from developing countries or international development cooperation. We cannot draw the conclusion that this means that half of the companies that receive funding are "new actors", but it does suggest that a significant share of them are.

Again, we attribute this to the Fund's "ease of operation". i.e. that the application process is relatively straightforward and not overly burdensome. This means that staff in the Icelandic companies need no expertise or experience in application writing as such; their technical expertise can suffice.

Of the experts in the TAP, 10 out of 21, i.e. almost half, had no experience from working for any of the international organisations in the program. More than half of the experts agree in the survey that the TAP has opened up new opportunities for them and 71% agree that the TAP has opened up new opportunities their firms. 76% think

that the TAP has increased their understanding of developing countries. Therefore, we can draw a similar conclusion for the TAP as for the Fund, i.e. that it has introduced several new actors to international development cooperation.

The evaluation team has not identified any innovative **project approaches** in any way that would make it meaningful to talk of such. There is nothing inherently *positive* in an "innovative" approach; while idea development and improvement of approaches is indeed good, there are tried and tested approaches to many types of development projects. The main benefit of the Fund is the proliferation of Icelandic solutions and expertise to developing countries, and an increase in trade and employment that will benefit people in those countries. However, the actual solutions and services demonstrated and exported through the projects are in some cases new to the target markets, as we can see that 64% of Fund survey respondents agree that their projects have led to change, or **innovation**, in their products and service.

To our knowledge there is only one company that has finalised its Fund-financed project and then moved on to discuss next step financing with other potential financiers. That is GEG Power who are in discussions with NEFCO for the next step in the geothermal fruit cooling project in India. Thanks to the Fund, the project has reached a level of maturity that makes it interesting to lenders and investors in green, development, or impact finance and investing. Since most or all projects have shown some level of success, we would expect that many of these are becoming "ready" for next stage financing. However, given the lack of experience in many of the project companies, they would likely benefit from further public support in the form of guidance, introductions, advisory services, and project due diligence to obtain next stage financing.

4.2 Coherence

- *To what extent are the Icelandic efforts coherent with other private sector development interventions, by e.g. other Nordic and international partners (e.g. World Bank Group)? To what extent are there duplications, and how can opportunities for synergies be used?*

Our discussion relating to this question is based on **interviews**¹⁸, **desk study** (via various Internet searches), and **previous knowledge** from extensive work in the IFI and DFI sector. Please also refer to our brief on IFIs which is meant to give an overview of IFIs, which Iceland is member in, and which may be relevant to the Icelandic private sector; and Nordic cooperation, both included in Appendix 1.

The Fund can be considered a type of challenge fund that finances projects developed and led by Icelandic companies, that contribute to any of the SDGs, and that target an ODA country. Thus, it takes a broader approach than most similar financing tools. There is likely very good reasoning behind this: the limitation is the size of the Icelandic private sector, which is smaller than in most other donor countries, and therefore any additional (and perhaps unnecessary) limitations would be unbeneficial. Other financing tools need to limit eligibility to keep the number of applications at manageable level. They also tend to work with themed calls for proposals for the same purpose, whereas the Fund has only had general calls, and Development Seeds has a continuous general call.

Given Development Seeds' and the Fund's focus on early-stage and demonstration-stage financing respectively there is no major overlap with other facilities. It is true that there is similar financing available to Icelandic firms from other institutions and countries, but the global web of financing tools is difficult to navigate, there is much more competition for regional and global funds, and the application process is often much more burdensome. Many of the companies that have received funding from the Icelandic facilities claim that their projects would not have been developed and implemented without this funding. Thus, the Icelandic financing facilities fill a void and offer

important opportunities to Icelandic private sector companies to engage in international development cooperation.

At the same time, there is great coherence in that the projects financed by Development Seeds and the Fund may afterwards be mature for financing from other Nordic and international funding facilities and financial institutions. Development financing institutions often look for good investment opportunities that contribute to environmental and social sustainability. The Icelandic financing facilities assist in the preparation of such projects through the financing offered, both for early stage "idea development" and for piloting/demonstrating solutions in developing countries. Synergies not only can and should, but even must be used to secure long-term sustainability of the development. Once a company's solution, whatever form it may take, has been tried and tested in a developing country with financing from the Fund, the next step must be to scale up. Otherwise, any successful solution that contributes to SDG fulfilment while also meeting the other requirements of the Fund will not provide the benefit it could, and should, to developing countries. Therefore, to properly leverage the facilities, it would be important that the MFA increases its efforts to connect Icelandic companies with Nordic and international financing institutions, funds, and bilateral agencies.

4.3 Organisation effectiveness/efficiency

- *To what extent has the governance, management, and administration of the facilities been efficient and effective? Can these be improved, and how?*

It is unclear who is responsible within MFA to follow up on the facilities' work, progress, and results, and based on this provide recommendations for improvements. There seems to be no strategic or advisory board assisting the Fund management.

The Fund Manager reports within with MFA hierarchy. This puts much requirement on the Fund Manager's *line*

¹⁸ Specifically, the evaluator interviewed staff from the World Bank and NEFCO, as well as people at the MFA and at the Norwegian Ministry

for Foreign Affairs and Norad, the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and Swedish Sida.

manager(s) to know and understand the Fund, its operations, and the context in which it works, and on the Fund Manager to make recommendations that may seem self-serving or biased. Most or all DFIs and IFIs as well as multi-donor funds have boards that are both strategic and executive (some have two different boards) with members that review project proposals and approve or reject them, either by some sort of majority or unanimously, and that provide feedback to the organisations and their management, make improvement recommendations, etc.

The fact that the assessment committee members lack relevant experience and play a limited role in the Fund is an obstacle for more strategic input and support to project design. While it may be challenging to identify available experts with experience from international development cooperation investment projects, due diligence of private sector projects from a bankability perspective, etc., it is critical that project applications include all relevant information, are properly assessed, that the project assessment committee knows what additional information to ask for, who to ask, how to review that information, etc. The Fund resources could be more effectively used if the assessment group/board had greater strategic responsibilities. Furthermore, the projects could benefit from increased support from the Fund (e.g. through the assessment team/board) in project design and application development.

The MFA staff members who have acted as Fund Managers have been very competent and interested. We have no reason to believe that any MFA staff member appointed to this post would lack in either of those regards going forward; however, regardless of competence, very few staff at the MFA have experience from similar financing facilities, the IFI context, project finance and management, or even development cooperation. Such experience would facilitate the processes as a new Fund Manager would more quickly be fully acquainted with, and understand, the role and work to be done. Given that the Fund Manager position is part of the rotation scheme at the MFA, the lack of sufficient experience and knowledge will lead to a standstill period in the Fund and the TAP

between the departure of a previous Fund Manager, and the point in time when the new Fund Manager is up to speed.

This relates only to day-to-day operations, i.e. knowing how the Fund and the TAP works, understanding project finance and IFIs, etc. With a potentially greater workload in the future, it will take even longer for a new Fund Manager to be fully operational unless that person has significant experience from similar work. In addition to the day-to-day operations, there is the institutional memory of financed project, successes and failures, the contact network this brings in the Icelandic private sector as well as among local partners in the project countries.

We conclude that both governance (in its limited form) and management have been adequately efficient and effective. This may be mostly attributable to the fact that neither the Fund nor TAP has been in existence very long, and the scope of activities has thus been quite limited. Nevertheless, the positive feedback from the survey respondents suggest that competent management has also played a role.

To date, Development Seeds has only funded two projects. Under Rannís administration Development Seeds is not able to offer specific support on international development cooperation, evaluate project with a clear understanding of the relevant context, etc. It may also be confusing that Development Seeds is part of the Technology Fund which serves a different purpose with little focus on internationalisation and none on developing countries.

The marketing undertaken by **Business Iceland**, as well as their advisory services, may have facilitated the spreading of knowledge of the private sector's opportunities to collaborate with the public sector on international development cooperation but none of the survey responses confirmed this. However, Business Iceland's expertise lies in trade and export promotion with focus on large, mature markets. Business Iceland however has little experience from international development cooperation and DFI/IFI finance.

4.4 Relevance

- *To what extent are the facilities' design relevant to the objective of mobilising the private sector to support Iceland's work towards achieving the SDGs? Can the design be improved?*

According to the responses to the Fund survey, the Fund plays an important role in making these types of projects happen, and thus that it is a **relevant financing facility**.

The design of the facilities is appropriate for the objective of mobilising the private sector, but there is scope for improvements in relation to governance and management as per the recommendations later in this report.

The design of the Fund promotes Icelandic private sector companies, which likely share the Icelandic government's values to large extent. It also provides a simple and straightforward application process and reporting requirements. The fact that the Fund is technology neutral and open to all ODA countries brings added value and relevance since the size of the Icelandic private sector is a limitation in itself, and it makes the Fund stand out in the Nordic and international development cooperation finance infrastructure.

It is appropriate that the facilities are not concerned with leveraging private sector funding per se. This is not, and should not be, the focus of these facilities. The amounts are relatively small, as are most of the companies, and financial leverage would not be a very suitable measure of progress. The current possibility in the Fund to receive up to 2,000,000 ISK for pre-feasibility studies may overlap with Development Seeds which can be confusing to outside actors.

There is a possibility of placing the funds under a Nordic or international organisation's management. However, this would make it more difficult and risky for Icelandic companies to apply, making them less likely to do so, which goes against the purpose of Iceland's private sector collaboration. By remaining close to the Icelandic private sector the facilities promote closer collaboration between the MFA and the private sector in international development cooperation. The Icelandic government furthermore has the possibility to steer this funding towards its policy goals at any given time, focus on sectors

and countries of particular importance (for instance through themed calls). It can also vary the funding levels on short notice depending on government budget and the demand/interest from the private sector.

The design of the TAP is also relevant: it promotes Icelandic expertise for development projects in developing countries in a straightforward way with seemingly little overhead and delay.

- *To what extent are the facilities designed and implemented in a way that is relevant to the Icelandic development cooperation objectives related to gender equality, human rights, and environmental sustainability?*

This question is difficult to answer. We have looked at the assessment criteria for projects for the Fund, where the following two are most applicable:

- a) Relevance of project (15%); and
- b) Developmental impact and results (15%)

We assume that the relevance is connected to inter alia the crosscutting issues of gender equality, human rights, and environmental sustainability. Many of the Fund projects focus on environmental and climate sustainability, for instance through the use of renewable energy, sustainable fisheries, recycling, etc. Others focus on gender equality. However, there is no evidence that the issues have been streamlined into all projects. The two Fund-financed projects we have reviewed in detail do not (as far as we have seen) include any components that specifically target gender equality. Furthermore, one focuses on renewables through geothermal energy use which automatically leads to positive climate effects. However, more work could potentially be done on environmental sustainability, for instance by promoting organic farming more clearly, introducing more energy efficient vehicles etc. As for the Creditinfo project we have identified neither specific gender equality components (although the project itself will indeed provide opportunities for female entrepreneurs) nor the promotion of environmental sustainability (one could envisage specific "green loans" in the future).

Overall, the design and implementation of the facilities do not support the crosscutting issues to any greater extent. More emphasis could likely be put on the crosscutting issues in the project application document and assessment. The Fund, through MFA staff, the assessment committee members, consultants or others could also do a peer review of the project design from (inter alia) a crosscutting point of view and recommend improvements to strengthen the mainstreaming of gender equality, human rights, and environmental sustainability throughout the projects. From a programmatic point of view, it may be difficult for technically focused companies that are not so experienced in development cooperation to design projects in a way so that these crosscutting issues are properly addressed.

Of the 21 respondents to the TAP survey only two were female. Interviewees from the World Bank stated that a vast majority of the experts from the TAP are male. Nine of the (at least) 56 assignments in 2020 and 2021 were carried out by women.

4.5 Sustainability

- *To what extent are the benefits likely to continue after the project ends?*

This question is most relevant at project level, i.e. for each individual project. Our review of the Fund-financed projects suggests that it depends on the project company's commitment, the availability of further financing, and the local partners, which points to a few things:

- It is impossible for the Fund to determine in advance whether a company will pursue an objective after a project has been successfully completed. Nevertheless, it is important to look already in the application stage at what plans the company has for long-term engagement, scale-up, etc. Such planning could include future funding sources.
- If the project is to develop a feasibility study or similar preparatory work, there needs to be a clear idea of what to do with such study, and how to pursue future investment if the study shows a bankable project. The Fund could engage experts in a review of the TOR for feasibility studies to ensure that it covers the requirements set by, for instance IFIs and DFIs.

- Among the companies, there is limited knowledge of the Nordic and international development finance scene for further project financing. Also, the lead time for funding decisions is often long, mainly depending on the time it takes for the financing institutions to gather and analyse all relevant data from the companies and projects. This may deter companies from engaging with such financiers.

Workshop participants described very different levels of engagement with and from their local partners. A high level of engagement with local partners could be an indicator of the likelihood of lasting benefits, but the variety of projects, partners, and implementation modalities mean that we cannot conclude that there is such engagement and close collaboration in general.

4.6 Overarching Evaluation Questions

- *What are the most viable mechanisms for Iceland to rely on/establish for private sector collaboration?*

The Fund is a fully adequate, not to say the most viable, funding mechanism for the Icelandic government to support Icelandic private sector companies interested in engaging in international development cooperation and supporting the SDGs. This is not to say that the design and functioning of the Fund is flawless. However, we see no need to change the approach, and we do support a continuance of the Fund.

Development Seeds has been less successful in promoting private sector collaboration in development cooperation. Nevertheless, we believe in the idea of providing an earlier stage of financing, and Development Seeds may indeed be a suitable tool for it, albeit in a different structure.

The TAP cannot really be regarded as a financing instrument, or as a very effective tool to establish private sector collaboration. That said, it is a very efficient tool for providing (Icelandic) expertise to selected international organisations, while at the same time providing opportunities for the experts in developing countries and with international organisations. More junior experts on the roster would give them much needed international experience. Signing agreements with more international organisations, and strengthening the outreach within the international organisations which are already in the TAP, would increase the use of the program.

- *Are there certain sectors that Iceland could focus on to increase effectiveness and efficiency, and thus provide greater impact?*

The TAP already focuses on five sectors, and we see no need to change this. One could argue for the inclusion of, for instance, financial advisory services so that Icelandic financial expertise could work in projects aiming to increase financial participation of the poor and women, access to finance in developing countries, etc. to increase the use of the TAP and the opportunities for Icelandic experts.

As for the Fund (and Development Seeds) with the current, very broad approach is appropriate. The number of potential and interested private sector companies in Iceland is low, and further restrictions would unnecessarily limit the number of eligible companies and projects. It would be more important to maintain focus on development impact and the SDGs.

There could however be a case for thematic calls for proposals, meaning that a specific call could focus on renewable energy, of fisheries, etc. This may be an option if the number of applications per call increases to a level where it is not manageable, or if there for political or policy reasons would be motivated to support any specific sector.

- *Should Iceland focus its private sector support to any specific countries or region, to make use of already existing channels and experience from the markets?*

As for sectors, there is no advantage to place unnecessary limits on the potential companies and projects that can be supported. Any geographic focus could be regarded as arbitrary and there is a risk that any such choice made by the MFA may be publicly questioned.

Also here, specific calls could be an option, or funds earmarked for certain geographies in “windows” in the Fund. A call could for instance be targeted specifically to SIDS, or even “sustainable fisheries in SIDS”. That would increase the chances of such projects receiving financing, and the MFA could make a push by providing support and advisory services to companies interested in pursuing such projects if they were deemed politically attractive. For

instance, climate mitigation in low-lying SIDS may have gained extra focus after COP 26 in Glasgow, and pecuniary estimates of climate related losses in low-income countries could be higher on the political agenda after COP 27 in Sharm el-Sheikh.

5. Recommendations

Forward-Looking Questions to Guide Recommendations

The following questions guided both the forward-looking analysis undertaken by the evaluation team, and the recommendations presented in the following sub-sections:

- If and how can the facilities be redesigned, coordinated, etc. to be as effective as possible as tools for mobilising the private sector to support Iceland's work towards achieving the SDGs?
- How can the governance, management, and administration of the facilities improve to better serve the interests of the MFA and the private sector actors?
- How should projects be monitored and evaluated ("M&E") on a continuous basis, and by whom?
- What reporting requirements should there be (from projects to the facilities, and from the facilities to the MFA)? How can the MFA develop information to be shared in an engaging way to the public?
- What support can the facilities and the MFA offer to project applicants and project implementers? What support can project implementers offer each other, as well as project applicants?
- Are there other actors, facilities, and tools that Iceland could channel their private sector funding through, such as funds managed by the UN, World Bank, Nordic partners, etc?

5.1 Governance, Management, and Administration of the SDG Partnership Fund, Development Seeds, and the Technical Assistance Program

5.1.1 General

Recommendation 1: The private sector funding for international development cooperation should remain in Iceland and administered by the MFA.

Recommendation 2: Development Seeds should be merged with the Fund to create a streamlined funding process from early-stage finance for idea development to pilot implementation/demonstration. This would result in only one fund with separate windows. With MFA management and administration, it is more likely that the project criteria and evaluation, as well as design and implementation support, can be better suited to the challenges of working in developing countries. It should also be clear to

applicants for early-stage funding that there is an option of coming back to the Fund for next stage financing to demonstrate project on the ground in developing countries. The early-stage financing could be a separate window with calls taking place simultaneously. The Fund would then have two windows: (i) early-stage financing (potentially with a cap of for instance approximately 50,000 EUR or 7,000,000 ISK) for pre-feasibility / feasibility studies, idea development, etc; and (ii) project implementation window (as it is today). The application for early-stage financing could be simpler than the project implementation application.

This could also lessen the risk for confusion with two different actors managing similar funds, and the possibility to receive small grants from the Fund overlapping with Development Seeds.

5.1.2 Management

Recommendation 3: The Fund Management position, which administers the Fund (including former Development Seeds) and the TAP, should ideally not be part of the MFA rotation scheme. Recurring staff change brings operations to a halt for some time and creates a loss of institutional memory, networks, connections, and understanding of the projects. A Fund Manager could either be recruited:

- by the MFA, as an MFA staff member, but with a profile that fits the role and no guarantee that if the person leaves the Fund Management position, they remain in the MFA; or
- by the Fund, using the Fund's budget, as a fixed term position for e.g. three years. The salary for such position could count as ODA eligible coming from the Fund's budget.

Recommendation 4: MFA should investigate the possibility for the Fund to have a designated administrator, either from MFA staff or one that is recruited separately. The Fund Manager, which should be a senior and experienced person, should not need to spend much time on administration, reporting, etc., as there is less time for the type of work for which the Fund Manager is qualified.

Recommendation 5: The Fund Manager position should have a greater scope of work. The position, as it is construed today, is not a full-time position for a person

experienced in the field. Moreover, with greater administrative support the Fund Manager will be able to achieve more and shift focus. The Fund Manager should be responsible for networking with financing institutions and other institutions (see our brief on IFIs in Appendix – X), as well as EU and the UN, to support project companies in their next steps, guiding them in seeking further finance, and introducing them to relevant contacts at financing institutions etc. It will also benefit the TAP as the Fund Manager could engage more closely with the organisations that use the program.

Recommendation 6: The Fund Manager should be encouraged to utilise the travel budget for networking and learning events, including regular visits to Nordic and international organisations to learn about their operations and establish close professional ties with key persons. This would allow the manager to better guide and support Icelandic companies in identifying and securing project financing for international development projects. The Fund Manager should attend relevant annual and other meetings of DFIs/IFIs, seminars and workshops, meetings with like-minded (for instance to enhance Nordic cooperation), etc.

5.1.3 Governance and Project Selection

Recommendation 7: There should be an advisory board to assist with governance, to recruit, support, and oversee the Fund Manager, act as a formal link to the MFA, identify and develop recommendations for improvement, provide decision-making authority, and function as a sounding board to both the Fund Manager and the MFA. An advisory board with understanding of the type of work the Fund does could be of great support to the Fund Manager and the Fund's activities. The board could consist of three to five people. Two-three could be MFA staff members with relevant expertise and experience. The fourth and/or fifth member could be external, either from another ministry of authority, or external consultants with relevant international experience who could act as an expert on the board. If necessary, the board work could be made more attractive by allowing a small budget for the board to meet externally two to three times per year for strategic planning. Board members could also do project field visits, participate in DFI/IFI events, etc. We believe this would be part of a longer-term investment in strengthening Icelandic competencies in private sector collaboration and project financing.

Recommendation 8: The project assessment group must have the right competencies, experience, and skills to properly review and recommend projects. They should also be given a wider scope of work. The assessment group's TOR should include a responsibility to continuously review and provide recommendations for the improvement of the selection criteria and project application form.

Recommendation 9: The advisory or strategic board should also be responsible for project assessments. If the board is responsible for project application reviews and recommendations to the MFA, the members would have a very good understanding and knowledge of the Fund and its operations. This would benefit their strategic work (recommendations, decision-making, budgeting, etc.) as well as their ability to support the Fund Manager. With one or two external experts on the board the MFA could also secure technical and institutional knowledge and experience. The board would also be able to support the project companies in design and identification of financing solutions (see below).

5.1.4 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting

Recommendation 10: The Fund Manager and the future designated administrator should engage more closely in project M&E. The Fund could engage with the project companies in a more organised way, for instance through quarterly summaries of all project progress, recurring meetings with the project companies, and the selection of two to three projects each year where the Fund Manager and a contracted consultant conducts field visits for monitoring purposes. Clear TOR should be developed for such monitoring missions.

Recommendation 11: The Fund should establish procedures for reporting on aggregate level. The Fund should develop an annual report to be submitted to the MFA and which should, in whole or in part, be published on the Fund and MFA websites. The annual report should *inter alia* include i) case studies from the in-depth project evaluations for that year; ii) funds allocated to the Fund instruments; iii) funding approved to projects per year and in aggregate; iv) funds disbursed; v) one or two success stories; vi) a few profile stories from the companies and the beneficiaries; vii) reporting on progress towards the SDGs, etc.

Recommendation 12: The MFA could look into establishing a separate and external Fund website. The website would function as the main channel for information both to potential project companies and to interested third parties. In addition to Fund marketing, information on calls for proposals and the process, contact information and so on, the website could provide information about further financing and opportunities for project companies, as well as project information and statistics, case studies, and annual reports for the public and media.

5.2 Operations

Recommendation 13: The thematic and geographic scope of the Fund should remain as broad as it is today. There should be no limitations in terms of sector or technology. The size of the private sector is in effect a limitation. There is little risk that the number of applications will increase dramatically that would necessitate setting limitations. There is also no need for any additional geographic limitations. The SDGs are global, and ODA funding is eligible for all ODA countries. Therefore, the focus should be on possible solutions and change agents.

Recommendation 14: When appropriate, the fund could consider themed calls to support certain sectors, geographies, or governmental policies. There is the possibility to focus a call for proposals on a certain sector and/or geography, in order to promote an under-represented sector or a country or region that is in acute need of support.

Recommendation 15: The Fund should examine ways to provide more support to applicants and project companies during project design and implementation. Fund/MFA staff/board members could be more interactive with the applicants by providing feedback and assisting them with risk identification and mitigation through proper project design. Through regular monitoring and evaluation, the Fund Manager should be in a position to identify issues and weaknesses in project implementation and offer support. KLAK is an organisation that could also support companies in the development of a project and business plan.

Recommendation 16: A question should be added in the project application form about the future prospects of the project if funding is approved. How do they foresee the project developing after finishing the project period, how will results and operations be made sustainable in the

long-term, what future financing and operational options are there (set up a local company or manage from Iceland, etc.).

Recommendation 17: The Fund should provide more support to project companies after project implementation through the Fund Manager, the board, and/or other MFA staff who should have good knowledge of what financing options there are and how they operate, and how projects should be prepared and presented to them. The Fund should have a network of contact/entry points for these financiers and make necessary introductions. The Fund and the project company could meet near the end of a project to map out a way forward.

Recommendation 18: TMFA should investigate the possibility to require project companies to mentor less experienced project companies, which could be included in the financing agreement and specified as a certain number of hours. Companies that have implemented a project in the same country or region, and/or sector, could provide useful information, insights, advice, and contact persons. This may especially benefit less experienced companies.

Recommendation 19: MFA should organise events for project companies to meet and share knowledge. This could facilitate problem-solving, ensure lessons learned, foster business relationships, create future projects where companies collaborate, etc. Interested companies that have not received funding could be invited to learn from those that are working on projects.

Recommendation 20: MFA could consider employing consultants via a framework agreement to assist successful project companies with project due diligence. Due diligence could be done and presented in a way so that it helps financing institutions prepare for further funding. A consultant could provide financial and integrity due diligence of the projects and present this in a format useful to financiers. MFA should investigate if such support could be ODA eligible. If this is not feasible, the MFA could have a list of consultants that companies could use for due diligence using their own funds, before approaching the financing institutions.

Recommendation 21: The Fund should provide a clear template for project reports submitted by the companies, both progress reports and final reports. The template

should provide a way for the companies to submit information in a way that best contributes to the Fund's aggregate reporting, for instance, the Annual Report. The final report should also include a section on the way forward/plan to secure long-term sustainability. The report template should include a section on the beneficiaries of the project (who, what, how many).

Recommendation 22: The Fund should do more marketing to reach more companies. The MFA would ideally be responsible for this marketing through its own channels, the Fund website, and other channels (e.g. Business Iceland, the Federation of Icelandic Industries, the Chamber of Commerce, etc.).

5.3 The Technical Assistance Program

Recommendation 23: MFA should consider adding another consultant class to the TAP to allow the international organisations to use more junior experts for simpler tasks. A technical expert with at least two years' experience in relevant tasks could do much work for the international organisations at lower cost.

Recommendation 24: The TAP should investigate ways to include and propose more female experts. The Fund Manager should be encouraged to identify and propose more female experts in each call-off from the international organisations.

Recommendation 25: More international organisations could be added to the TAP to utilize available funds and make greater use of Icelandic expertise. For instance NEFCO could be added, which could increase their ability to support projects in geothermal energy and fisheries, while providing Iceland with additional contact points with NEFCO. AfDB could be another candidate given Iceland's focus on Africa, as well as the ADB with its work in SIDS. The Fund Manager could also engage more with the international organisations to ensure that relevant staff and departments are informed of the possibilities offered through the TAP.

Recommendation 26: The requests from the international organisations should include information on the overall project, including its objectives, results to date and expected results, and how the assignment will contribute to the project. This information can feed into reporting by TAP on what the program has supported and achieved.

Recommendation 27: The TAP should develop a brief Annual Report highlighting assignments that have been carried out and what these have contributed to.

5.4 Business Iceland's Role

Recommendation 28: The agreement between the MFA and Business Iceland should be terminated. Business Iceland should remain focused on promoting Icelandic business on core markets, and not engage in developing countries other than as part of promoting Icelandic business if required by a private sector actor. However, Heimstorg should remain as part of Business Iceland's core business and offer information to Icelandic companies on Icelandic and international funding facilities, calls for proposals, etc.

5.5 De Minimis

Recommendation 29: Iceland should consider conducting a legal investigation into whether the de minimis rule must apply to the Fund. A discussion with the Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs could precede any such investigation (see the de minimis section in Appendix 1).

Recommendation 30: The MFA should investigate using procurement as a tool to increase private sector collaboration. The Icelandic government could enter into a project specific agreement with a recipient country where Iceland agrees to finance a project, either in full or a component thereof. The MFA can then procure the relevant goods and services on behalf of the recipient country and either enter into the agreement itself or facilitate an agreement between the recipient country and the supplier.

Recommendation 31: Iceland may consider channelling additional dedicated funds via a Nordic finance institution which may not count as state support and therefore not be limited by the de minimis rule. This would need to be further investigated by legal experts, but if the support is disbursed by a Nordic or international finance institution it may be possible to provide financial support beyond the limit set by the de minimis rule (200,000 EUR over a

three-year period for grant financing, higher for loans and guarantees).

Recommendation 32: The MFA could investigate the possibility to offer guarantees where de minimis limits are higher; the public sector would take on much of the project risk while leveraging private sector finance from commercial banks, as well as capital from development financial institution.

5.6 Nordic Cooperation

Recommendation 33: Iceland should stay engaged in the newly-established Nordic cooperation group. The group is a good channel to improve cooperation, discuss with like-minded, identify fora for collaboration, and share lessons learned. Iceland could consider inviting representatives to Iceland for a next meeting at working level in the Nordic cooperation group. Iceland has much to gain from collaborating with the Nordic countries and institutions. At the same time, Iceland enjoys much respect for professionalism. Norway took the initiative to start the group and should therefore be a first point of contact.

5.7 Iceland's Multilateral Cooperation for Private Sector Engagement

Recommendation 34: Iceland could consider ways of improving its collaboration with the IFIs in which it is not a member to be in a better position to advise its private sector in financing opportunities, for instance by "piggy-backing" on like-minded, primarily Nordic countries, to provide input to and get information from the IFI boards (for instance an informal Nordic IFI group). Iceland could also look at arranging joint delegations to the IFIs with one or several Nordic countries to promote Nordic cooperation and values, such as gender equality and the environment. Iceland could also explore possibilities to work with Nordic bilateral DFIs (for instance through the newly established Nordic group).

Recommendation 35: Iceland could also consider ways of increasing its engagement with IFIs in which it is a member, for instance by the Fund Manager participating in relevant events, MFA properly coordinating internally as well as with other ministries before board meetings, engagement in multilateral donor funds where Iceland is a contributor, etc. One practical recommendation is to have a representative from the MFA as an alternate member on the NEFCO board.

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Annex 1 - Background information and discussion

A Brief Note on Private Sector Collaboration in General

Private sector collaboration is part of a Theory of Change (ToC) that says that private sector actors can be efficient, effective, and provide additional resources to the fulfilment of development goals, in this case the SDGs.



The private sector has been a key actor in development cooperation for a very long time; however, historically it has mainly played the part of a contracted (procured) party, such as a consultant or contractor. Over the last decade or more, the private sector has increasingly come to play a role as implementor, project developer, financiers, innovation partner, etc. Especially since the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in 2015, which prescribed the private sector as a necessary actor to achieve growth and sustainable development, has private sector involvement and investment in international development cooperation really taken off.

Financial Reporting

It is important for donor countries to report development finance to the OECD DAC¹⁹. While most countries

¹⁹ The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee.

claim not to be driven primarily by disbursement targets, it is undisputable that both the OECD and the EU have a target for its members that the ODA should be 0.7% of GNI. Historically, in 1958 development finance flows actually included both public and private funding. A target of 1% was discussed at that time, but as it is impossible to predict private financial flows and promptly adjust the public flows accordingly, it was determined that only public funds be counted towards ODA.

However, with the shift of focus towards the private sector as both financier and implementer, ODA reporting has had to adapt. Based on this, the OECD DAC has developed a framework and principles for Private Sector Instruments, and how private sector financing can be counted towards official development assistance (ODA).

In addition to the work being done by OECD both to increase and improve the collaboration with the private sector in international development cooperation, and to monitor and report on the financing flow, a relatively new initiative has been set up to make financial reporting for SDGs more comprehensive: the Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD). The International TOSSD Task Force was set up in 2017, and TOSSD is developed and managed by experts from donor countries, recipient countries, and multilateral organisations.

The target of 0.7% (or any other target set by an individual country) tends to point towards development cooperation being supply- rather than demand-driven. Thus, if one were to be a bit cynical, international development cooperation is not as needs-based as most claim. A rural farmer in Malawi, for example, when identifying and formulating her needs, does not take into account whether the donor country will be able to count the support towards ODA. Neither will it improve the impact of the project, and thus the livelihood of the farmer and her family, if the donor country reaches the arbitrary target of 0.7%. There may indeed be instances where the best support identified for a certain situation is *not* eligible to be reported as ODA. Purely needs- and results-based support would not factor in the ODA eligibility in any funding decision.

The “De Minimis” Rule

State aid, or state support, is limited through the so called “de minimis” rule, which states, in very generalised and simplified terms, that a state cannot provide financial support in the form of a grant in excess of 200,000 EUR²⁰ over a three-year period to a private sector company. De minimis aims to support economic entities with comparatively small amounts and the underlying assumption is that small amounts of support do not have a significant impact on competition and trade in the European Economic Area (EEA).

In practice when it comes to private sector development this means that there is a clear limit to how much public development aid finance can be channelled through the private sector without the use of public procurement for specified work. The de minimis rule applies to state support, such as grant financing, provided **directly** to a company. However, a company that provides services or delivers products after being awarded a contract through public procurement is not affected by this rule. For prioritised sectors, countries, and projects, the MFA could in theory procure such goods and services.

The limits are higher for other types of financing as long as they meet certain criteria. Through loans and guarantees a company may receive more support where a sovereign lender can take considerable risk on a project

²⁰ It is interesting to note in this regard that Article 3 point 2 of the regulation on de minimis application states that: “The total amount of de minimis aid granted **per Member State** to a single undertaking shall not exceed EUR 200 000 over any period of three fiscal years.” (Author’s emphasis.) This means that an Icelandic company (“undertaking”) may be eligible for grant financing from other countries and institutions.

supporting international development, albeit at a reasonable market rate.²¹ Thus, the use of different types of financing instruments may be a way to support successful development projects beyond the 200,000 EUR limit stipulated by the state aid (grant) rule.

Furthermore, Norway seems to have reached a decision, after an investigation by a legal consultant, that the de minimis rules does not have to be applied to their international development cooperation, at least when the financed work is being carried out primarily in a developing country. The evaluation team has not seen this report and only been given this information orally, but the reasoning may according to the source be that the *intent* of the de minimis rule to disallow state support that skews competition on EU's internal market. Work done in developing countries does not (directly) create any competitive advantage on the EU's internal market, and therefore the de minimis rule should not apply. This could be interesting to discuss with the Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

A bilateral fund managed by NEFCO or NDF could also be exempt from the de minimis; targeted towards geothermal energy and fisheries, such fund could support Icelandic companies.

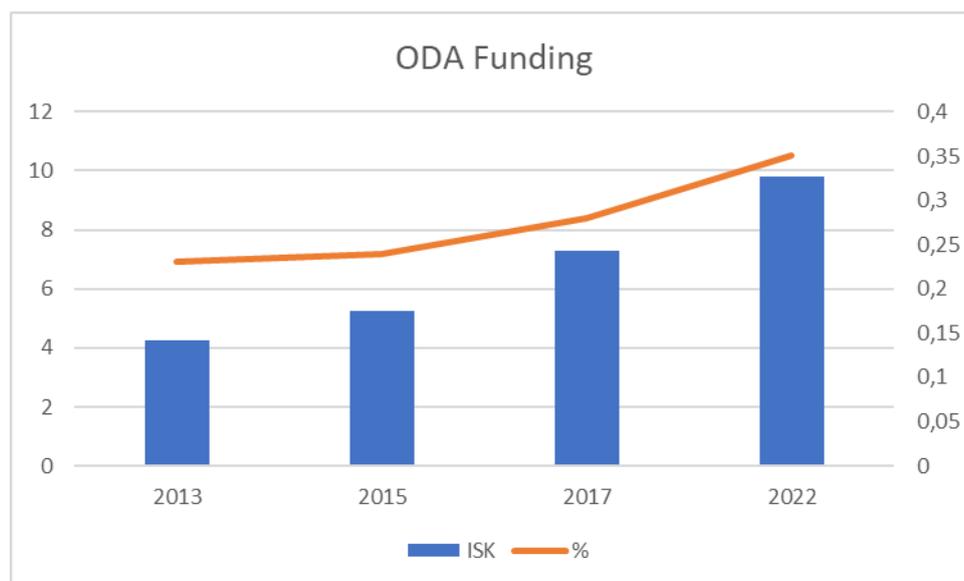
Icelandic Development Cooperation

- **Funding**

The overarching objective of Iceland's international development cooperation, according to information on the MFA's website, is to reduce poverty and hunger and promote general well-being on the basis of human rights, gender equality, and sustainable development. The cooperation focuses on areas where Iceland's expertise can be used in the fight against poverty and in reaching the SDG. Typical sectors than come to mind are geothermal energy and fisheries, two sectors where Iceland has contributed much on the world stage.

Iceland is committed to the 0.7% disbursement target (i.e. 0.7% of GNI should go towards ODA eligible funding each year). Of this, 0.2% of GNI should go to the *least* developed countries. However, Iceland has yet to reach that target. According to the current policy for international development cooperation Iceland contributed 0.23% of GNI in 2013, 0.24% of GNI in 2015, 0.28% of GNI in 2017 as ODA financing, and its goal is to reach 0.35% of GNI this year (2022).

²¹ See e.g. (16) and (18) in the above-mentioned regulation at: [Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid Text with EEA relevance \(europa.eu\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1407-01&fromDoc=32013R1407-01-20131218)



(The forecasted GNI figure for 2022 is from [Iceland Gross National Income - 2022 Data - 2023 Forecast - 1980-2021 Historical \(tradingeconomics.com\)](https://tradingeconomics.com/iceland/gross-national-income).)

• Governance and Management

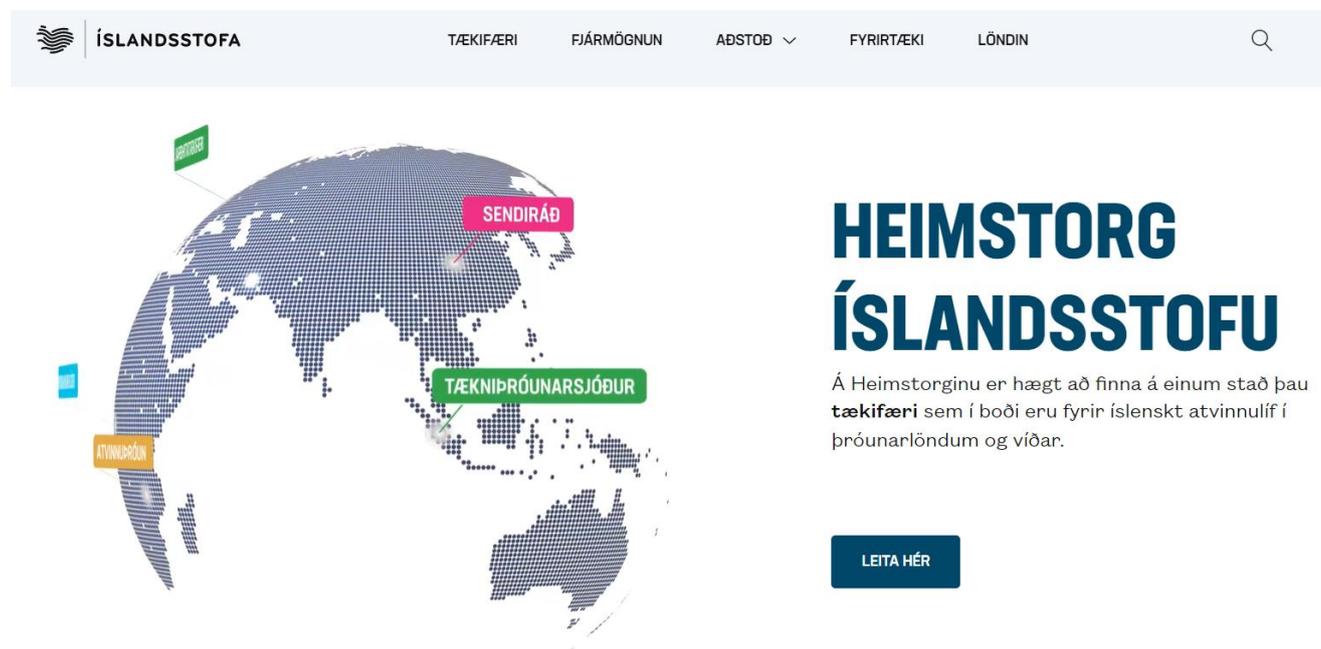
The Icelandic International Development Agency (ICEIDA) merged with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) at the beginning of 2016, when the MFA's Development Cooperation Office (currently the Directorate for Development Cooperation according to the MFA website, one of three so called "functional departments" with the other two being the Directorate for External Trade and Economic Affairs, and the other being the Directorate for Defence) took over Iceland's bilateral development cooperation. This was well in line with the trend at the time, to bring development cooperation closer to politics and policy, and ideally reduce administrative costs and overhead. An evaluation of the merger is currently on-going, and results are yet to be published. However, several interviewees during this evaluation have pointed to the lack of experienced international development cooperation staff available in the MFA and in Iceland in general. One may assume that dismantling ICEIDA has resulted in some loss of such experience, as well as in development project management skills. One of the issues the MFA seems to face is a lack of staff resources for international development cooperation; not primarily for budgetary reasons, but because few Icelandic professionals have relevant experience.

We briefly discuss the rotation of MFA staff in the main report, and the negative impact it has on institutional memory and specific skills development in project management in international development cooperation. At specific development cooperation agencies such as ICEIDA, rotation would be less common, and a change in position within such agency would still mean that a professional staff member works within the development cooperation sphere. We want to highlight that development cooperation is not similar to other types of work, and we do not believe that having worked in an international setting is not necessarily meriting for development cooperation work.

Business Iceland

The MFA has an agreement with Business Iceland (Íslandsstofa) to assist with the promotion of private sector collaboration opportunities, including (and perhaps especially) the Fund. By year-end 2021 the MFA has reimbursed Business Iceland to an amount of approximately 170,000 EUR. Business Iceland have developed a website called Heimstorg (www.heimstorg.is) to promote *inter alia* the Fund, along with several other initiatives. On

this website, which currently only exists in Icelandic language, Business Iceland also promote opportunities for Icelandic companies in terms of international procurement, Nordic and international financial institutions, etc.



This is indeed positive and has likely supported many companies in terms of becoming aware of funding opportunities for private sector actors interested in collaboration with the public sector for international development cooperation. However, one may assume that it is in the general interest of Icelandic business promotion that Icelandic companies are offered an opportunity to collaborate, develop their ideas, try and demonstrate innovations etc. with the objective, from a trade point of view, to increase export. The fact that this coincides with, for instance, the furthering of the SDGs is a positive side impact from a trade point of view, and it is also for this purpose that the public sector offers grant funding. Nevertheless, it should be part of Business Iceland's core business to promote such funding opportunities, as well as global funding opportunities, to Icelandic companies, and also provide support in applying, networking, etc. to increase the chances of receiving funds.

It is notable that when one uses the search engine on (the English version of) the Business Iceland website, and inputs the terms "SDG", "sustainable development goals", or "fund", the search returns zero hits.

- **Partner and Focus Countries**

According to the policy for international development cooperation for 2019-2023 Iceland has two bilateral partner countries: Malawi and Uganda. In addition, there are three so called focus countries, namely Mozambique, Palestine, and Afghanistan. Thus, three out of five partner and focus countries are in sub-Saharan Africa, and the remaining two are in the Middle East. It should be mentioned that no SIDS are considered partner or focus countries for Iceland, despite Iceland's own experience as a very successful and highly developed small island state. Nevertheless, the policy explicitly states that work will also be done to provide support to Sierra Leone and Liberia²², as well as SIDS.

²² It is our understanding that Sierra Leone is soon to become a bilateral partner - this is currently in the works and a diplomatic mission is being established in Sierra Leone. According to OpenAid 6.5% of ISL ODA went to Sierra Leone in 2020.

- **Regional Development Cooperation**

Further, according to the policy for international development cooperation for 2019-2023, Iceland shall aim to implement and further extend regional cooperation in collaboration with multilateral institutions. It goes on to, albeit under a different headline, mention four multilateral institutions on which Iceland will focus its regional and multilateral cooperation:

- i. The World Bank
- ii. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- iii. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)
- iv. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

However, the policy also states that work on environmental sustainability will be done in close collaboration with the FAO and IFAD, and goes on to mention collaboration with several other UN agencies and international organisations. We also know that the TAP provides a roster for UNEP, which should thus be another multilateral organisation with which Iceland collaborates.

Membership in and Cooperation with IFIs

When it comes to funding the scale-up of project ideas, for instance in a step that could naturally follow on a successful implementation of a project co-financed by the Fund, it is reasonable to approach bilateral, regional, and international financial institutions (IFIs). Iceland is a member of *inter alia* the following IFIs:

- The World Bank
- Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)
- The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
- The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB)
- The Nordic Investment Bank (NIB)
- The Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO)

Iceland is also a member of the Nordic Development Fund (NDF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF), which are not generally regarded as IFIs, and who both have a global focus on ODA countries.

Given Iceland's partner and focus countries is it notable that Iceland is not a member of the **African Development Bank** (AfDB). The AfDB is very active as a development financier in especially sub-Saharan Africa and has over the last decade or so become increasingly innovative and engaged in private sector development. In addition to the partner countries (Malawi and Uganda) and one of the focus countries (Mozambique; all three of these countries mentioned now are in sub-Saharan Africa), the policy for international development cooperation for 2019-2023 specifically mentions Sierra Leone and Liberia. All these countries are members of, and therefore also target countries for, the AfDB. It is understandable that a small donor country such as Iceland may wish to focus its financing efforts on few partners, and much work in Africa is being done in collaboration with the World Bank, especially relating to geothermal energy. Also, as a bilateral donor Iceland may still co-

finance projects with the AfDB should there be a wish to do so. Closer collaboration with the AfDB could benefit Icelandic development cooperation, as well as finance for Icelandic private sector companies since AfDB has several funds and initiatives supporting the private sector.

Further, it is interesting to note that while Iceland is not a member of the **Asian Development Bank** (ADB), it is a member of the newer AIIB. The membership in AIIB may have much to do with the relatively political approach the bank took to recruiting members as it was being established. The fact the Iceland is *not* a member of the ADB in turn would likely be attributable to Iceland's limited finances. Nevertheless, ADB does operate in a region with many SIDS and large populations in ODA countries reliant on fisheries for sustenance and income (in addition to the SIDS and the long coastlines of several target countries, Mekong is a very sensitive ecosystem providing fish to millions of people). In addition, SIDS often depend on diesel-fuelled generators for electricity, and there is much investment going into renewable energy in these countries, mainly solar and small-scale hydro. Granted, the World Bank is a strong collaboration partner also in this region, but the target countries tend to have a stronger voice in the regional development banks which means these may be better fora to engage with the countries. Therefore, close contacts and collaboration with the ADB could benefit Icelandic development cooperation, as well as finance for Icelandic private sector companies since ADB has various funds focused on the private sector.

Iceland is also not a member of the **Inter-American Development Bank** (the IADB). This is quite understandable given that Iceland's emphasis is not on Latin or Central America. Nevertheless, with the presence of geothermal energy sources in Latin America, it would likely be beneficial for Iceland to seek and maintain good relationships with the IADB through relevant channels.

There is also the **Islamic Development Bank** (IDB), which works in many countries across the Middle East and Africa. Among the IDB's target countries are Uganda, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, and Palestine. To be eligible to become a member in the IDB a country must be a member of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Thus, even if there were an argument to be made for Icelandic membership (which the evaluation team does not think there would be), Iceland could not become a member. Nevertheless, since Iceland directly supports at least four²³ countries that are members of and target countries for the IDB, we do believe there would be much to gain from close contacts, and potential collaboration, with the IDB (similar to the argument made for IADB and the ADB).

Iceland is not a member of the EU and therefore not of the European Investment Bank (EIB). The EIB primarily focuses in the internal (EU) market, but given its size, its external mandate is large in absolute terms. The evaluation team has not investigated Iceland's collaboration with the EU or the EIB and has no reason to believe it lacks in any regard. However, we want to emphasize the potential benefits of collaborating closely with various EU institutions, including in terms of seeking funding from the EU for Icelandic initiatives.

Nordic Cooperation and Financial Institutions

Iceland is the smallest economy among the five Nordic countries, by some margin. Nevertheless, Icelandic expertise, as well as Icelandic leadership on important issues such as gender equality, is highly appreciated both among the Nordic countries and globally. Financial support is but one type of support that can be offered; however, it is neither efficient nor effective without expertise. Iceland also has a type of experience as a state that

²³ In this respect we want to point out that the support to Palestine is not bound to its territory but also includes Palestinian diasporas in e.g. neighbouring countries which include several other IDB members.

the other Nordics lack: that of being a small island state historically highly reliant on fisheries and domestic agriculture, and fully powered by renewable energy.

The evaluation group has interviewed staff from the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Norad (Norway), and Sida (Sweden), who are involved in private sector collaboration and Nordic cooperation. All have expressed great interest in closer collaboration with Iceland in international development cooperation.

There is an informal group of representatives from the Nordic Ministries of Foreign Affairs and international development cooperation agencies that has met digitally on at least two occasions. The first meeting was, to our understanding, only attended by Norway²⁴, Sweden, and Denmark, whereas also Finland and Iceland attended the second meeting. The group is established to hold consultations on enhancing Nordic cooperation specifically on private sector development, with a view of potentially formalising a working group for the same purpose. The current informal group, as well as any formalised working group, are probably good platforms for Iceland to discuss and strengthen its role in the Nordic development cooperation finance landscape.

The Nordic Development Finance Corporation

NEFCO is a financing institution owned by the five Nordic countries. These member countries are represented on the NEFCO board primarily by each country's Ministry of the Environment or similar, although Sweden, Finland, and Denmark have representation also from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the form of an alternate board member²⁵. At NEFCO board meetings, both the board member and the alternate board member attend with a right to speak. We believe it is positive when members are represented by two different ministries as it means that issues must be discussed between at least two separate parties in the capitals, and statements in the board will be joint and therefore have a broader and more solid base. It also brings greater experience and insights to the board, and thus the organisation, as the ministries may participate in different other institutions, organisations, and initiatives.

NEFCO has historically financed projects in Central and Eastern Europe, with Russia long being the biggest market. Projects have mostly focused on reducing negative environmental impact on the Baltic Sea, and on energy efficiency. However, in 2017 NEFCO received a global mandate (as per an agreement in 2016) which means that they can now provide loan capital and equity to Nordic companies, primarily SMEs, for relevant green growth investments of interest to the owner countries anywhere in the world. NEFCO is therefore a highly relevant financing partner for Icelandic SMEs, including those that have successfully implemented projects financed by the Fund.

NEFCO has a credit line/loan facility from NIB which it has yet not drawn on, that could make it an important vehicle for additional Nordic development capital.

NEFCO is also fund manager for the Nordic Project Fund (Nopef), which facilitates the scale-up of Nordic green solutions on global markets. Nordic SMEs and mid-cap companies can apply for grant funding for feasibility studies and other preparatory business activities in order to support their internationalisation projects aimed at markets outside the EU/EFTA.

²⁴ The group seems to be a Norwegian initiative.

²⁵ Note that Iceland is only represented by the Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources.

In our contacts with Icelandic companies, it became clear that NEFCO is not well known to the Icelandic private sector, despite much effort from the institution to promote its financing solutions²⁶. According to NEFCO the situation is the similar in all Nordic countries; knowledge of NEFCO is fairly low. It would be beneficial to NEFCO, as well as to private sector companies, to use public resources to help promote NEFCO's financing tools and help through networking efforts and introductions.

NEFCO did a mapping of the green financing landscape in the Nordics in 2021. One finding from the mapping was that there are not many public finance options in Iceland. This would point to the importance for the Icelandic private sector of financing institutions such as NEFCO.

Iceland is the Nordic country most reliant on the Nordic finance institutions for scale-up financing to the private sector for development cooperation. All other Nordics have national development and export financing facilities, whereas Iceland has none.

²⁶ Icelandic companies have however been relatively successful in gaining access to finance from NEFCO: since 2019 five companies from Iceland have been approved loan and equity finance under the global mandate, which points to great improvement over the last few years.

Geographic distribution of NEFCO's project portfolio

Country

Algeria	Mexico
Australia	Moldova
Bangladesh	Mozambique
Belarus	Myanmar
Benin	Namibia
Bolivia	Nepal
Botswana	Nicaragua
Brazil	Nigeria
Burkina Faso	Peru
Cambodia	Philippines
Canada	Poland
Chile	Qatar
China	Russia
Colombia	Rwanda
Congo	Saudi Arabia
Cuba	Senegal
Egypt	Serbia
Estonia	Singapore
Ethiopia	South Africa
Georgia	South Korea
Ghana	Sri Lanka
Honduras	Sudan
India	Tanzania
Indonesia	Turkey
Kazakhstan	U.S.
Kenya	Uganda
Laos	Ukraine
Latvia	United Arab Emirates
Lithuania	Vietnam
Malawi	

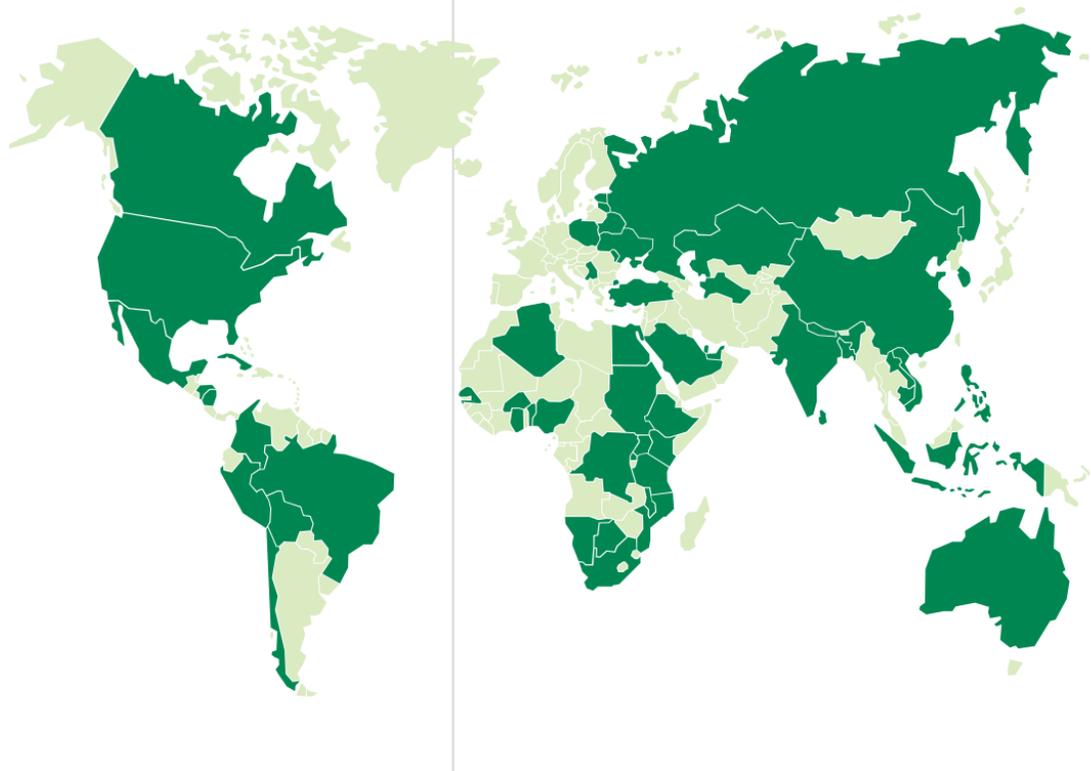


Image from "NEFCO and Climate finance – Mobilising innovative climate finance".²⁷

²⁷ [nefco_climatepublication_2016_EN.pdf](#)

The Nordic Development Fund

The NDF is a development fund that provides mainly grant co-financing for climate and environment projects in Southeast Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and South America. Most funding is co-financed with the main IFIs: the World Bank, ADB, AfDB, and IADB. NDF also has the possibility of directly financing projects (i.e. without co-financing), and such funding may take any form. In 2016 NDF approved its first sovereign loan under the climate mandate, *which was combined with a grant*.²⁸ In 2017 the first proper private sector equity investment was approved.²⁹ This equity investment was done in lockstep with German KfW and Norwegian Norfund, and through NDF did conduct a separate due diligence of the investment, there was much reliance on the more experienced colleagues from Germany and Norway.

NDF is not likely to be a direct financing option for Icelandic companies as it mostly co-finances sovereign investments with the major IFIs and invests in funds. NDF primarily co-finances climate and environment projects with the large IFIs, where the latter design, develop, and drive the projects, and approach NDF for co-financing.

NDF manages the Energy and Environment Partnership Trust Fund (EEP Africa), which provides grants and, as of yet only on a very small scale, debt financing to energy and environment projects in Africa. Iceland is a funding partner in EEP, which is a good potential source for Icelandic companies from which to seek grant co-financing for energy and environment projects in Africa. For funding from the EEP companies are likely not bound by the de minimis rule, and they can therefore apply for grant funding from EEP despite having received finance from for instance the SDG Fund.

Time to revisit a merger?

Iceland could, in order to strengthen the Nordic institution's ability to support and promote Icelandic solutions, revisit the possibility of merging NDF and NEFCO. It should lie in Iceland's interest that the Nordic financing institutions are as effective as possible. NEFCO functions like a commercial financing institution with an ability to take significant risk. It has vast experience from project development and finance in both the private and the public sector. It has only recent global experience. NDF would bring both additional capital and global development experience, as well as a strong network of IFIs. Overhead costs could be reduced, and the management by the owner countries (the Nordic countries) could improve. A merger may improve collaboration between ministries in the Nordic capitals, and board representation at this "Nordic Green Development Bank" could include both the ministries for foreign affairs and the ministries for the environment (or the equivalent). The Nordic green development finance community would speak with a more united and much stronger voice.

The Nordic Investment Bank

NIB is owned by the five Nordic countries and the three Baltic countries. It provides loans and guarantees to private and public companies, governments, municipalities, and financial institutions primarily in the owner countries. Outside the membership area, NIB may finance projects that involve member country interests, such as investments by companies in its member countries, technology transfer, equipment deliveries, or other ways

²⁸ A six million USD sovereign loan was combined with a five million USD grant for a road project. For more information see: [Lao PDR Road Sector Project II \[NDF C92/C93\] - Nordic Development Fund](#)

²⁹ A seven million USD equity investment in a renewable energy holding company based in Nairobi. This was combined with a 500,000 USD grant to the same entity for investment project preparatory activities. For more information see: [responsAbility Renewable Energy Holding Company \(rAREH\) \[NDF C99\] - Nordic Development Fund](#)

of internationalising member country businesses. The Bank may extend loans in countries that have signed agreements on financial cooperation with NIB.

NIB would generally not be *directly* relevant to SMEs wanting to scale up and internationalise innovative business as the risk and size ratio is likely such that NIB would point towards smaller financiers. However, NIB may be an important building stone in a stronger and better capitalised Nordic green financing structure by on-lending to the likes of NEFCO and NDF (or ideally a Nordic Green Development Bank).

Nordic Development Financial Institutions

Four out of the five Nordic countries (not Iceland) have national DFIs:

- IFU (Investeringsfonden for udviklingslande) in Denmark
- Norfund in Norway
- Swedfund in Sweden
- Finnfund in Finland

In addition, at least Sida in Sweden, which remains as an international development cooperation agency governed by, but separate from, the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, provides guarantees as a financial instrument.

Several, if not all, of these DFIs as well as Sida are open to provide financing for Icelandic companies through various types of financing instruments. The evaluation team has for instance looked at one historic example where Finnfund provided financing for the Icelandic company Creditinfo (a 2.4 million EUR loan approved in 2015 for activities in Africa, re-paid in 2019). It is not necessarily the responsibility of the MFA to provide information and contacts with Nordic national DFIs as these may be outside the scope of the MFA's work; however, Business Iceland should have information on and be able to provide relevant contact details for these institutions to Icelandic companies.

Annex 2 – Eligible collaboration countries for the Fund 2022-2023

Least Developed Countries (LDCs)	Low Income Countries which are not LDCs	Lower Middle Income Countries and Territories which are not LDCs	Upper Middle Income Countries and Territories and Small Island Developing States (SIDS)
Afghanistan Angola Bagladesh Benin Bhutan Burkina Faso Burundi Cambodia Central African Republic Chad Comoros* DR Congo Djibouti Eritrea Ethiopia Gambia Guinea Guinea- Bissau* Haiti* Kiribati* Lao DPR Lesotho Liberia Madagascar Malawi Mali Mauritania Mozambique Myanmar Nepal Niger Rwanda Sao Tomé and Príncipe* Senegal Sierra Leone Solomon Islands* Somalia South Sudan Sudan Tanzania Timor-Leste* Togo Tuvalu* Uganda Yemen Zambia	DPR of Korea /North Korea Syrian Arab Republic	Algeria Belize Bolivia Cabo Verde Cameroon Congo Cote d'Ivoire Egypt El Salvador Eswatini (Swaziland) Ghana Honduras India Indonesia Iran Kenya Kyrgyzstan Micronesia Mongolia Morocco Nicaragua Nigeria Pakistan Papua New Guinea Philippines Samoa Sri Lanka Tajikistan Tokelau Tunisia Ukraine Uzbekistan Vanuatu Viet Nam West Bank and Gaza Strip Zimbabwe	Cuba Dominica Dominican Republic Fiji Guyana Marshall Islands Mauritius Nauru Niue Saint Helena Saint Lucia Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Suriname Tonga Wallis and Futuna

Annex 3 – People interviewed

People interviewed

Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs

- Erla Hlín Hjálmarsdóttir, Director of Results and Evaluations, MFA. 1 June 2022/24 August 2022, 5 October 2022
- Auður Edda Jökulsdóttir, Minister Counsellor in charge of Private Sector Collaboration, MFA, 7 June 2022, 10 June 2022, 4 October 2022,
- Ágústa Gísladóttir, Director, MFA. 7 June 2022;
- Davíð Bjarnason, Director of Bilateral Development Cooperation, MFA; Ásdís Bjarnadóttir, Specialist of Bilateral Development Cooperation, MFA. 21 June 2022;
- Geir Oddsson, Head of Division for Climate, Natural Resources and Environment, MFA. 22 June 2022;
- Sara Ögmundsdóttir, Director for Finance and Statistics, MFA. 5 October 2022;
- Benedikt Höskuldsson, Special Envoy for Climate, MFA. 5 October 2022;
- María Mjöll Jónsdóttir, Director General of the Directorate of International Affairs and Development Cooperation, MFA. 19 October 2022.
- Svanhvit Adalsteinsdóttir, Head of Business and Trade Department, MFA, 23 November 2022

Business Iceland

- Brynhildur Georgsdóttir, Director of Business Development, Business Iceland; Gunnhildur Ásta Guðmundsdóttir, Project Manager of Heimstorg, Business Iceland. 4 October 2022;

Project companies

- Ingvar Birgisson, Director of Operations and Solutions, Creditinfo. 15 June 2022; 9 November 2022
- Páll Arnar Guðmundsson, Global Partnership Manager, Creditinfo, Yunteng Derek Zhang, Creditinfo, 9 November 2022
- Snorri Einarsson, CTO, GEG Power; Vijay Chauhan, CRO, GEG Power. 21 June 2022;
- Vijay Chauhan, CRO, GEG Power; Rúna Hagalínsdóttir, CFO, GEG Power. 5 October 2022;
- Stephanie Alice Matti, Project Manager, Ecosophy; Smári McCarthy, Founder, Ecosophy. 24 October 2022.

Assessment group

- Arnljótur Bjarki Bergsson, Kristján Guy Burgess and Regína Bjarnadóttir, Members and former members of the SDG Partnership Fund evaluation committee. 5 October 2022;
- Konráð S. Guðjónsson, Former member of the SDG Partnership Fund evaluation committee. 21 October 2022;

Nordic countries

- Patrik Stålgren, Sida, Sweden, 13 October 2022
- Jakob Tvede, Chief Advisor, International Finance Team, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. 18 October 2022;
- Marta Gjortz, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Norway, Tullik Helene Ystanes Foyn, Norad, Norway, 28 October 2022

IFIs

- Elín Hallgrímsdóttir, Senior Energy Specialist, The World Bank. 19 October 2022;
- Mikael Reims, Vice President, Origination, Nefco. 19 October 2022;
- Þór Heiðar Ásgeirsson, Senior Fisheries Specialist, The World Bank; Xavier F.P. Vincent, Lead Fisheries Specialist, The World Bank. 17 October 2022;

Other

- Kristín Soffía Jónsdóttir, Executive Director, Klak; Magnús Ingi Óskarsson, Advisor, Klak. 11 October 2022.

Annex 4 – Workshop participants

Workshop participants, 4 October 2022, Reykjavik:

- **Atmonia**, James McDaniel, Horticulture Technician.
- **Creditinfo**, Ingvar Birgisson, Director of Operations and Solutions.
- **Creditinfo**, Páll Arnar Guðmundsson, Global Partnership Manager.
- **GEG ehf.**, Vijay Chauhan, Chief Research Officer.
- **Kerecis**, Jón Gunnar Guðmundsson, Project Manager.
Kerecis, Klara Sveinsdóttir, EVP Regulatory and Quality.
- **Kerecis**, Kristinn Thorleifsson, Senior Director of Environmental, Social and Governance Programs.
- **Kerecis**, Þórður P. Gunnþórsson, International Business Development.
- **MAR Advisors ehf.**, Magnús Bjarnason, Founder and CEO.
- **Össur**, Edda H. Geirsdóttir, VP Corporate Communications & PR.
- **T16 ehf.**, Geir Gunnlaugsson, Managing Director.
- **T16 ehf.**, Jónína Einarisdóttir, Deputy Director.
- **Verkís**, Kjartan Due Nielsen, Innovation Manager.

Annex 5 – Workshop Invitation

Invitation to a Workshop on the SDG Partnership Fund, Technical Assistance Program, and Development Seeds (Þróunarfræ)

Dear partners,

The consultancy firm NIRAS is currently conducting an evaluation of Iceland's international development cooperation collaboration with the Icelandic private sector. The evaluation primarily focuses on funding channelled via the following three facilities:

- i. The SDG partnership Fund
- ii. The Technical Assistance Program
- iii. Development Seeds (Þróunarfræ)

You will have received an electronic survey which we kindly ask that you reply to at your earliest convenience. In addition to the electronic survey, **we hereby wish to invite you to a workshop** in Reykjavik facilitated by the NIRAS evaluation team. The workshop is an important part of the evaluation and will serve as a primary source of data for the evaluation. At the same time, you as project companies have the chance to provide your input on the facilities listed above, as well as other initiatives and facilities from which you may have experience, thereby impacting on the future modalities of international development cooperation support provided by the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs through the Icelandic private sector. It will also give project companies an opportunity to meet and exchange experiences.

Where: Gallerí - Grand Hotel Reykjavik, Sigtún 38, 105 Reykjavik

When: Tuesday 4 October at 9 am to 2pm.

Who: Up to three representatives from each project company who are involved in the project(s) financed by the SDG Partnership Fund

Please confirm your attendance to Ásdís Björk Gunnarsdóttir at: abg37@hi.is no later than Monday 26 September. In your confirmation, please state:

- Name of the company
- Participants' name and title within the company
- What project(s) you have worked on, in which sector(s), and what country/countries, with funding from any of the facilities listed above

Please note that lunch will be provided. We kindly ask you to also let include in your confirmation whether the participants prefer the vegetarian, fish, or meat option. Also kindly let us know if you have any allergies.

Annex 6 – Countries eligible for NIB funding in the external mandate

NIB has entered into agreements on financial cooperation with national governments of the following countries:

Africa &

Middle East

Botswana
Egypt
Jordan
Mauritius
Morocco
Namibia
South Africa
Tunisia

Asia

China
Indonesia
India
Kazakhstan
Laos
Pakistan
Philippines
Sri Lanka
Thailand
Vietnam

Europe & Eurasia

Belarus
Bulgaria
Croatia
Czech Republic
Georgia
Hungary
Montenegro
Poland
Romania
Russian Federation
Serbia
Slovak Republic
Slovenia
Turkey
Ukraine

Latin America

Argentina
Brazil
Chile
Colombia
Dominican Republic
Mexico
Peru
Uruguay

Annex 7 – Inception Report



**Evaluation of Iceland's
Mechanisms for Private Sector
Collaboration**
Draft Inception Report

Erik Árling, Ásdís Björk Gunnarsdóttir,
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NIRAS
30 August 2022

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Abbreviations

DFI	Development Finance Institution
EEP	Energy and Environment Partnership
IFI	International Finance Institution
IFU	Investeringsfonden for Udviklingslande
KEQ	Key Evaluation Question
LIC	Low-Income Country
NCF	Nordic Climate Facility
NDF	Nordic Development Fund
NEFCO	Nordic Environment Finance Corporation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
SDG	The UN Sustainable Development Goals
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SME	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise
TA	Technical Assistance
TOR	Terms of Reference

1 Executive Summary

The assignment to carry out an evaluation of Iceland's private sector collaboration for international development cooperation commenced with a start meeting with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland ("MFA") on 1 June 2022. During the Inception Period the evaluation team has undertaken a first review of documents¹ provided by the MFA and conducted several meetings with MFA staff familiar with the Sustainable Development Goals Fund (the "SDG Fund") and its current operations, as well as with two project companies that have received financing from the SDG Fund. The scope of the evaluation will likely also include the grant framework Development Seeds (Próunarfræ) and a Technical Assistance facility (the "TA Facility") to offer advisory services to international organisations.

The discussions held during the Inception Period indicate that stakeholders are positive about the purpose and setup of the SDG Fund, and that further improvements are possible. The midterm review, of which this evaluation forms a part, has been planned from the onset and should focus on ways to improve the effectiveness and attractiveness of the SDG Fund to the Icelandic private sector, to ensure that it fulfils its purpose of using the plentiful expertise of the Icelandic private sector towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals ("SDGs").

The evaluation team has, in collaboration with the interlocutors from the MFA and private sector partners, already identified several ideas that may be proposed in the evaluation report. In this report, the team aims to set out the best way forward for the evaluation to fully explore these options, as well as others that will arise along the way.

No major changes to the TOR or technical proposal are foreseen. Proposals for minor changes are outlined in this Inception Report:

- Revised time plan for the evaluation;
- Field visits (the two proposed projects in Senegal could be replaced, and Malawi may be cancelled; this is discussed in further detailed later in this report);
- The period to be evaluated should be "to date" to increase amount of data and results;
- Revised evaluation questions;
- Confirmation that all three facilities will be reviewed.

The evaluation team's current view, based on the brief work done during the Inception Phase, is that the SDG Fund is much appreciated by the partners that have received funding. However, to attract companies with less experience from international (development) work, the SDG Fund, and potentially the other facilities, may need to increase their visibility and strengthen technical support during project development and implementation. The role and responsibilities of Business Iceland, and whether it is the most suitable partner for the MFA in this work, should also be evaluated in detail by the evaluation team to assess how the MFA's objectives to mobilise the private sector to support the SDGs can best be supported.

¹ See Annex 2 for list of documents.

2 Background and Purpose

MFA Iceland has contracted NIRAS to carry out an evaluation of Icelandic mechanisms for private sector collaboration to improve development cooperation support for primarily low-income countries ("LICs") and small island developing states ("SIDS"), to achieve the SDGs. This type of private sector cooperation is currently mainly channelled through three facilities:

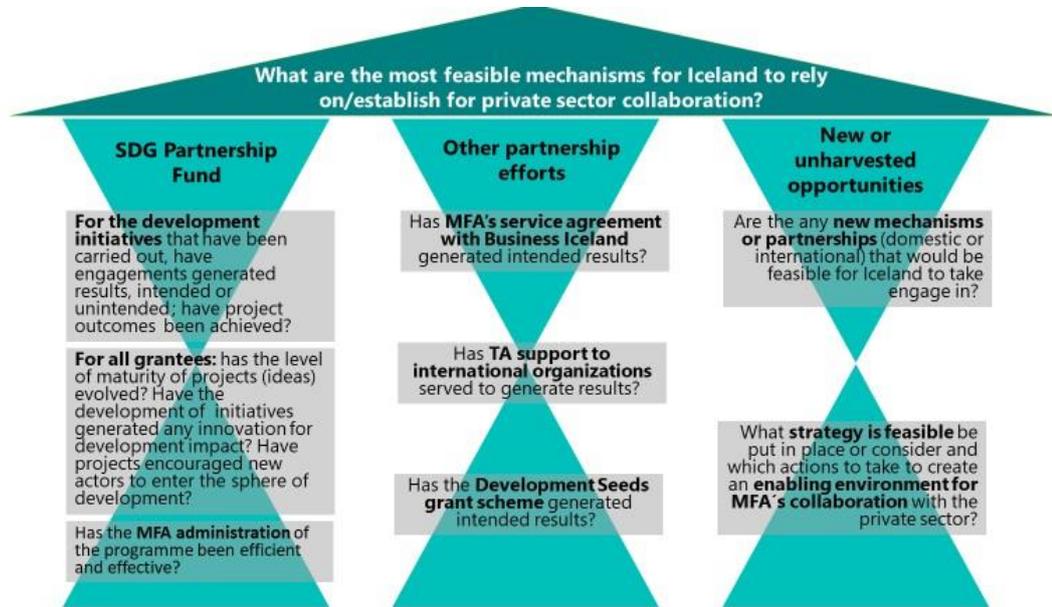
- The SDG Fund, which aims to co-finance projects developed and implemented by Icelandic private sector companies that support Iceland's work towards fulfilling the SDGs. The fund, which was established in 2018, targets LICs and SIDS, but is otherwise country and sector neutral;
- The Development Seeds (Þróunarfræ) facility, which is a grant framework managed by the Icelandic Centre for Research (Rannís) that provides grant funding for project preparatory activities. It was established in 2021;
- The TA Facility which offers advisory services through Icelandic consultants to international organisations. The TA Facility has been in operation since 2017.

The evaluation is based on the OECD DAC *evaluation criteria*, plus thematic and crosscutting dimensions added by the MFA (gender equality, human rights, and environmental considerations).

The overall objective of the evaluation is to objectively assess the results from the MFA's efforts for private sector collaboration, with particular focus on the SDG Fund. The other two facilities (Development Seeds and the TA Facility) shall be taken into consideration as deemed relevant and appropriate by the evaluation team.

As per the TOR, the period to be evaluated is from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2021. The evaluation team proposes to include results to date, to increase the amount of data that can be reviewed. This may improve the significance of the results and can thus better guide the recommendations for improvement. The core evaluation question as presented in the TOR and with our proposed revision is:

What are the most viable mechanisms for Iceland to rely on/establish for private sector collaboration?²



² See chapter 5 regarding our proposed revision.

2.1 Evaluation Users

The evaluation results are meant to provide guidance to MFA, giving recommendations and proposals for improvement to Iceland's support for SDG achievement (as well as other development goals) through private sector cooperation. The primary users of the evaluation will thus be the Fund Manager and other parts of the MFA that work with private sector collaboration through the SDG Fund, the TA Facility, Development Seeds, and other existing and future funding and cooperation facilities and fora. Secondary users may include the overall Icelandic civil service and politicians, for whom it can provide input to private sector collaboration, international business development support, and budgeting. Secondary users also include private sector actors wishing to engage in international development cooperation and for that purpose seek funding from the MFA.

3 Scope of Work

This is a summary of the scope of work, which is outlined more in detail in the remainder of the report.

3.1 Completion of the Assignment

At the start-up meeting between NIRAS and MFA it was decided that the original dates as set out in the Terms of Reference ("TOR") would not apply, primarily as the assignment started later than planned and summer holidays in Sweden and Iceland may interfere with work. Thus, it was agreed that the evaluation team will aim to submit the Final Evaluation Report in November 2022.

3.2 Scope of Work

After the Inception Period, the evaluation team finds that the scope of work as outlined in the TOR remains valid and realistic. The geographical scope is wide as the funding facilities to be evaluated are open to all LICs and SIDS. The projects approved to date are implemented in several countries around the world. Also in terms of sectors, the facilities do not have any limitations. The period to be evaluated should be 1 January 2018 to date, i.e. including the latest round of approvals in summer 2022.³

The evaluation team's input to date is in line with the workplan for the Inception Phase.

3.3 Time Plan

As outlined above, the original time plan in the TOR should be revised, as has been discussed with the MFA. The reason is that the assignment commenced later than planned, and the summer holiday period will interfere with the planned work. A proposed new time plan is presented in this Inception Report.

3.4 Budget

The evaluation team has not identified any need to revise the budget for this assignment. As further outlined below field travels should be discussed with the MFA as the evaluation team recommends that one of the originally two proposed field trips for project evaluation be cancelled. The reason for this is that there is no added value in conducting field review of the project, with limited local interlocutors to interview and no tangible assets to inspect. Nevertheless, the same project can be evaluated in-depth from the evaluation team's home office. Whether to cancel or replace the field trip should be discussed with the MFA. The

³ The TOR proposed until 31 December 2021, see further on this below.

evaluation team would recommend looking at other potential field studies as part of this evaluation assignment, more on this below.

4 Approach and Methodology including Proposed Changes

The evaluation team is strengthened in its belief that the three facilities (the SDG Fund, Development Seeds, and the TA Facility) should be assessed and evaluated as one approach to Iceland's private sector cooperation, rather than as three separate tools. While our final conclusion may be different, our current view is that these three facilities will likely be more impactful if they are well aligned with one another, and the management of the three are either combined under one entity or work more closely together.

The approach and methodology that was proposed in NIRAS' technical proposal remains valid, as outlined in the following.

4.1 Approach

We will apply an evaluation model based on the "White Box Approach"⁴. The evaluation will further follow the so called "Mixed Methods Approach", meaning that it will include both quantitative (e.g. input-output, poverty reduction through jobs created/increased income, equality targets met, funding leveraged, investments facilitated, etc.) and qualitative methods.

The evaluation will apply the following five OECD DAC evaluation criteria:

- Relevance
- Coherence
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Sustainability

The sixth OECD DAC evaluation criterion is *impact*. Given that this is a mid-term evaluation and that the longest-running projects have been active for approximately two years, and the fact that COVID-19 has slowed project implementation, we believe it is not reasonable to evaluate impact. Nevertheless, we propose to *assess* the *outcome* to the extent possible by looking at how likely it is that the intended project, as well as fund (or "program"), results are achieved. This will admittedly be speculative, but we believe it is an important exercise to theoretically validate our proposals and recommendations for improvements to the fund management and governance, and a potential discussion on its *raison d'être*. The team will assess the likelihood of meeting impact targets and contributing to objectives by looking at how well targets are met to date in projects that have started implementation, considering the impact of COVID-19. For this purpose it is important to conduct one or two deeper project evaluations, including field studies, as outlined in the TOR and NIRAS' original technical proposal, as well as in this Inception Report.

In addition to the OECD evaluation criteria, we will look at a dimension which is thematic (as per Iceland's evaluation policy), where we will evaluate the extent that environment and climate, gender equality, human rights, innovation, and the impact of COVID-19 have been integrated into the design, implementation processes and monitoring of the projects.

⁴ Rogers, P.J. and Fraser, D. (2003), "Appreciating appreciative inquiry", in Preskill, H. and Coghlan, A.T. (Eds), Using Appreciative Inquiry in Evaluation, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

We will assess the 17 portfolio projects that had been approved prior to the commencement of this assignment, as well as other facilities as outlined in the TOR, by reviewing available documentation such as project applications, reports, fund and facility guidelines and selection criteria, any documented decisions and deliberations, etc. Since the assignment commenced, additional projects have been approved for financing from the SDG Fund. We will review these from a fund management and governance perspective as well as from a portfolio perspective, looking at selection criteria and the spread (sector- and country-wise). However, as they will likely not commence implementation before this evaluation assignment ends, we will not evaluate or assess project progress.

We will also conduct a workshop with Icelandic partners/companies in Reykjavik to understand their experiences and discuss the SDG Fund, Development Seeds (Þróunarfræ), and the TA Facility (more on this below).

We foresee that the presentation of results will include both *absolute* and *relative* results, on *project* and *fund* (aggregate) level:

- Absolute results on project level tell us what the project has achieved to date (for instance the work that has been conducted as part of a feasibility study, how far construction has come, how many people have been trained etc.).
- Absolute results on fund or aggregate level tell us what has been achieved by the fund financing that has been *approved* to date, measured for instance in number of people with increased capacity or awareness, access to certain services, study results achieved, but also amounts disbursed, co-financing leveraged, and so on.
- Relative results on project level provide information on how much of the planned activities and results that have been implemented and achieved. This way we “translate” the absolute results into a sort of success measure (% or target met, for instance).
- Relative results on fund level would look at how much or the targets have been met to date. Our understanding is that the SDG Fund does not have any such target on fund level (which makes sense since the fund is open to many countries and sectors). However, we could look at budgeting, disbursement targets (if any), and actual disbursement.

Our team has extensive experience from bilateral and multilateral donor funds and partnerships and will bring a comparative perspective to the analysis which will also feed into the recommendations for improvement. Costs will be compared to similar initiatives that our team identifies, where such cost data can be shared (administrative costs, overhead, etc.). How administrative costs will be presented, with the aim of being comparable, will depend on what information we are able to gather from other similar initiatives; it may be the cost per each USD approved and/or disbursed, per project, per asset under management, per result, etc.

4.2 Methodology

The evaluation will be carried out in a participatory manner where the interlocutors and stakeholders shall be kept informed of, and be given ample opportunity to provide input to, the process and results. Much of the work is done through interviews and a workshop, where interviewees can have the opportunity to share their views.

The evaluation team will continuously communicate and collaborate with the MFA in each step of the process, and the MFA will be given opportunity to provide input on all deliverables. The evaluation team will continuously coordinate with the MFA.

4.2.1 Data Collection

We will collect and analyse both qualitative and quantitative data, as well as data gathered through an electronic survey. Quantitative variables include funding amounts (approved and disbursed), leveraged financing (co-financing from private sector project implementing partners as well as other potential partners, and any other financing leveraged), number of beneficiaries affected, and any qualitative data gathered through the electronic survey. Qualitative aspects will, however, carry most weight as this is a mid-term review of projects that we know have been partly stalled by COVID-19. Qualitative variables include finalisation of activities and realisation of outputs, relevance to SDGs, awareness raising (e.g. in terms of gender equality), training, networking, etc. They also include experiences and lessons learned for the MFA on the methodologies, vehicles, and structures for private sector support for development cooperation.

For primary data collection, in addition to the electronic survey of partners, we plan to conduct a workshop and interview meetings in Iceland, as well as field visits to selected projects to be agreed with the MFA (in line with the MFA's expectations outlined in the TOR). We will likely also conduct further digital interviews and hold follow-up discussions through digital meetings. To evaluate technical assistance support which has been channelled through international organisations, which we propose to include in the scope⁵, we foresee digital interviews or email questionnaires/surveys with people in international organisations, as well as possibly one or a few discussions with Icelandic consultants who have been contracted using such funding. If possible, we will also organise meetings with international organisations' field staff during field visits, if these are conducted in places where TA support has been provided.

We believe that we will be able to access and gather relevant quantitative data for the evaluation objects, i.e. the funding facilities and the projects. There may be some difficulty retrieving detailed financial data from private sector project companies, but our experience thus far shows that they are prepared to provide the details needed to assess progress, leverage, and other relevant variables. We have already received much of this information from the MFA and will request complementary data from the project companies as necessary.

Data Collection during Inception Phase

Initial data collection and analysis has been done during the Inception Phase⁶. The evaluation team has received 2,199 documents from the MFA (or which some are duplicates) and has briefly reviewed a large selection of these, including:

1. Reports, data, and background information relating to the cooperation with Business Iceland, and the Development Seeds (Próunarfræ) facility;
2. Agreement and project document templates, regulations, forms;
3. Project agreements;
4. All documents relating to the SDG Fund for the period 2018-2021 (a total of 1,637 documents in 354 folders);
5. New documentation for the latest round of applications, along with updated data on number of approved projects;
6. Latest project reports submitted in the summer 2022.

⁵ During the Inception Phase we discussed this with the Fund Manager and believe it would be useful to include it in the scope of the evaluation. This will contribute to the discussion on the tools' roles in Iceland's work with the private sector in development cooperation.

⁶ The Inception Phase ends with the submission of this Inception Report and an Inception Meeting if required by the MFA

In addition, the following interviews have been conducted:

- Erla Hlín Hjalmarsdóttir, Director of Results and Evaluations, MFA. *1 June 2022;*
- Auður Edda Jökulsdóttir, Programme Manager SDG Fund, MFA; Ágústa Gísladóttir, Director, MFA. *7 June 2022;*
- Follow-up meeting with Auður Edda Jökulsdóttir. *10 June 2022;*
- Ingvar Birgisson, Director of Operations and Solutions, CreditInfo. *15 June 2022;*
- Snorri Einarsson, Chief Technology Officer, GEG Power; Vijay Chauhan, CRO, GEG Power. *21 June 2022;*
- David Bjarnason, Director of Bilateral Development Cooperation, MFA; Asdís Bjarnadóttir, Specialist, Bilateral Development Cooperation, MFA. *21 June 2022;*
- Geir Oddson, Head of Division (Climate, Natural Resources and Environment), MFA. *22 June 2022*

The interviews have provided much input and ideas for the way forward, and the evaluation team is already in the process of formulating preliminary recommendations to be tested and validated throughout the remainder of the evaluation.

Electronic Survey

Following the holiday period and prior to the workshop in Iceland, the evaluation team proposes to conduct an electronic survey with all Icelandic companies that have received funding.⁷ The survey will likely be divided into two parts, where the second part will only be filled out by those whose projects have commenced actual implementation. Questions may include:

- Part 1
 - How did you experience the project application process? (Simple/difficult, time-consuming, resource-demanding, etc. Please elaborate.)
 - Did you engage any outside support to assist you with the application (i.e. someone with experience from international development work, project applications, or similar)?
 - Did you receive any/adequate information, instructions, and/or support from the MFA for the application process?
 - Did you receive adequate feedback on your proposal during and/or after the process?
- Part 2
 - Kindly state the stage and progress of project implementation at the time of answering this survey (briefly).
 - What obstacles have you experienced to date? Were they foreseen? Have you managed to solve such issues, and how?
 - In addition to the above, how has COVID-19 impacted on project implementation, have you been able to take any action to remedy such negative impact, and if so what (for instance changing the project activities/objectives, methodology, time plan, etc.)?
 - Have you needed and/or received any support from the MFA in the project implementation?
 - Have you needed and/or received any support from other actors connected to the MFA/financing facility in the project implementation (including other project companies)?
 - Have you had any contact with other companies who have received funding from the SDG Fund?

⁷ We are also considering whether non-successful applications should be invited to answer the survey to receive their feedback on the application process.

- Has the fund disbursement (payment) process worked well, with disbursement made on time, is the disbursement request clear and efficient, do you experience any difficulties submitting required documentation for disbursements etc?
- Would you consider applying for funding from the SDG Fund or any other MFA-managed financing facility for similar development cooperation work again?
- Have your offered services/products been altered or adapted in any way to meet the needs of the new markets? Have the initiatives led to product development and/or new market initiatives or solutions?
- To what extent have interventions transferred skills, new solutions and financial support to partners and beneficiaries?

In order to increase the rate of reply we plan to edit the questions using a Likert scale (e.g. "Strongly agree", "Agree", "Do not agree" etc.). This will lessen the work for the participants and thereby increase the likelihood of receiving responses. We will include a possibility to comment where relevant, so that respondents may, but do not have to, provide additional input.

The survey will be sent by email to all selected participants, in the English language. Many email addresses were included in the TOR, and remaining addresses will be requested from the Fund Manager. We welcome the MFA's review of the survey questions prior to commencing the survey and will therefore send the draft questions to the MFA once ready.

Workshop in Iceland

The evaluation team plans to conduct a 3/4-day workshop in Reykjavik with project companies (i.e. Icelandic companies that have received financing from the SDG Fund; we propose to not include grantees from the other financing facilities in the workshop in order to keep it well focused). All companies that have been granted funding will be invited. In the interviews with CreditInfo and GEG Power this was welcomed, and the companies expressed strong interest in meeting and discussing experiences and possibilities with other project companies.

During the start meeting the MFA agreed to investigate the possibility of providing administrative support to arrange meeting facilities and refreshments, and also cover the costs for this, as it is not included in NIRAS' proposed budget for the assignment. We hereby confirm that such meeting is planned and *kindly request that the MFA books a meeting facility* including refreshments, and issue invitations to project companies, for a date agreed between the evaluation team and the MFA following the submission of this Inception Report.

The workshop will commence with a brief presentation of the evaluation assignment and evaluation team. Following introductory presentations, we propose two sessions where the participants are divided into groups by:

- Sector, such as energy, finance, fisheries, etc.; and
- Geography.

In each session the participants will be given a set of topics to discuss and following each session they will be required to present the discussions they have had. This will provide the evaluation team with a deeper understanding of the issues project implementation faces as well as potential solutions to these problems. Further, it may increase project companies' knowledge and contribute to the sharing of experiences and lessons learned. Ideally the sessions would function as a basis for future interaction and support between the project companies.

Interviews in Iceland

In connection with the workshop (i.e. in the days before and/or after), the evaluation team would appreciate the possibility to interview relevant staff from the MFA (including its Business Services section), Business Iceland, and other potential stakeholders where such in-person interviews would be beneficial for the evaluation. We would also seek to meet with the project companies for projects that we have agreed with the MFA to do in-depth evaluations of, including possible field studies. If appropriate we may also visit such companies' facilities in Iceland, if relevant for their projects (for instance if the project aims to establish similar operation or facility in the project country).

Other Stakeholder Interviews

During the Inception Period it has become clear that the evaluation team should seek to interview certain Nordic partners, such as IFU (Denmark), who have established the Danish SDG Investment Fund as a Public-Private Partnership (PPP), and potentially also members of the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, who are undergoing a restructuring to better support climate and the environment, as well as the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO), and the Nordic Development Fund (NDF) who manages the Energy and Environment Partnership (EEP) and the Nordic Climate Facility (NCF). The evaluation team also considers discussing the management and governance of challenge funds with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) who have much experience from this.

This is in addition to the interviews already preliminarily planned with the World Bank and the United Nations.

All interviews are planned to be conducted via video link, but the evaluation team is open to discussing possible in-person interviews where there are several interviewees (e.g. Helsinki and Copenhagen).

Document Review

The document review that has commenced during the Inception Phase will continue throughout the assignment. The Fund Management is providing the evaluation team with up-to-date information and reports from the projects. As we propose that the evaluation period be from fund inauguration to date, we think it is important that we continue to review data as it comes in from projects and other relevant stakeholders.

Project Health Checks and Evaluations / Field Visits

The TOR outlined that field health checks and evaluations should be conducted. The evaluation team supports this, but suggests that the selection of projects be reviewed. One of the projects proposed in the TOR is implemented by CreditInfo in the Ivory Coast and Senegal. The project reports success to date, but relates to an *online platform* for credit information to be used for bank lending to SMEs. No SMEs or banks have started using the platform yet since CreditInfo are still in the process of rolling it out. Another project in Senegal that was proposed for field review assessed plastic recycling but consists only of a feasibility study. Therefore, there would likely not be any added value in a field visit.

The proposed health check of a project in Malawi may also be premature as the project has not yet commenced.

The suggested field evaluation of a project implemented by GEG Power in India may provide added value as work is on-going. However, test drilling has not yet commenced so there may yet be limited physical work or structures to review. Nevertheless, according to GEG Power, the local community has been much engaged in the preparations and there may therefore be plenty of interviewees among future beneficiaries (users of the geothermal cooling services). There are also other projects and initiatives in India, both funded by the SDG Fund and other Icelandic activities, that the evaluation team could visit for a both broader and deeper understanding of the Icelandic financing facilities and how they fit in to / complement overall Icelandic development cooperation.

Another field visit could be conducted for a project to be determined, where there are tangible assets, and/or easily identifiable local beneficiaries, to inspect and/or talk to. Note that the evaluation team has no firm recommendation for such project but wishes to discuss with the MFA, including the Fund Manager. Possibilities include fisheries in Lake Victoria or St. Lucia/Dominican Republic, a water project in Burkina Faso, or a clothing project in Turkey.

4.2.2 Analysis

All data will be analysed continuously throughout the assignment, as per the approach and methodology outlined in this Inception Report. Data analysis will be complemented and validated through observations. The Project Manager and Quality Assurance Advisor will provide data analysis support and triangulation data from other similar evaluations carried out by NIRAS.

5 Theory of Change

At NIRAS, we believe that a clear and well-formulated Theory of Change (ToC) is an important guiding instrument for any development activities undertaken by a donor, implementing agency, and other organisations. Reconstructing the basic ToC for an evaluation can help understand how changes are expected to take place and why. It provides a useful analytical framework. A ToC is best developed with input from, and discussions with, key stakeholders. A working ToC may be initially established, to later be refined towards the end of the evaluation. Therefore, we propose to develop a basic ToC framework for Iceland's contribution to the SDGs through private sector support. Such ToC may be guided by the following question:

- *How will supporting the private sector lead to positive change, and through which pathways?*

We suggest to have a meeting, or mini-workshop, with relevant MFA staff when the evaluation team is in Iceland for the workshop, to discuss ToC.

6 Relevance and Evaluability of the Evaluation Questions

The overall evaluation question remains valid. However, we propose to change the word "feasible" to "viable", meaning that we should not only look at what is *possible*, but what can be effective and sustainable given the specificities of the Icelandic international development cooperation context:

What are the most viable mechanisms for Iceland to rely on/establish for private sector collaboration?

To this, we may add *sectors and geographies*:

- Are there certain sectors that Iceland could focus on to increase effectiveness and efficiency, and thus provide greater impact?

- Should Iceland focus its private sector support to any specific countries or region, to make use of already existing channels and experience from the markets?

Further, the TOR include a set of 12 evaluation questions. It was agreed between NIRAS and the MFA that additional/revised evaluation questions could be proposed in the Inception Report. We therefore propose the following Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) based on the evaluation questions presented in the original TOR.

6.1 Proposed Key Evaluation Questions

6.1.1 Effectiveness

- For the development initiatives that have been carried out: (i) to what extent have engagements generated results, intended or unintended; (ii) have project outcomes been achieved; (iii) what factors contributed to the results achieved?
- To what extent have interventions transferred skills, new solutions and financial support to partners and beneficiaries?
- To what extent have the private sector mechanisms contributed to the emergence of new actors, innovative project approaches, and more robust project proposals from the Icelandic private sector?

6.1.2 Coherence

- To what extent are the Icelandic efforts coherent with other private sector development interventions, by e.g. other Nordic and international partners (e.g. World Bank Group)? To what extent are there duplications, and how can opportunities for synergies be used?

6.1.3 Organisation effectiveness/efficiency

- To what extent has the governance, management, and administration of the facilities been efficient and effective? Can these be improved, and how?

6.1.4 Relevance

- To what extent are the facilities' design relevant to the objective of mobilising the private sector to support Iceland's work towards achieving the SDGs? Can the design be improved?
- To what extent are the facilities designed and implemented in a way that is relevant to the Icelandic development cooperation objectives related to gender equality, human rights, and environmental sustainability?

6.1.5 Sustainability

- To what extent are the benefits likely to continue after the project ends?

6.2 Forward-Looking Questions to Guide Recommendations

In addition to the KEQs we also propose the following questions to guide the forward-looking work to result in proposals and recommendations:

- If and how can the facilities be redesigned, coordinated, etc. to be as effective a possible as tools for mobilising the private sector to support Iceland's work towards achieving the SDGs?
 - *This includes looking at the number and structure of facilities, focus, number, and types of calls for proposals, project selection criteria, etc.*
- How can the governance, management, and administration of the facilities improve to better serve the interests of the MFA and the private sector actors?
- How should projects be monitored and evaluated ("M&E") on a continuous basis, and by whom?

- What reporting requirements should there be (from projects to the facilities, and from the facilities to the MFA)? How can the MFA develop information to be shared in an engaging way to the public?
- What support can the facilities and the MFA offer to project applicants and project implementers? What support can project implementers offer each other, as well as project applicants?
- Are there other actors, facilities, and tools that Iceland could channel their private sector funding through, such as funds managed by the UN, World Bank, Nordic partners, etc?

7 Stakeholder Analysis

The stakeholders can be divided into four main groups:

7.1 The Financier

The financier is the Icelandic government represented primarily by the MFA. The three financing facilities that are the subjects of this evaluation are all funded directly through the MFA, and managed either directly or indirectly by it. The SDG Fund, which is the main financing facility of the three, is managed directly by the MFA through a Fund Manager who is part of the MFA staff rotation scheme. It was also developed mainly by MFA staff.

The MFA is also the Client for NIRAS and has contracted this mid-term evaluation. It is important for the MFA to learn of the results, effectiveness, and efficiency of the facilities, and receive recommendations for improvement in the management and structure of the financing facilities, as well as proposals for overall strengthening of private sector collaboration for international development cooperation. Therefore, this evaluation goes beyond the MFA's financing facilities to look also at other potential financing channels, such as International Financial Institutions (IFI), Nordic Development Financing Institutions (DFI), etc.

The Financier as a stakeholder, represented by MFA, will be continuously informed of the progress of the evaluation, and be offered the opportunity to review and comment on draft deliverables and the work plan throughout the assignment.

The evaluation team has engaged with several MFA staff during the Inception Phase (see list of people met) and foresees that additional people from the MFA may be interviewed during the assignment. The Fund Manager will remain closely engaged in the evaluation work and continues to provide data and information to the evaluation team.

7.2 Project Companies

The project companies are the Icelandic companies that have received funding from the financing facilities, and their (local and other) private sector partners engaged in project implementation. The project companies have the most up-to-date information on project progress and funding spent, and therefore are the most important sources of primary data for the evaluation. However, one must consider that the project companies have an interest in the outcome of any project evaluation, and therefore information received from them should be triangulated to the extent possible. For case studies, the evaluation team will seek to interview local partners and beneficiaries to validate results. However, for the portfolio level evaluation a critical review of the information submitted by the project companies may need to suffice.

After the latest round of approvals in June 2022 there are 24 projects that have received funding from the SDG Partnership Fund. There are slightly fewer project companies since some are involved in more than one project. These will all be invited to the workshop in Iceland. The evaluation team has already interviewed two project companies during the Inception Phase and

will likely interview several more over the course of the assignment to gain a more in-depth understanding of certain projects. This will certainly be the case for the projects that will be evaluated through field studies.

7.3 Target Groups

The target groups should, in our view, always be considered the most important stakeholder group in any evaluation of this sort. No matter what results we gather from other stakeholders, only the target groups, including beneficiaries, will be able to tell us whether an activity has had actual, positive impact. The evaluation team will have limited possibility to engage directly with many target groups in this assignment; only for the field studies can we meet with beneficiaries, local population, etc. in the project countries. We must also consider the fact that many projects have been delayed due to COVID-19, and therefore the beneficiaries may as of yet not have experienced any positive impact.

Nevertheless, we will look at the number of beneficiaries targeted and the number of people who have reportedly benefited from any given project at the time of this evaluation.

7.4 The Public

The last main stakeholder group is one we somewhat simplified call the "public". This is primarily people of Iceland who pay taxes and may have an interest in the work that the Icelandic government is doing to achieve the SDGs, and more generally in terms of international development cooperation. The public also includes interest groups such as NGOs, academia etc. looking at specific issues (poverty reduction, climate and environment, gender equality, etc.) and geographies (i.e. countries where the projects are implemented).

However, one should also consider interest groups and the private sector in the target countries which may have opinions on the type of work being undertaken, and/or who may see or expect business opportunities arising from the projects.

During this evaluation, the evaluation team will not engage with such groups, unless specifically agreed with the MFA. However, the evaluation report and any short form presentation of results should be developed, formulated, and formatted in a way so that an interested public/third party can read and assess the information.

8 Evaluation Team

The following evaluation experts make up the evaluation team:

Name	Role	Responsibilities
Erik Årling	Team leader	As Team Leader, Mr. Årling will be responsible for organising and implementing the services requested in the ToR, in line with the methodology, schedule and budget proposed in the tender. This includes: Coordination of and contribution to the document review, refinement of the methodology and elaboration of the Inception Report; Development of tools and methods for data collection, coordination, and contribution to the data collection and analysis process; Conducting interviews with key stakeholders; Primary responsible for debriefing meetings;

		Primary responsible for report writing and presentation of evaluation findings, results, and recommendations.
Ásdís Björk Gunnarsdóttir	National Icelandic Evaluator	Responsible for: Technical inputs to the evaluation focusing on the Icelandic context; Participation in all outlined meetings; Contribution to the document review, refinement of the methodology and elaboration of the Inception Report; Contribution to the development of tools and methods for data collection, and contribution to the data collection and analysis process; Conducting interviews with key stakeholders in Iceland; Report writing, recommendations and presentation of evaluation findings, results.
Cecilia Ljungman	Quality Assurance Advisor	Responsible for: Quality assurance on all deliverables; Ensuring adherence to OECD DAC evaluation standards; Advisory support.
Dima Issa	Project Manager	Responsible for: Administrative oversight and coordination; Survey design administration and analysis; Stakeholder-, time-, cost-, resource- and risk management; Layout and timely submission of deliverables.

9 Work Plan

It was agreed during the start meeting on 1 June that the deadlines in the TOR, including for the Inception Report, were not applicable and that the evaluation team would be allowed adequate time to finalise each task. The Final Evaluation Report shall be submitted no later than November 2022. It was further agreed that the workshop to be held in Iceland would be conducted tentatively early September 2022 (whereas NIRAS' technical proposal suggested June).

Workplan

					June					July			August				September				October				November							
	EÅ	ABG	CJ	DI	1-3	7-10	13-17	20-23	27-01	4-8	11-15	18-22	25-29	1-5	8-12	15-19	22-26	29-2	5-9	12-16	19-23	26-30	3-7	10-14	17-21	24-28	31-4	7-11	14-18	21-25		
Inception Phase																																
Start meeting																																
Document review	4	3,5																														
Meetings with MFA and project implementers																																
Project implementation planning	1			1																												
Development and submission of Inception Report	2		0,5																													
Inception Meeting	1	0,5																														
Data collection and analysis																																
Detailed document review	1	3																														
Survey design, administration, and analysis	0,5			3,5																												
Data collection in Iceland	4	2,5																														
Additional interviews (remote)	2																															
Project assessments India (with travel, timing tbc)	8																															
Project assessments other country (with travel)	5																															
Report writing and dissemination																																
Synthesis	2	1																														
Preliminary findings workshop	1	1																														
Draft evaluation report	4,5		1	1																												
Final evaluation report	1		0,5	1																												
Dissemination	1																															
Presentation of findings	0,5	0,5		0,5																												
Total days per person	39	12	2	7																												
Total days for the assignment				59,5																												

Initials: EÅ: Erik Årling, ABG: Asdis Björk Gunnarsdottir, CJ: Cecilia Ljungman, DI: Dima Issa

Once counterparts at the MFA are available, the evaluation team also proposes to engage in planning the workshop in Iceland, tentatively scheduled early October (“Data collection in Iceland”).

The potential field visits have not been scheduled as they depend on the projects selected and availability of project company staff etc.

10 The Evaluation Team’s Early Considerations

The SDG Fund is relevant to support Iceland’s work with the SDGs, as it facilitates the work of the private sector and leverages private sector funding towards the fulfilment of the SDGs. The interviewed companies are satisfied with the processes and structure of the SDG Fund. Therefore, we believe that it should likely remain part of the Icelandic government’s development cooperation financing infrastructure.

10.1 Reporting

The evaluation team believes that improvement to reporting processes, structures, and templates would be beneficial. Reporting from the project partners seems adequate in practice, although with more active projects, reporting practices may straggle. Information and training on DAC compliant reporting, along with clear templates, may therefore be relevant. There also seems to be uncertainty regarding expectations from the MFA and the political level that the facilities report on an aggregate level. A structured annual report may be advisable, possibly also including material for results dissemination to the public.

10.2 Governance and Management

The SDG Fund, as well as possible the other facilities, may benefit from being more detached from the MFA. External fund management (at least one Fund Manager, possibly other staff if and as the fund grows such as for instance an M&E expert) could be employed to ensure that the Fund Manager has relevant experience from similar funds, and also the possibility to stay in the position for longer than the MFA rotation period.

If a Fund Manager is recruited separately from the MFA, a governance board or committee (the “Board”) should be considered. The Board should consist of MFA staff, plus possibly an external (challenge) fund or other development cooperation expert, as well as possibly representation from Business Iceland. The Board would be responsible for governance, and oversee the fund management. The Board can also, as a more independent body, report to the minister and make recommendations on extending/replenishing the fund.

Lastly, the three facilities that are the objects of this evaluation could benefit from being managed as one single facility, or at least from closer collaboration between the three. If they were merged into one facility, such facility (e.g. the “SDG Partnership Fund”) could include different windows for small- and large-scale funding, a roster of consultants, etc.

10.3 Support to Project Companies

Icelandic companies with limited international experience, especially in the field of development, could benefit from receiving more support from or through the SDG Partnership Fund (from the MFA, Business Iceland, external consultants, etc.). Such support could be in the form of developing projects and project proposals, implementation in complex markets, and results reporting.

Companies with limited experience can also be supported by project companies with more experience, for instance by requiring as part of a funding approval that an experienced company provides a certain amount of support, or "mentoring", to less experienced companies.

In connection with the above, one or several networks of project companies could be established to provide support to each other, for example sector wise, per region, or only one network of inter-company advice.

10.4 Focus (countries and sectors)

The SDG Fund takes a different approach from most other similar (challenge) funds in that it is open to all LICs and SIDS, and is not limited in terms of which sectors it can finance. This is a reasonable approach for the Icelandic private sector, as there is a limited number of companies with experience from, or capacity for, international (development) work. Thus, our current view is that this approach is reasonable.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to consider Iceland's:

- Expertise in geothermal and other renewable energy and fisheries in particular; and
- Role as a small island state which is a highly developed democracy.

Therefore, an interesting discussion could be initiated about whether Iceland's development cooperation should focus on renewable energy, fisheries, and governance for SIDS, with a special partnership or forum for island states, aiming to support SIDS. This is however a discussion well outside the scope of this evaluation.

11 Annexes

Annex 1 – Evaluation Framework

Evaluation Questions	Areas of inquiry - assessment indicators - <i>how you will know</i>	Methods – <i>how you will gather the data</i>	Sources – <i>where the data can be obtained</i>
1. For the development initiatives that have been carried out: (i) to what extent have engagements generated results, intended or unintended; (ii) have project outcomes been achieved; (iii) what factors contributed to the results achieved?	<p>Reported activities and results by the project companies.</p> <p>Evidence of results.</p> <p>Comparison of reported/evidenced results versus planned outcomes.</p> <p>Analysis of factors affecting project implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Survey • Participatory workshop and interviews • Field studies • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • MFA staff • Project company staff • Beneficiaries
2. To what extent have interventions transferred skills, new solutions and financial support to partners and beneficiaries?	<p>Evidence of impact on and changes among project companies, local beneficiaries, as well as local businesses and authorities, related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustenance • Employment / income generation • Poverty reduction • Professional development • Education / training • Innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Survey • Participatory workshop and interviews • Field studies • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • MFA staff • Project company staff • Beneficiaries • Local authorities • Local businesses

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to finance • Cultural changes <p>Etc. depending on the objectives of each specific intervention.</p>		
3. To what extent have the private sector mechanisms contributed to the emergence of new actors, innovative project approaches, and more robust project proposals from the Icelandic private sector?	<p>Estimated number of Icelandic companies involved in international (development) work, exporting goods and services, etc.</p> <p>Comparison of number of companies working internationally in 2017 and 2022.</p> <p>Analysis of project approaches among funded projects ("innovativeness").</p> <p>Number and quality of submitted and approved project proposals per call over the evaluation period.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Survey • Participatory workshop and interviews • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • MFA staff • Business Iceland • Project company staff
4. To what extent are the Icelandic efforts coherent with other private sector development interventions, by e.g. other Nordic and international partners (e.g. World Bank Group)? To what extent are there duplications, and how can opportunities for synergies be used?	<p>Information about other organisations' interventions.</p> <p>Evidence of communication and collaboration between MFA/Business Iceland and other organisations.</p> <p>Information about the possibilities/eligibility for Iceland to cooperate/collaborate/co-finance other activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Interviews • Mapping of organisations and their activities • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • Other organisations' staff • Research reports • Online information
5. To what extent has the governance, management, and administration of	Number of MFA and other staff involved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document and data review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • MFA staff

<p>the facilities been efficient and effective? Can these be improved, and how?</p>	<p>Administrative and overhead costs vs. approved amounts.</p> <p>Administrative and overhead costs vs. disbursed amounts.</p> <p>Lead times for project proposal review, approvals, feedback, disbursement.</p> <p>Feedback on project reports (amount, lead time, quality etc.).</p> <p>Comparison with other organisations.</p> <p>Evaluation team's experience of best-practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Iceland • Other similar facilities
<p>6. To what extent are the facilities' design relevant to the objective of mobilising the private sector to support Iceland's work towards achieving the SDGs? Can the design be improved?</p>	<p>Comparative analysis of facility designs.</p> <p>Administrative, overhead, and approved amounts vs. leveraged amounts.</p> <p>Number of project proposals per call relative to similar (Nordic) facilities.</p> <p>Time and resources needed for project proposals (by private sector companies seeking funding)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Survey • Participatory workshop and interviews • Field studies • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • Project company staff • MFA staff • Other government staff involved in SDG reporting • Potentially NGOs/CSOs monitoring SDG fulfilment

	Project results' contribution to SDGs.		
7. To what extent are the facilities designed and implemented in a way that is relevant to the Icelandic development cooperation objectives related to gender equality, human rights, and environmental sustainability?	<p>Analysis of facility designs in relation to Icelandic development cooperation objectives.</p> <p>Evidence of results in the fields of gender equality, human rights, and environmental sustainability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Survey • Participatory workshop and interviews • Field studies • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • Project company staff • MFA staff • Beneficiaries
8. To what extent are the benefits likely to continue after the project ends?	Assessment of reported and evidenced results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Survey • Participatory workshop and interviews • Field studies • Observation and analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • MFA staff • Project company staff • Beneficiaries • Local authorities • Local businesses

Annex 2 – List of Received Documents

- 1 Heimstorg - kynning fyrir ráðherra jan 2021.pdf
- 2 Heimstorg Íslandsstofu_Kynning-fyrir-sendiráðin.pdf
- 3 Undirritadur samningur thjonustubord 151020.pdf
- 4 Viðskiptablaðið_Heimstorg viðtal bls.12.pdf
- 5 Undirritadur samningur thjonustubord 151020.pdf
- 6 x.Endurfjármögnun NDF_Mbl.nr. 360_2020.pdf
- 7 Undirritadur samningur thjonustubord 151020.pdf
- 8 x.Endurfjármögnun NDF_Mbl.nr. 360_2020.pdf
- 9 AukinSamvinna_utr_capacent.pdf
- 10 Framkvæmd utanríkisstefnu Íslands í kjölfar COVID-19.pdf
- 11 Saman á útivelli 2020.pdf
- 12 Áfram Ísland skýrslan 2015.pdf
- 13 Þróun einkageirans og samstarf opinberra og einkaaðila á sviði þróunarmála
- 14 Áritanir og staðfestingar ársreikninga.pdf
- 15 B_nr_1035_2020 (2).pdf
- 16 B_nr_1035_2020.pdf
- 17 Leidbein_Rikisendurskodunar_um_eftirlit_med_styrkjum.pdf
- 18 MATSVIÐMÐ tafla_LOKAÚTGÁFA.pdf
- 19 UPM2019090019 - IS-EN Tafla yfir matsviðmið.pdf
- 20 Íslensk landaheiti Hagstofa.pdf
- 21 Ferill umsókna - frjáls félagasamtök.pdf
- 22 Ferill umsókna - Samstarfsjóður við atvinnulíf.pdf
- 23 Vésteinn Viðarsson FJR - starfrænt Ísland.pdf
- 24 Handbok-um-sjodi-1.-utgafa-des.-2016.pdf
- 25 Skýrsla Þróun Einkageirans Drög GP.pdf
- 26 TS_Reglur.pdf
- 27 ESB um minniháttaraðstoð_gr.107_108_bls.644.pdf
- 28 ESB_um gr.107 og 108.pdf
- 29 Nokkur-atridi-um-minnihattaradstod-okt2015_FJR.pdf
- 30 1. B_nr_1035_2020_Reglur um styrkveitingar utanríkisráðuneytisins.pdf
- 31 2. Leidbein_Rikisendurskodunar_um_eftirlit_med_styrkjum_juni2015.pdf
- 32 B_nr_1035_2020.pdf
- 33 EU role of private sector.pdf
- 34 danida_btb_programme_2006_2011.pdf
- 35 Danmörk SDG Investment Fund 2016.pdf
- 36 Svíþjóð policy framework 2016.pdf
- 37 swedpartnership_details.pdf
- 38 6 EXPLORER GENERAL CONDITIONS 2019.pdf
- 39 Danida IFU Strategy.pdf
- 40 DMDP results framework_april2018-1.pdf
- 41 Fact-sheet-final-SDG-Denmark.pdf
- 42 IFU Strategy.pdf
- 43 DMDP portfolio_nov2018-1.pdf
- 44 2017-Report-DAC-Untynging.pdf
- 45 blended finance in the poorest countries_ODI.pdf
- 46 dac untynging aid.pdf
- 47 Danida Business Explorer 2019 - Guidelines.pdf
- 48 Development-Impact-of-DFIs.pdf
- 49 OECD-Blended-Finance-Principles.pdf

50 What-is-ODA.pdf
51 Global_Compact_Principles.pdf
52 Norad-enterprisedevforjobs-grant-scheme-rules.pdf
53 Norway white paper.pdf
54 1.Marel stærri styrkur maí 2019.pdf
55 10. 66 °Norður stærri styrkur janúar 2021.pdf
56 11. Kerecis stærri styrkur janúar 2022.pdf
57 12. BBA Fjeldco og Intellecton.pdf
58 13. Samningur við Pólar toghlerar og Kaldara.pdf
59 14. Aurora Seafood forkönnun mars 2020.pdf
60 15. Geymd forkönnun mars 2020.pdf
61 16. Atmonia forkönnun sept. 2020.pdf
62 17.Ocean Excellence forkönnun okt. 2020.pdf
63 18. T16 forkönnun júní 2021.pdf
64 19. Pólar toghlerar forkönnun júlí 2021.pdf
65 2.Thoregs forkönnun júlí 2019.pdf
66 3.Credit Info stærri styrkur mars 20.pdf
67 4.GEG stærri styrkur mars 2021.pdf
68 5. Intellecton stærri styrkur apríl 2021.pdf
69 6. Hananja stærri styrkur apríl 2021.pdf
70 7. Áveitan stærri styrkur maí 2021.pdf
71 8. BBA Fjeldco stærri styrkur sept. 2021.pdf
72 9. Fisheries Technologies stærri styrkur sept. 2021.pdf
73 141209 - Viðskiptatengd þróunarsamvinna_2013.pdf
74 AukinSamvinna_utr_capacent_04.pdf
75 Gallup könnun - greining á fyrirtækjum í þróunarsamvinnu.pdf
76 Vinnustofa fyrirtæki í þróunarsamvinnu samantekt 2018.pdf
77 220315 Auglýsingar vefborðar mars 2022.pdf
78 201030_Frettabladið kálfur um heimsmarkmið og atvinnulíf.pdf
79 201030_Frettabladið viðtal við ráðherra.pdf
80 Auglýsing 19. mars 2021.pdf
81 Auglýsing vor 2021.pdf
82 Fréttablaðið laugard. 20.mars 2021.pdf
83 Áritanir og staðfestingar ársreikninga.pdf
84 B_nr_1035_2020 (2).pdf
85 B_nr_1035_2020.pdf
86 Leidbein_Rikisendurskodunar_um_eftirlit_med_styrkjum.pdf
87 MATSVIÐMÐ tafla_LOKAÚTGÁFA.pdf
88 UPM2019090019 - IS-EN Tafla yfir matsviðmið.pdf
89 Íslensk landaheiti Hagstofa.pdf
90 Ferill umsókna - frjáls félagasamtök.pdf
91 Ferill umsókna - Samstarfsjóður við atvinnulíf.pdf
92 Vésteinn Viðarsson FJR - starfrænt ísland.pdf
93 Handbok-um-sjodi-1.-utgafa-des.-2016.pdf
94 Skýrsla Þróun Einkageirans Drög GP.pdf
95 TS_Reglur.pdf
96 ESB um minniháttaraðstoð_gr.107_108_bls.644.pdf
97 ESB_um gr.107 og 108.pdf
98 Nokkur-atridi-um-minnihattaradstod-okt2015_FJR.pdf
99 2. Leidbein_Rikisendurskodunar_um_eftirlit_med_styrkjum_juni2015.pdf

100 B_nr_1035_2020.pdf
101 EU role of private sector.pdf
102 danida_btb_programme_2006_2011.pdf
103 Danmörk SDG Investment Fund 2016.pdf
104 Svíþjóð policy framework 2016.pdf
105 swedpartnership_details.pdf
106 6 EXPLORER GENERAL CONDITIONS 2019.pdf
107 Danida IFU Strategy.pdf
108 DMDP results framework_april2018-1.pdf
109 Fact-sheet-final-SDG-Denmark.pdf
110 IFU Strategy.pdf
111 DMDP portfolio_nov2018-1.pdf
112 2017-Report-DAC-Untying.pdf
113 blended finance in the poorest countries_ODI.pdf
114 dac untying aid.pdf
115 Danida Business Explorer 2019 - Guidelines.pdf
116 Development-Impact-of-DFIs.pdf
117 OECD-Blended-Finance-Principles.pdf
118 What-is-ODA.pdf
119 Global_Compact_Principles.pdf
120 Norad-enterprisedevforjobs-grant-scheme-rules.pdf
121 Norway white paper.pdf
122 1.Marel stærri styrkur maí 2019.pdf
123 10. 66 °Norður stærri styrkur janúar 2021.pdf
124 11. Kerecis stærri styrkur janúar 2022.pdf
125 12. BBA Fjeldco og Intellecton.pdf
126 13. Samningur við Pólar toghlerar og Kaldara.pdf
127 14. Aurora Seafood forkönnun mars 2020.pdf
128 15. Geymd forkönnun mars 2020.pdf
129 16. Atmonia forkönnun sept. 2020.pdf
130 17.Ocean Excellence forkönnun okt. 2020.pdf
131 18. T16 forkönnun júní 2021.pdf
132 19. Pólar toghlerar forkönnun júlí 2021.pdf
133 2.Thoregs forkönnun júlí 2019.pdf
134 3.Credit Info stærri styrkur mars 20.pdf
135 4.GEG stærri styrkur mars 2021.pdf
136 5. Intellecton stærri styrkur apríl 2021.pdf
137 6. Hananja stærri styrkur apríl 2021.pdf
138 7. Áveitan stærri styrkur maí 2021.pdf
139 8. BBA Fjeldco stærri styrkur sept. 2021.pdf
140 B_nr_1035_2020.pdf
141 1. Úthlutun_Álitsgerð_áb.pdf
142 2. Úthlutun_Álitsgerð.pdf
143 3. Úthlutun_Álitsgerð.pdf
144 4. Úthlutun_Álitsgerð.pdf
145 5. Úthlutun_Álitsgerð.pdf
146 Gátlisti yfir gögn og matsvidmið tafla.pdf
147 Matsform_lysing.pdf
148 Bréf til þóknananefndar vegna skipan í matshóp 2021.pdf
149 CV-2021 Lilja Gylfadóttir.pdf

150 Fylgiskjal_Starflýsing fyrir matshóp samstarfssjóðs 2021.pdf
151 Minnisblað 128_2021.pdf
152 Rnstj. sp. skipan vor 2021.pdf
153 Starflýsing fyrir matshóp - Samstarfssjóður við atvinnulíf.pdf
154 Starflýsing fyrir matshóp samstarfssjóðs 2021.pdf
155 Starflýsing fyrir matshóp samstarfssjóðs 2020.pdf
156 B_nr_1035_2020.pdf
157 Fylgiskjal_Auglýsing vor 2021.pdf
158 Fylgiskjal_Reglur_B_nr_1035_2020.pdf
159 Fylgiskjal_1_Auglýsing vor 2021.pdf
160 Rökstuðningsbréf undirritað.pdf
161 Cognitio ehf..pdf
162 North Tech Energy ehf..pdf
163 BBA_Fjeldco ehf. og Intellect ehf..pdf
164 BBA_Fjeldco ehf..pdf
165 Pólar toghlerar ehf..pdf
166 Áveitan ehf..pdf
167 220501 Skipunarbréf Arnljótur Bjarki Bergsson.pdf
168 220501 Skipunarbréf Lilja Gylfadóttir.pdf
169 220501 Skipunarbréf Regína Bjarnadóttir.pdf
170 CV Regína Bjarnadóttir.pdf
171 ReginaBjarnadottir CV2022english.pdf
172 Rnstj. sp. minnisblað um skipun vor 2022.pdf
173 Heimstorg - kynning fyrir ráðherra jan 2021.pdf
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1346 Creditinfo Group - styrkur veittur.docx
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1394 Lokadrög_álitsgerð_02.docx
1395 Lokadrög_álitsgerð_03.docx
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1665 Fréttatilkynning Þróunarfræ 26.feb 2021.png
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1667 03 Adivasi menntasetið hönnun.png
1668 04 Hagkvæmishús Kenýja-framhlið.png
1669 05 Hagkvæmishús Kenýja-hverfi.png
1670 Mynd 1.png
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1673 Sjá viðskiptablað viðtal 4.mars 2021.txt
1674 3-4. Umsókn og verkefnaskjal umsóknaraðila _island.is.txt
1675 3-4. Umsókn og verkefnaskjal umsóknaraðila _island.is.txt
1676 Sjá viðskiptablað viðtal 4.mars 2021.txt
1677 Málsnúmer UTN20110093.txt
1678 3. Verkefnaskjal, sbr. c-lið 2.mgr.5.gr. reglna 1080_2018.txt
1679 00 LESTU MIG - fór ekki í gegnum Island.is.txt
1680 #00 ATH Sami samstarfsaðili og Sæbjúguverkefnið sem reyndist ekki vel.txt
1681 2. Vesen með skráningu Verkefnaskjals á island.is - barst í t.póstik.txt
1682 3-4. Umsókn og verkefnaskjal umsóknaraðila _island.is.txt

Annex 8 – Terms of Reference

April 2022



Terms of Reference

Evaluation of Iceland's
mechanisms for private sector
collaboration

International Development Cooperation

Publisher:

Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Iceland

April 2022

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1. Background

Iceland's current modality for collaboration with private sector within its international development efforts can be traced back to 2018. [Iceland's Policy for International Development Cooperation 2019-2023](#)¹ states that:

"Mutual responsibility and partnership in order to further the SDGs shall guide the cooperation of different parties in order to achieve set objectives. Cooperation will be undertaken with parties from various sectors, including government ministries and institutions, universities, the private sector, and civil society organisations. Partners shall be selected based on projects and best practices, while consistently maintaining transparency. Strong emphasis shall be placed on consultation, cooperation, and coherence between policy areas".

And:

"Icelandic private sector agents and institutions shall be encouraged to take social responsibility and support sustainable development in developing countries in accordance with the SDGs, for instance, by income and employment generating investments and projects that increase prosperity and help people to break the bonds of poverty. It shall also be kept in mind that funding development projects can lead to increased investment by other states, institutions, or private actors. This is in accordance with the outcome of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, where calls were made for increased participation from private sector actors in funding projects related to sustainable development. Efforts shall be made to use Iceland's value-adding expert knowledge in projects within multilateral organisations, as Icelandic companies and institutions possess varied expert knowledge that could be used for economic development in low income states.

¹ Approved by Althingi, the Icelandic Parliament on 2nd May 2019.

International obligations, including in the field of human rights, the environment, and employment, shall always be respected in carrying out those projects, just as they are in other projects.”

Further, in the commentary to the Parliamentary Resolution (case 345/2018-19), an elaboration of Iceland’s private sector is also offered:

“Recognizing the critical importance of the private sector in driving sustainable development, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs established the Sustainable Development Goals Partnership Fund in 2018.

Against the overall ambition of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the objective of the Fund is to encourage the Icelandic private sector to collaborate with partners in developing countries, and to work together to make a positive and lasting contribution to poverty reduction, job creation, and sustainable growth. Applications to the Fund must demonstrate clear linkages to one or more of the Sustainable Development Goals.”

As mentioned in the commentary, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Partnership Fund was established in 2018. This is the primary mechanism for Iceland’s efforts for private sector collaboration in international development, but is also complimented by other efforts, which may be taken under consideration in the evaluation.

The responsibility for planning and implementing Iceland’s development policy and programs falls under the responsibility of the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Directorate for International and Development Affairs of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has the main responsibility for development policy implementation and collaborates with several other public and public private organisations. The

1.1 The SDG Partnership Fund

The SDG Partnership Fund was initially planned for a trial period of three years, 2019-2021, but due to covid-19 disruptions, this trial was extended by a year (2022). An evaluation was planned by the end of the said trial period. In accordance with updated trial period, the evaluation was delayed until 2022 and this ToR is prepared to launch the evaluation in a timely manner. The intent is to generate findings and lessons for an evidence-base for the design of continued efforts on Iceland's behalf by end-of-year 2022. No previous evaluations of the development interventions have been carried out.

The purpose of the fund is to encourage participation and contribution to development cooperation by the private sector, with the objective of reducing poverty and supporting job creation and sustainable growth in the world's poorest countries, in accordance with the SDGs. Projects should provide benefits and generate revenue in developing countries and have clear linkages to one or more of the UN SDGs.

Support from the SDG Fund is limited to the business community, namely: Icelandic privately held companies; private and publicly listed limited liability corporations; partnerships and cooperatives; and private foundations.

Grant allocations to private sector companies can amount to a maximum of 200,000 Euros over a three-year period and a minimum counterpart contribution percentage of 50% is required by the companies. Compliance with the EEA Agreement's state aid rules regarding "de minimis" support must be ensured, and if the grant recipient has received state aid from elsewhere, the allocated grant may be reduced by that amount.

Projects must be conducted in collaboration with partners in a chosen developing country. Additional partners, such as universities and civil society organizations can take part in projects.

Projects should be linked to the company's core activities. Eligible applicants include business community entities such as those listed above, and the application evaluation process looks towards the company's overall knowledge and capacity, quality

of technical solutions, competence, and financial capabilities to undertake projects of transnational cooperation.

Applicants must meet certain basic requirements, such as payment of public fees and pensions. Furthermore, it is expected that businesses have endorsed good business practices, for example through membership of the UN Global Compact, or in relation to other international benchmarks, such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

Eligible collaborating countries range from least developed to lower middle-income countries as per OECD/DAC's definition, plus higher middle income SIDS states.

Eligible to apply for funding from the SDGs Partnership Fund are:

- Privately held companies
- Private and publicly listed limited liability corporations
- Partnerships and cooperatives
- Private foundations

More details on the development objectives, eligibility criteria guidelines for operational procedures and application processes is posted on the MFA's website in [English](#) and [Icelandic](#).

Fund procedures and assessment criteria are set forth in Annex 1.



Sustainable Development Goals Partnership Fund

Iceland supports the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals through private sector initiatives in developing countries.

Open for applications until 3 February 2022.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland grants support through the Sustainable Development Goals Partnership Fund. The SDGs Fund has the objective to foster partnership projects aiming at strengthening sustainable economic growth. Projects must take place in developing countries as classified by OECD DAC and the Government of Iceland.

Projects can receive up to 50% of total budget with a maximum of 200.000 EUR for each project over a period of three years. Projects should be implemented in line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Special emphasis is placed on women's job creation and projects that have a positive environmental impact. Applicants should be Icelandic private sector businesses in collaboration with partners in developing countries.

- Further information at www.mfa.is/sdgfund
- Calls for applications will be made three times in 2022 with deadlines on **February 3, May 3 and October 3, 2022.**
- For further inquiries, please contact SDGfund@mfa.is

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Government of Iceland
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Figure 1 Call for applications, February 2022

To date, 17 companies have received support from the SDG Fund:

Company	Project Title	Grant (ISK)	Country
Marel hf.	Bætt gæði í vinnslu pangasíus/Improved quality in pangasíus processing	7.000.000	Vietnam
Thoregs	Skýrgerð, próteinvörur og mjólkurvinnsla/skyr making, protein products and milk processing	5.000.000	India
Creditinfo Group hf.	Aðgengi lítilla fyrirtækja að fjármálaþjónustu/SMEs access to financial services	23.345.000	Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal
Fisheries Technologies ehf.	Carice, innleiðing á TFM upplýsingakerfi/Carice, implementation in TFM information systems	29.120.000	St. Lucia and Dominica
GEG ehf.	Notkun jarðvarma við kæligeymslur fyrir epli/use of	14.560.000	India

	geothermal for cool storage for apples		
Hananja ehf	Rephaiah verkefnið/ Rephaiah project	26.875.000	Malawi
Intellecon ehf.	Bætt fiskveiðistjórnun í Viktoríuvatni/Improved fisheries management in Lake Victoria	28.073.000	Uganda
Áveitan ehf.	Sjálfbært samfélag með aðgengi að vatni/Sustainable community with access to water	29.120.000	Burkina Faso
BBA//Fjeldco ehf.	Skrif á reglugerðum v/ endurnýjanlegra orkugjafa/Regulations for renewable energy	6.383.000	Comoros
Pólar toghlerar ehf.	Hringrásarhagkerfi endurvinnsla plast úrgangs/Circular economy, recycling of plastic waste	2.000.000	Senegal
Kerecis	Sáraumbúðir til bágstaddra í Kairó/wound bandage for the disadvantaged in Cairo	29.120.000	Egypt
66 Norður og UN Women	Atvinnuþróun, valdefling flóttakvenna og hringrásarhagkerfi/ Business development, women's empowerment and circular economy	26.924.000	Turkey/ Women's Refugee Center
Aurora Seafood ehf.	Aukin hagsæld með nýtingu vannýttra auðlinda úr sjó/improved livelihoods by the use of underutilized ocean resources	2.000.000	Ginea
Ocean Excellence ehf.	Kælitækni fyrir smábátaútgerðir/cooling technologies for small scale fisheries	2.000.000	Sierra Leone
Atmonia ehf.	Sjálfbær framleiðsla á nituráburði / sustainable production of nitrate fertilizer	2.000.000	Cameroon
Geymd ehf.	Nýjung, hönnun og uppbygging snjallmannvirkja/innovation, design and construction of smart infrastructure	2.000.000	India and Kenya

T16 ehf.	Skapandi greinar fyrir betri atvinnutækifæri/creative industries for job opportunities	2.000.000	Ginea Bissau
TOTAL:		237.520.000	

Overview of payments made to date is set forth in annex 4.

1.2 Other efforts for partnerships with the private sector

1.2.1 Development Seeds - Þróunarfræ

In collaboration with Rannís - The Icelandic Centre for Research, a grant framework for start-up companies, was established in early 2021.:

Þróunarfræ (Development Seeds): preliminary and preparatory grants for young start-up companies that intend to engage in development cooperation.

Grants for up to 2 million ISK can be awarded, with no requirements for additional contributions. Eligibility criteria and details are posted on Rannís website².

To date, one grant has been administered: safety software for air travel in developing states (Öryggishugbúnaður í flugsamgöngum í þróunarríkjum).

1.2.2 Technical assistance

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs also has put in place advisory contracts for technical assistance (TA) to international organizations, such as the World Bank and FAO.

From 2017-2021, ten assignments were funded through TA efforts for projects in Tanzania, Sao Tome and Principe, Costa Rica, Albania, Philippines, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Vietnam and

² See: <https://www.rannis.is/sjodir/rannsoknir/taeknithrounarsjodur/fyrirtaekjastyrkur-frac/>

El Salvador. Support during this period amounted to 178.532.732 ISK.

This support largely came at a halt during the COVID-19 epidemic, as fieldwork was rendered impossible. As this support is demand-driven, It is deeded likely that this support will be likely to increase in coming years.

2. Objectives and Scope

This evaluation will be guided by seven (7) criteria: six (6) are based on from the OECD DAC evaluation dimensions (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability) and one complementary for thematic emphasis for the cross-cutting issues of gender, human rights, and environmental considerations. Additionally, the evaluating team is requested to consider the factors of innovation and the implications of the covid-19 pandemic. Below are more details for each of the eight criteria:

- The criterion of Relevance estimate objectives of the actions undertaken by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and its partners within the framework of collaboration with the private sector. Through this criterion, it will be the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global and partner as well as institution need, policies and priorities, will be assessed.
- The Coherence criterion estimates how well the interventions fit with other development interventions, whether there are duplications of efforts and if synergies are maximized. This includes mechanisms for private sector collaboration available to Iceland, such as by Nordic and international partners (e.g. the World Bank Group), where unharvested opportunities may exist.
- The criterion of Effectiveness is used to assess the extent to which the project has achieved its objectives and intended results. The evaluation should measure possible gaps, analyse them, and identify success factors (to include across types of projects funded) and bottlenecks.
- The Efficiency criterion will guide the data collection and analysis work in order to measure the extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.

- The criterion of Impact will guide the evaluation in assessing the whether the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended higher-level effects. Due to the limited time in which the intervention has been ongoing, the evaluator may determine to exclude assessments pertaining to impact, which shall be outlined in the inception report.
- The Sustainability criterion measures to which extent the net benefits of the interventions continues, or is likely to do so.
- The thematic criterion, as per the evaluation policy 2019-2023, takes into account the cross-cutting themes in Iceland's international development: gender equality, human rights and environmental considerations. The evaluation shall verify the extent to which these principles were taken into account in the design, implementation and monitoring of the development initiative(s). An addition to this, the evaluation team is asked to add the consideration of innovation; to outline if any indications or evidence exist that show that innovation has been derived from the development initiative(s) or that efforts can be re-designed to stimulate innovation. Further, the evaluation team is asked to integrate assessments related to the covid-19 pandemic into the evaluation design.

2.1 Objectives

The overall objective of the evaluation is to objectively assess the results from the MFA's efforts in its efforts for private sector collaboration, with particular focus on the SDG partnership fund. Other efforts by the MFA, outlined in chapter 1, shall be taken into consideration as is deemed appropriate by the evaluator. As the trial period of the SDG partnership fund comes to an end by the end of year 2022, it marks a milestone in Iceland's private sector collaboration. Thus, this evaluation will serve to outline options for Iceland's most feasible mechanisms for private sector collaboration which might be developed by Iceland. It is, therefore, necessary that the evaluation applies a forward-looking approach and is not based on the premises that current layout of organization and governance shall prevail for years to come.

New opportunities and approaches to such collaborations, as well as lessons learned shall be considered within the evaluation design.

The evaluation shall adhere to the MFA Evaluation Policy 2020-2023 and follow the current OECD-DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluations, as appropriate.

2.2 Scope

The development initiatives under evaluation, are carried out in different parts of the world. However, progress has been delayed for many projects. Therefore, it is likely that development outcomes may be difficult to assess. Some fieldwork may be required, in addition to fieldwork carried out in Iceland.

Suggested approach for field work is as follows:

1. Conduct a "health-check" of a project in Malawi. This would entail a one-day visit of local evaluation experts, to visit project site and conduct interviews.
2. Conduct a pre-feasibility study of fieldwork in:
 - a) Senegal, of one project which has been carried out (with conventional evaluation in mind), and a health-check of another project which is not as far ahead.
 - b) India, of two projects which are not far ahead, whether health-checks or more substantive studies.

The evaluation will cover interventions by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs from January 1, 2018 until end of year 2021.

The above initiatives that will be evaluated are primarily the (1) SDG Fund, (2) the MFA contract with Business Iceland and (3) Development Seeds Grants. TA efforts may be considered in this evaluation as a part of MFA engagement with the private sector, but the development impact of the support itself shall not be evaluated per se.

3. Evaluation Questions

Guided by the OECD DAC evaluation criteria mentioned above, the consultant team will be asked to answer the questions listed below. Challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic shall especially be assessed within the entire evaluation framework. The technical proposal submitted by the evaluation teams responding to this call for proposals may suggest modifications or additions to the questions. These suggestions will be discussed with the commissioning authority. If accepted, based on their relevance, the said questions will be incorporated into the evaluation. The questions below are derived from the main evaluation criteria discussed in the previous section.

As the evaluation is forward-looking, the core evaluation question is as follows:

What are the most feasible mechanisms for Iceland to rely on/establish for private sector collaboration?

To seek answers to this core question, an assessment of the achievements to date need to be carried out, and options for other ways to work in this sector, shall be examined. The evaluator is asked to generate lessons learned from like-minded countries and if deemed feasible, suggest ways for Iceland to use models from other donor countries, to collaborate with or participate in mechanisms that these countries offer. Particular attention shall be paid to the Icelandic context; Iceland remains a small donor with limited resources.

To address the above question, the evaluation team shall seek to answer the following sub-questions which evolve around three pillars of Iceland's efforts in its collaboration with the private sector:

3.1 SDG Partnership Fund

- For the development initiatives that have been carried out, have engagements generated results, intended or unintended; have project outcomes been achieved?
 - To what extent are the benefits likely to continue after the project ends?³
 - To what extent have interventions transferred skills, new solutions and financial support to partners and beneficiaries?
- For all grantees:
 - Has the level of maturity of projects (ideas) evolved?
 - Have development initiatives generated any innovation for development impact, are new projects and ideas likely to arise?
 - Have projects encouraged new actors within Iceland to enter the sphere of development?
- Has the MFA administration of the programme been efficient and effective?
 - Are applications assessed and processed in a professional and efficient manner, is the programme cost-efficient?⁴
 - Is the administrative arrangement suitable and fit-for scale/Iceland?

3.2 Other partnership efforts

- Has MFA's service agreement with Business Iceland generated intended results?
- Has TA support to international organizations served to generate results?⁵
- Has the Development Seeds grant scheme generated intended results?

³ Limited scope of projects and implementation will inevitably be a limiting factor for such assessment.

⁴ E.g. is the ratio of overhead cost vs. outflow of funds, within an acceptable range?

⁵ To include potential spin-off effects for Icelandic firms and consultants, such as valuable experience which can be applied in a continued work within a development context.

3.3 New or unharvested opportunities

- Are there any new mechanisms or partnerships (domestic or international) that would be feasible for Iceland to take engage in?⁶
- What strategy is feasible to be put in place or consider and which actions to take to create an enabling environment for MFA's collaboration with the private sector?

⁶ This includes mechanisms that Iceland already has access to, but may not have been pursued or facilitated by the MFA, such as opportunities via the WB, UNOPS, NDF, EEP, NEFCO and Nordic+ channels; access to challenge funds etc.

4. Methodologies

The evaluation will examine, on the basis of a document review and data collection, interviews, surveys and fieldwork, the expected results and outputs described in programme and project documents. The evaluation will be conducted using a participatory and inclusive approach geared toward the production of tangible evidence to guide reflections on the strategic directions for Iceland's private sector collaboration.

The evaluation will specifically examine the integration of cross-cutting issues, innovation and consideration the covid-19 pandemic, and will be conducted in accordance with [Iceland's evaluation policy 2019-2023](#), to include any ethical considerations.

The evaluation will be based on mixed methods data collection and analysis with project beneficiaries and key actors in the project implementation process. By using multiple methods and triangulating data from different sources, findings are likely to produce more relevant and credible answers to the evaluation questions.

Existing data and documents will be made available to the evaluation team by the Minister Counsellor responsible for private sector collaboration and the Director of Results and Evaluations, MFA. An indicative list of documents is set forth in annex I. The consultants will submit an evaluation inception report with a detailed methodology, which includes both quantitative and qualitative elements, designed to accurately answer the evaluation questions. In order to demonstrate that the evaluation team has a clear understanding of the program content and the key questions addressed by this evaluation, the inception report should provide a critical summary of the information contained in the program documents made available to the evaluation team. The inception report should also indicate, for each of the

evaluation questions, the following information (evaluation matrix): what data collection methods and tools will be used to answer them, from whom the data in question will be collected (including the sampling strategy), what analytical methods will be used to interpret the data, what measures will be adopted to ensure the quality of the evaluation, and how the data will be disseminated. It should also propose measures to ensure that the evaluation process is ethically sound and that the confidentiality and dignity of those involved in the evaluation are protected.

The evaluation report should be concise, may include appendices, and should include an executive summary not exceeding 5 pages, as well as a summary in a separate document. The content of the evaluation report should be consistent with generally agreed upon and Government of Iceland's criteria for quality standards for evaluation reports. The main conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation will be disseminated in the form of a summary note. A joint inception meeting between core MFA staff and the consultants where the inception report is reviewed, will serve as an opportunity to jointly revise the evaluation implementation and the methodology applied. Upon evaluation completion, the Director of Results and Evaluations, MFA, will be responsible for following up the main recommendations of the evaluation in the form of a management-response, as per standard practice.

4.1 Principles of Ethical Conduct

The evaluation must be conducted in accordance with the ethical considerations set forth in [Iceland's Policy for Evaluations 2019-2023](#):

- Anonymity and confidentiality. The evaluation must respect the rights of those who provide information, ensuring their anonymity and confidentiality.

- **Accountability.** The report must address any conflicts or differences of opinion that may have arisen between the consultants or between the consultant and the interviewees.
- **Integrity.** The evaluator should, upon her/his discretion, highlight issues not specifically mentioned in the ToR to obtain a more complete analysis.
- **Validation of Information.** The consultant shall ensure the accuracy of the information collected in the preparation of the reports and shall be responsible for the information presented in the final report.
- **Intellectual Property.** In using the various sources of information, the consultant shall respect the intellectual property rights of the institutions and stakeholders under review.

5. Expected Deliverables, Timeframe and Agenda

5.1 Deliverables

The following main deliverables are expected from the mission:

- An inception report in English that presents the mission methodology, tools, and resources dedicated to the mission. Reservations and apparent uncertainties pertaining to field work shall be set forth.
- Any methodological workshop tools produced for the evaluation, (survey databases, interview guides and transcripts of the qualitative surveys conducted during the mission) shall be submitted for validation and consultation.
- Draft final evaluation report in English.
- Final evaluation report in English that takes aim of the relevant input from stakeholder consultations for the final draft of the evaluation report.
- A short summary of findings in English.
- Presentation of findings in a virtual meeting with MFA staff and other stakeholders.

Written deliverables are to be submitted in electronic format in English in accordance with the deadlines set in this ToR. The Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs retains the rights with respect to all distribution, dissemination and publication of deliverables.

5.2 Evaluation Work Plan

The evaluation will be conducted by a multidisciplinary team consisting of a national (Icelandic) consultant with some background in international development and a lead expert specialized in evaluation, with expertise and hands-on experience from private sector collaboration in international development.

5.3 Indicative Timeline

The duration of the consultation is from 15 April until 5 July 2022. The consultant will assess the scope of work and 40 working days and will take effect from the date of signature of the contract. The consultant will propose a detailed timetable for the mission according to this duration, its methodology and the key activities required for such a mission.

The indicative schedule below is proposed and will be adapted by the consultant according to the methodology applied and as outlined in the inception report:

Phase I, preparations:	8 days
Consultants formulate the evaluation, methodologies and describe data collection, as needed. This is summarized in an inception report, which is submitted to the Director of Results and Evaluations, MFA, for review and input. Before phase II commences, the consultants and the Director jointly review the inception report.	
Phase II, data collection and analysis:	20 days
Consultants conduct data collection and analysis. As a part of phase II, surveys may be administered to stakeholders, and fieldwork carried out.	
Phase III, report writing:	7 days
Final report and summary report is written, and draft submitted to the Director of Results and Evaluations, MFA. The Director reviews draft and submits comments for the consultant's considerations.	
Phase IV, dissemination:	5 days
Deliverables submitted (final report and summary). Presentation of findings.	

Suggested timeframe is set forth below, but the consultant may suggest changes in timeframe as needed in the proposal submitted:



6. Required Expertise and Qualifications

A team of consultants will be hired for this evaluation. The consultant(s) must be able to travel as required to conduct interviews and collect data from stakeholders. Given that some of the core documents are written in Icelandic, it is necessary that at least one member of the team is fluent in Icelandic. The following combination of the consulting team is required in minimum:

Qualifications of the lead consultant:

- Have at least 5 years of field experience in areas relevant to the consultation, preferably the implementation of private sector collaboration programmes and projects;
- Have good knowledge of the field of mixed financing and private sector collaboration in international development, to include the frameworks by OECD DAC in this field;
- Have tangible experience in the field of evaluation of development programs and projects;
- Demonstrated expertise in quantitative and qualitative research methods and in evaluation methods;
- Have good oral and written communication skills in English, teamwork and facilitation of participatory processes.
- A solid insight into the mechanisms that the Nordic+ have set in place for private sector collaboration mechanism, is an added value.

Qualifications of the Icelandic-speaking consultant:

- Read, speak and write excellent Icelandic, and the ability to translate accurately from Icelandic into English;
- Have good knowledge of evaluation of development programs and projects;
- Have good insight into the sphere international development and different mechanisms for development cooperation.
- A solid insight into the field of mixed financing and private sector collaboration in international development, is an added value.

7. Evaluation Management

7.1 Evaluation manager

The Director of Results and Evaluation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs commissions the evaluation and will be the overall evaluation manager. He/she will help maintain the independence of the evaluation and ensure that norms and standards are followed and that quality standards are met. He/she will be the focal point for the evaluation team and will be responsible for validating documents. He/she will also ensure that the key stakeholders are informed of the evaluation's progress.

Quality control of the evaluation will be conducted through a joint review of the ToR, methodology, and reports. This may also be performed by the Director of Results and Evaluation in coordination with key stakeholders, as required. The final report will be made public by the Government of Iceland and may be referenced by the consultants.

7.2 Payment arrangements

The consultant(s) will use their own office equipment and resources. A field mission is planned for the data collection phase.

The consultant is not permitted to use the information collected for this assignment in any other work assignment.

The consultant will be paid:

- 30% upon delivery and approval of the inception report;
- 70% upon delivery and validation of the final deliverables.

The consultant(s) will be responsible for their transport, accommodation and per diems. The consultant(s) will supply their personal laptops, stationery and, as needed for the work. Any required translation and interpretation services from Icelandic or

other languages to English shall be the responsibility of the consultants.

8. Evaluation Bid

Any incomplete files or bids submitted after the deadline will not be considered. All bidders will be contacted and receive an official response to their application.

Fees will be negotiated and determined before contracts are signed.

Some essential documents to be consulted by the consultants to enrich their technical and financial proposals will be published alongside the call for proposals.

8.1 Technical Proposal

A Technical Proposal which shall include the following documents:

- A Curriculum Vitae of consultants
- A proposal that must demonstrate:
 - Understanding of the ToR (including goals and objectives);
 - Methods of data collection and analysis that the consultant believes are relevant to answering the evaluation questions included in the ToR;
 - Valid justifications for the use of each of the identified data collection and analysis methods; and
 - A clear definition of the roles and responsibilities the consultant will play on the team.

This document remains a technical document and not a cover letter. Complete technical proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Understanding of the problem, the expected outputs, and the purpose(s) of the evaluation;

- Quality of the justification of the proposed evaluation methods and approaches;
- Adherence to the number of days;
- Consideration of reasonable timelines for validation;
- Writing skills;
- Qualifications of the evaluation team.

8.2 Financial Offer

The proposed financial offer must include fees and logistics. Financial offers shall be set forth in Euros (EUR) or UN Dollars and include any value added tax, as appropriate.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Iceland shall carry the costs of the evaluation and be responsible for the payments to consultant(s).

9. Annex 1: SDG Fund - Procedures and Criteria

Sustainable Development Goal Fund - Partnership with the business community in development cooperation

Procedures and criteria

The Sustainable Development Goal Fund (Heimsmarkmiðasjóður) is a three-year experimental project. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs reserves the right to modify the criteria below as needed

1. Introduction

In accordance with the <Ministry's> steering committee report on "Foreign service for the future" (*Utanríkisþjónusta til framtíðar*) on increased participation of the business community in development cooperation, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has designed a framework for partnering with the business community in development cooperation by establishing a Sustainable Development Goal Fund. The fund is founded as a three-year experiment with the possibility of extension based on the results. Up to 400 million ISK of the 2018-2021 development aid budget will be allocated for projects through the fund.

2. Goal

The purpose of the fund is to encourage participation and contribution to development cooperation by the business community, with the objective of reducing poverty and supporting job creation and sustainable growth in the world's poorest countries, in accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Projects should provide benefits and generate revenue in developing countries and have clear linkages to one or more of the UN SDGs.

3. Eligibility for funding

Support from the Sustainable Development Goal Fund is limited to the business community, namely:

- Privately held companies
- Private and publicly listed limited liability corporations
- Partnerships and cooperatives
- Private foundations

Projects must be conducted in collaboration with partners in a chosen developing country. Additional partners, such as universities and civil society organizations, can take part in the project.

Projects should be linked to the company's core activities. Eligible applicants include business community entities such as those listed above, and the application evaluation process looks towards the company's overall knowledge and capacity, quality of technical solutions, competence, and financial capabilities to undertake projects of transnational cooperation.

Applicants must meet certain basic requirements, such as payment of public fees and pensions. Further, it is expected that businesses have endorsed good business practices, for example through membership of the *UN Global Compact*, or in relation to other international benchmarks, such as the *UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* and the *OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises*.

Eligible collaborating countries range from least developed to lower middle-income countries as stated by OECD/DAC's definition.⁷

Funding procedures are based on OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) procedures on public expenditure towards official development assistance (ODA), which entails that grants for export and marketing projects are not on offer.

4. Criteria for funding allocation

Projects should have as its goal to support at least one Sustainable Development Goal. Furthermore, special attention is given to projects in developing countries with the objective of contributing to the listed themes below, in accordance with Iceland's development emphases:

- Increasing employment opportunities
- Poverty reduction
- Sustainable use of natural resources (for example renewable energy and fisheries)
- Promotion of gender equality
- Combating climate change and its effects
- Improved health

All projects must take human rights, gender equality and environmental considerations into account, as they are cross-cutting issues in Iceland's development cooperation. Steps must be taken to ensure that projects do not cause environmental or societal harm in any way.

⁷

http://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/DAC_List_ODA_Recipients2014to2017_flows_En.pdf

Projects funded by the Sustainable Development Goal Fund must meet the following minimum requirements:

- A development goal in a developing country should always be the main objective of projects as well as it should be in accordance with the receiving country's plans and needs.
- Need to include clearly defined additionality, that is, collaborative projects that would not be implemented or receive funding under normal market circumstances.
- Must not distort competition or otherwise disturb the market.
- Must have measurable development impacts. Clear demands for monitoring and evaluation of projects and results are placed on all development projects.
- It is desirable that projects could be scaled up, without further support, after funding comes to an end.
- EFDI's regulations, on what kind of projects may not be financed, apply for the Sustainable Development Goal Fund.⁸
- EEA regulations on government grants may apply.

5. Application process

The Sustainable Development Goal Fund sends out a call for applications once a year. Applications follow a two-step application procedure:

1. A brief application and basic information.
2. Successful projects in the first step of the process are then asked for a more comprehensive project proposals and company information.

As the first step of the process, proposals for possible collaborative projects are requested, where applicants include:

- Objectives, implementation plan and prospective project results.
- A financial plan, including the applicant's own financial contribution to the project.
- Possible collaborators, for example civil society organizations, other companies, universities and public entities, depending on the project's nature.

A selection committee evaluates applications according to the criteria listed below and selects applications to advance to the second step in the application process. No decisions are made on funding until after the second step of the application process.

If an applicant already has a complete project proposal it can be submitted in its entirety in the first step of the of the process.

⁸ <https://www.edfi.eu/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/EDFI-Exclusion-List.pdf>

In the second step applicants are required to submit a detailed project proposal and all necessary auxiliary documents, such as documents confirming that companies meet the fund's demands. Such documents include company annual financial statements and other company information deemed important, such as list of owners and board members, corporate social responsibility policy, and information on past involvement in development projects. Comparable information is also needed for collaborating partners. Further demands, such as due diligence appraisals, could be conducted in the latter phase of the application process. Applicants will be notified of such demands when and if the requirement arises.

6. Assessment of applications

A review panel constituted of representatives from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Confederation of Icelandic Enterprises, and independent development experts, serves as an advisory board for project selection and, at later stages, referral to the Minister.

Assessment of applications in both phases of the application process are based on the following:

- 1) Compliance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Iceland's emphases in development cooperation at the time of application.
- 2) Contribution of expertise, technical solutions, the company's competence in its field and in participating in transnational projects.
- 3) Company contribution to the project.
- 4) Contribution and competence of collaborating partners in a developing country.
- 5) Project contribution to poverty reduction, knowledge creation and/or job creation in the developing country.
- 6) Project sustainability and possibilities for further development and funding.

7. Structure and handling of grants

The Sustainable Development Goal Fund's project support follows two paths:

- 1) Co-financing of development targeted operations and projects of companies with income generating intentions, up to 50% financing, 25 million ISK maximum in total over a three-year period.
- 2) Co-financing of non-profit development projects and research with specific development goals in relation to training, education, climatic issues, sustainable use of natural resources, equality etc. Up to 70% financing, 75 million ISK maximum in total over a three-year period.

Projects can be funded by the Sustainable Development Goal Fund for a total of three years, as of the allocation of funds. Implementation of projects is the responsibility of applicants and collaborating partners in

the developing country, but monitoring is the responsibility of the Directorate for International Development Cooperation of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Companies must have a specific holding account for funding from the Sustainable Development Goal Fund. Grants from the fund shall only be paid in relation to actual costs of the company or collaborating partners for the project. Grant contracts will clearly stipulate that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Icelandic National Audit Office has access to all the relevant records for purposes of auditing project finances.

Funding can be discontinued, and reimbursement demanded in cases where those responsible for projects omit submitting progress reports, projects change considerably, or suspicions arise of granted funds not being used as per the project document and budget. Those responsible for administrating the grant shall make all the appropriate precautions to prevent any kind of corruption in relation to the deployment of funds.

8. Evaluation of the fund's operations

An independent external evaluation of the fund's operations shall take place in mid-2020 in which funded projects are evaluated and implementation status and likelihood of success in relation to the UN Sustainable Development Goals assessed.

Table of assessment criteria

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	Weight	Weight
Capacity and competence of applicant	40%	
Expert knowledge, technological solutions and company strength in respective field	15%	
Financial capacity	15%	
Experience and knowledge with regard to participation in international projects	5%	
Contribution and strength of partners in developing country	5%	
Quality of project	60%	
Relevance of project	15%	
Financial basis and project inspection	15%	
Developmental impact and results	15%	
Additionality	5%	
Sustainability	10%	

10. Annex 2: List of Documents

- [Iceland's Policy for International Development Cooperation 2019-2023](#)
- [Iceland's Evaluation Policy 2019-2023](#)
- Report by Capacent (2018), *Aukin samvinna, reynsla Norðurlandanna*
- European Commission (2014), *A Stronger Role of the Private Sector in Achieving Inclusive and Sustainable Growth in Developing Countries*
- Þorsteinsdóttir, Guðrún (2021), *Íslenski einkageirinn og alþjóðleg þróunarsamvinna*.
- Fund
- Project Documents and proposals
- Progress reports
- Funding agreements/contracts
- Project concept note validated by the donor
- Signed grant agreements
- Financial and accounting reports
- Summaries of review board
- Supervision/monitoring reports by the National and Regional Offices
- Audit reports
- Toolkits

11. Annex 3: List of suggested interviewees/main POCs

Ministry for Foreign Affairs:

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audur.edda.jokulsdottir@utn.is

Sara Ögmundsdóttir, Director of Development Finance,

sara.ogmundsdottir@utn.is

Geir Oddsson, Head of Natural Resources and Environment,

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Name	Title	Work phone	E-mail
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Kristján Guy Burgess	Sjálfstætt starfandi ráðgjafi	699 0351	kristjan.burgess@gmail.com

ÍSLANDSSTOFA / BUSINESS ICELAND			
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Rakel Jónsdóttir	Adviser	515 5823	rakel@rannis.is

Company	Name	Title	Work phone	E-mail	Grant/case nr.
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Thoregs	Þórarinn Egill Sveinsson	Sjálfstætt starfandi		thorarinneqillsveinsson@gmail.com	Úthlutað 2019 / UTN19070042
Creditinfo Group	Hákon Stefánsson		+354 660 5550	hakon@creditinfo.com	Úthlutað í mars 2020 / UTN20030029
Aurora Seafood	David Frey Jónsson	Frankvæmdastjóri		arc@simmet.is	Úthlutað í mars 2020 / UTN20030037
Fisheries Technologies	Vilhjálmur Hallgrímsson	Frankvæmdastjóri		vilhjalmur.hallgrimsson@gmail.com	UTN21070150 / UTN20100151
Ocean Excellence	Páll Gíslason	Frankvæmdastjóri		pg@pg.is	Úthlutað í október 2020 / UTN20100228
Almonia	Hákon Örn Birgisson			hakon@atmonia.com	Úthlutað í október 2020 / UTN20100227
Geymd ehf	Guðjón Bjarnason			guðjon@art.is	Úthlutað mars 2021 / UTN21030162
GEG ehf	Snorri Einarsson	Chief Technology Officer (CTO)	+354 5185202 / +354 867 1312	snorri.einarsson@gegpower.is	Úthlutað apríl 2021 / UTN21030162
Intellecon ehf	Guðmar Haraldsson	Frankvæmdastjóri, Hagfræðingur	+354 896 4912	gunnar@intellecon.com	Úthlutað apríl 2021 / UTN21030159 og júlí
Hananja ehf	Sveinbjörn Gizurarson	Professor in Clinical Pharmacokinetics and Toxicology	+354 898 0318	sveinb@hi.is	Úthlutað maí 2021 / UTN21040224
T16 ehf.	Geir Gunnlaugsson	Eigandi / CEO owner	+354-843 6237	geir@geirsson.com	Úthlutað júní 2021 / UTN21040224
Polar Toghlerar ehf.	Atli Már Jósafatsson		+354 898 66 77	atlimar@polardoors.com	Úthlutað júlí 2021 / UTN21070118
Áveitan ehf.	Haraldur Pálsson	Eigandi	+354 899 6336	haddi@aveitan.is	Úthlutað júlí 2021 / UTN21070140
BBA/Fjeldco ehf.	Baldvin Björn Haraldsson	Meðeigandi, lögfræðingur	+354 840 0400	baldvin@bbafjeldco.is	Úthlutað júlí 2021
66 *Norður (Seglgerðin) / UN Women Island	Bjarney Harðardóttir / Stella Sam	Stjórnarformaður / Executive manager		bjarney@ggnorth.is / stella@unwom	Úthlutað jan. 2022
Kerecis	Klara Sveinsd.	Sviðsstjóri verkefnispröun		klara@keracis.is	Úthlutað jan. 2022

Sector	First name	Surname	Title	Organization	Work phone	Mobile	E-mail	Comment
Ríkiskaup	Hanna Steina	Arnarisdóttir	Serfræðingur Nýsköpun og vörðsluþróun	Ríkiskaup	+354 530 1427		hanna.s.arnarsdottir@rikiskaup.is	Vegna skráningar á ráðgjafalistana
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Ráðgjafalisti FISKIVÁL	Miguel Angel	Jorge	Manager for Fisheries & Integrated Seascape Management Environment, Natural Resources & Blue Economy Global Practice	World bank	+1 (202) 473-4554		mjorge@worldbank.org	Vietnam UTN21020046 / INDIA UTN20090231
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Ráðgjafalisti HYDRO	Pierre Jacques	Lorillou	Senior Hydropower Specialist	World bank	+1 (202) 458-5655	+1 (301) 971-7127	plorillou@worldbank.org	Liberia UTN21020188 / Tanzania UTN21050048 / Liberia UTN21020188
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		–
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12. Annex 4: Cost overview

Following are some of the main expenses related to Iceland's collaboration with the private sector 2018-2022.

12.1 SDG Fund Grant Payments

Project	ISK
Sjóklæðagerðin hf. - Faðmur fyrir konur á flóttu	11.023.574
T16 ehf. - Skapandi greinar fyrir betri atvinnutækifærum í Gíneu-Bissá	1.000.000
Pólar toghlerar ehf. - Hringrásarhagkerfi um söfnun og endurvinnslu á plastúrgangi	1.000.000
KERECIS hf. - Íslenskt sáraroð til brunameðhöndlunar í Kairó	5.896.000
Áveitan ehf. - Sjálfbært samfélag, leið til betra lífs með hjálp til sjálfsbjargar	5.944.000
Fisheries Technologies ehf. - "CARICE" Verkefnið	6.036.000
Geymd ehf. - Nýjung, Hönnun og Uppbygging Snjallmannvirkja á Indlandi og Kenía	1.600.000
Intellecon ehf. - Bætt fiskiveiðistjórnun í Viktoríuvatni	8.854.538
GEG ehf. - Notkun jarðvarma fyrir kæligeymslu fyrir eplauppskeru á Himalayan svæðinu á Indlandi.	8.932.000
Hananja ehf. og verkefnið Rephaiah í Malaví	5.478.453
Aurora Seafood - Aukin hagsæld með nýtingu vannýttra auðlinda úr sjó	1.000.000
Samstarfssjóður við atvinnulífið - Atmonia - Sjálfbær Framleiðsla á nituráburði í Kamerún	1.000.000
Creditinfo Group - Aukið aðgengi lítilla og meðalstórra fyrirtækja í Vestur-Afríku að fjármálaþjónustu	20.385.446
Ocean Excellence - Kælitækni fyrir smábátaútgerðir í Sierra Leone	1.000.000
Marel - Bætt gæði í vinnslu á pangasíus-fiski í Víetnam	2.839.400
Thoregs - Próteinvörur og mjólkurvinnsla, þ.m.t. skyrgerð, á Indlandi	2.000.000
TOTAL:	83.989.411

Table 1 Grants paid 2018-2022 from the SDG fund

12.2 Overhead costs

Staff cost within MFA: one expert position devoted to private sector collaboration, 915.000 ISK per month (salaries + benefits and all associated costs). Annual costs: 10.980.000 ISK, over three years:

32.940.000 ISK

Payments to consultants:

To the consulting firm Capacent which performed some analysis of Nordic mechanisms, payments were made in five installments October-December 2018, totalling:

9.175.643 ISK

To Kristján Guy Burgess for review of SDG Fund regulation, one-off payment 31.07.2022:

300.000 ISK

Payments to review board:⁹

Table 2 Payments to review board 2019-2021

Experts	Period	Fees
Kristján Guy Burgess	2019-2021	2.105.469 kr.
Konráð S. Guðjónsson	2019-2021	2.105.469 kr.
Lilja Gylfadóttir	2021	560.758 kr.
Total:		4.771.696 kr.

⁹ Set forth with a reservatio that this might not be a complete list.

Payments to Business Iceland (Íslandsstofa) for services rendered (as per service contract/agreement) end of year 2021:

24.990.000 ISK

Table 3 Advertisement expenses for the SDG Fund 2019-2022

Date	Firm	Description	Amount
31.3.2019	Árvakur hf.	Auglýsing - Árvakur	356.070
9.9.2019	Torg ehf.	Samstarfssj.atvinnulífs. - Torg	57.330
9.9.2019	Torg ehf.	Samstarfssj.atvinnulífs. - Torg	238.875
9.9.2019	Torg ehf.	Samstarfssj.atvinnulífs. - Torg	57.330
9.9.2019	Torg ehf.	Samstarfssj.atvinnulífs. - Torg	238.875
		TOTAL 2019:	948.480
14.4.2020	Torg ehf.	Styrkir úr samstarfssjóði 11.04.2020 - Torg	73.770
14.4.2020	Torg ehf.	Styrkir úr samstarfssjóði 11.04.2020 - Torg	307.375
17.4.2020	Myllusetur ehf.	Augl. í VB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Myllusetur	39.832
17.4.2020	Myllusetur ehf.	Augl. í VB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Myllusetur	165.968
29.10.2020	Myllusetur ehf.	Augl. í VB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Myllusetur	16.800
29.10.2020	Myllusetur ehf.	Augl. í VB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Myllusetur	70.000
31.10.2020	Torg ehf.	Augl. í FB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Torg ehf.	25.402
31.10.2020	Torg ehf.	Augl. í FB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Torg ehf.	105.840
31.10.2020	Árvakur hf.	Augl. í MB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Árvakur hf.	23.344
31.10.2020	Árvakur hf.	Augl. í MB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Árvakur hf.	97.267

		TOTAL 2020:	925.598
25.3.2021	Myllusetur ehf.	Augl. í VB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Myllusetur	13.200
25.3.2021	Myllusetur ehf.	Augl. í VB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Myllusetur	55.000
31.3.2021	Árvakur hf.	Augl. í MB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Árvakur hf.	25.934
31.3.2021	Árvakur hf.	Augl. í MB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Árvakur hf.	108.057
9.9.2021	Myllusetur ehf.	Augl. í VB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Myllusetur	15.600
9.9.2021	Myllusetur ehf.	Augl. í VB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Myllusetur	65.000
13.9.2021	Torg ehf.	Augl. í FB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið11.09.21 - Torg ehf.	34.514
13.9.2021	Torg ehf.	Augl. í FB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið11.09.21 - Torg ehf.	143.808
30.9.2021	Árvakur hf.	Augl. í MB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Árvakur hf.	25.934
30.9.2021	Árvakur hf.	Augl. í MB v/samstsj.v atvinnulífið - Árvakur hf.	108.057
14.12.2021	Brotið blað ehf.	Hönnun og umbrot á auglýsingaefni fyrir Heimsmarkmiðasjóð atvinnulífs um þróunarsamvinnu - Brotið blað ehf.	15.660
14.12.2021	Brotið blað ehf.	Hönnun og umbrot á auglýsingaefni fyrir Heimsmarkmiðasjóð atvinnulífs um þróunarsamvinnu - Brotið blað ehf.	65.250
20.12.2021	Torg ehf.	Heimsmarkmiðasjóður, auglýsing 18.12.21 - Torg ehf.	65.330

20.12.2021	Torg ehf.	Heimsmarkmiðasjóður, auglýsing 18.12.21 - Torg ehf.	272.208
31.12.2021	Árvakur hf.	MB, Heimsmarkmiðasjóður - styrkir Birting: 15/12/2021 - Árvakur hf.	25.897
31.12.2021	Árvakur hf.	MB, Heimsmarkmiðasjóður - styrkir Birting: 15/12/2021 - Árvakur hf.	107.904
		TOTAL 2021:	1.147.353
3.1.2022	Keldan ehf.	Auglýsing á Keldan.is - Keldan ehf.	8.400
3.1.2022	Keldan ehf.	Auglýsing á Keldan.is - Keldan ehf.	35.000
24.1.2022	Torg ehf.	Heimsmarkmiðasjóður, auglýsing 19.01.22 - Torg ehf.	69.028
24.1.2022	Torg ehf.	Heimsmarkmiðasjóður, auglýsing 19.01.22 - Torg ehf.	287.616
31.1.2022	Árvakur hf.	MB, styrkir úr samstsj. v/atvinnulífið 19/01/2022 - Árvakur hf.	26.856
31.1.2022	Árvakur hf.	MB, styrkir úr samstsj. v/atvinnulífið 19/01/2022 - Árvakur hf.	111.900
1.2.2022	Keldan ehf.	Auglýsing á Keldan.is 01-'21 - Keldan ehf.	8.400
1.2.2022	Keldan ehf.	Auglýsing á Keldan.is 01-'21 - Keldan ehf.	35.000
7.2.2022	Torg ehf.	Heimsmarkmiðasjóður, auglýsing 02.02. og 05.02. - Torg ehf.	58.674
7.2.2022	Torg ehf.	Heimsmarkmiðasjóður, auglýsing 02.02. og 05.02. - Torg ehf.	244.474
		TOTAL 2022	885.348

This overview is intended to give the consultant some insight into expenses, but is not complete and needs to be verified. For instance, some overhead costs may not be included in this overview, such as travel expenses, cost associated with holding open seminars, and parts of costs to consultants on review boards.

Table 4 Overview of major costs 2018-2022

Expense	ISK	%
Staff	32.940.000	21%
Business Iceland	24.990.000	16%
Consulting fees	9.475.643	6%
Review Board	4.771.696	3%
Advertisements	3.906.779	2%
SDG Fund Payments	83.989.411	52%
TOTAL	160.073.529	100%



Annex 9 – List of documents reviewed

- 1 Heimstorg - kynning fyrir ráðherra jan 2021.pdf
- 2 Heimstorg Íslandsstofu_Kynning-fyrir-sendiráðin.pdf
- 3 Undirritadur samningur thjonustubord 151020.pdf
- 4 Viðskiptablaðið_Heimstorg viðtal bls.12.pdf
- 5 Undirritadur samningur thjonustubord 151020.pdf
- 6 x.Endurfjármögnun NDF_Mbl.nr. 360_2020.pdf
- 7 Undirritadur samningur thjonustubord 151020.pdf
- 8 x.Endurfjármögnun NDF_Mbl.nr. 360_2020.pdf
- 9 AukinSamvinna_utr_capacent.pdf
- 10 Framkvæmd utanríkisstefnu Íslands í kjölfar COVID-19.pdf
- 11 Saman á útivelli 2020.pdf
- 12 Áfram Ísland skýrslan 2015.pdf
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- 14 Áritanir og staðfestingar ársreikninga.pdf
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- 20 Íslensk landaheiti Hagstofa.pdf
- 21 Ferill umsókna - frjáls félagasamtök.pdf
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- 30 1. B_nr_1035_2020_Reglur um styrkveitingar utanríkisráðuneytisins.pdf
- 31 2. Leidbein_Rikisendurskodunar_um_eftirlit_med_styrkjum_juni2015.pdf
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- 35 Danmörk SDG Investment Fund 2016.pdf
- 36 Svíþjóð policy framework 2016.pdf
- 37 swedpartnership_details.pdf
- 38 6 EXPLORER GENERAL CONDITIONS 2019.pdf
- 39 Danida IFU Strategy.pdf
- 40 DMDP results framework_april2018-1.pdf
- 41 Fact-sheet-final-SDG-Denmark.pdf
- 42 IFU Strategy.pdf
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- 44 2017-Report-DAC-Untyng.pdf
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- 46 dac untyng aid.pdf
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- 49 OECD-Blended-Finance-Principles.pdf

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51 Global_Compact_Principles.pdf
52 Norad-enterprisedevforjobs-grant-scheme-rules.pdf
53 Norway white paper.pdf
54 1.Marel stærri styrkur maí 2019.pdf
55 10. 66 °Norður stærri styrkur janúar 2021.pdf
56 11. Kerecis stærri styrkur janúar 2022.pdf
57 12. BBA Fjeldco og Intellecton.pdf
58 13. Samningur við Pólar toghlerar og Kaldara.pdf
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60 15. Geymd forkönnun mars 2020.pdf
61 16. Atmonia forkönnun sept. 2020.pdf
62 17.Ocean Excellence forkönnun okt. 2020.pdf
63 18. T16 forkönnun júní 2021.pdf
64 19. Pólar toghlerar forkönnun júlí 2021.pdf
65 2.Thoregs forkönnun júlí 2019.pdf
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67 4.GEG stærri styrkur mars 2021.pdf
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1287 220210 Gátlisti Heimsmarkmiðasjóður kynning og markaðsetning.docx
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1460 Auglýsing sjóðurinn 2020 - framlengdur frestur vegna COVID-19.docx
1461 Auglýsing sjóðurinn 2020.docx
1462 Auglýsing vor 2020.docx
1463 Frétt_Atmonia_Ágrip í fjölmiðla-v2.docx
1464 Efni í drög að frétt um styrkveitingu úr Samstarfssjóði UTN.docx
1465 Auglýsing 22.feb 2020.docx
1466 De minimis yfirlýsing.docx
1467 01 Geymd ehf_Umsokn-vegna-heimsmarkmiðasjóðs2020 loka.docx
1468 13 Curriculum Vitae GB ark 4 des 2020.docx
1469 17 Yfirlýsing um minniháttar aðstoð.docx
1470 One Smart Voice! The Consumer theory. 000.05.08.2020 Adalskra VII. Hrafn.
1471 0.Samantekt verkefnisins.docx
1472 1. Gleymdist að setja texta við Umsókn sjá hér.docx
1473 drög_Starfsáætlun matshóps_4.úthlutun.docx
1474 Gátlisti yfir gögn og matsvidmið tafla.docx
1475 Matsform_lysing.docx
1476 Samþykkt_Starfsáætlun matshóps_4.úthlutun.docx
1477 Sniðmát_drög að álitsgerð.docx
1478 Starfslýsing fyrir matshóp samstarfssjóðs 2020.docx
1479 Álitsgerð Samstarfssjóður við atvinnulíf 4. úthlutun.docx
1480 Álitsgerð_03.docx
1481 Álitsgerð_04.docx
1482 Álitsgerð_05.docx
1483 Álitsgerð_05_SA.docx
1484 Álitsgerð_06.docx
1485 Álitsgerð_06_KGB.docx
1486 Álitsgerð_07_final.docx
1487 Álitsgerð_Final.docx
1488 Álitsgerð_Final_EH.docx
1489 Álitsgerð_Final_EH_SA.docx
1490 drög að minnisblaði.docx
1491 drög að bréfi_Bláa hagkerfið ehf.docx
1492 drög að bréfi_Polar toghlerar ehf.docx
1493 drög að bréfi_Suss Education ehf.docx
1494 drög að bréfi_Suss Education ehf_nytt.docx
1495 ~Şög að bréfi_Suss Education ehf.docx
1496 drög að tölvupósti.docx
1497 Skapalón - styrkur hafnað mars 2021.docx
1498 Skapalón - styrkur hafnað mars 2021_track changes.docx
1499 Skapalón - styrkur veittur mars. 2021.docx

1500 Skapalón - styrkur veittur mars. 2021_track changes.docx
1501 1. Ísland.is Afgreiðsla.docx
1502 Bláa Hagkerfið ehf. - hafnað.docx
1503 Hananja ehf. - hafnað.docx
1504 IGI slf. - hafnað.docx
1505 Polar toghlerar ehf. - hafnað.docx
1506 Suss Education Europe ehf. - hafnað.docx
1507 x. Skapalón - styrkur hafnað mars 2021.docx
1508 Íslenski Sjávarklasinn ehf. - hafnað.docx
1509 1. Ísland.is Afgreiðsla.docx
1510 GEG ehf. - styrkur veittur.docx
1511 Geymd ehf. - forkönnun_styrkur veittur.docx
1512 Hananja ehf. - styrkur veittur.docx
1513 Intellecton ehf. - styrkur veittur.docx
1514 T16 ehf. - forkönnun_styrkur veittur.docx
1515 x. Skapalón - styrkur veittur mars. 2021.docx
1516 framvinduskýrslur sniðmát ÁG_SÁ.docx
1517 Framvinduskýrslur sniðmát.docx
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1519 Drög að samningi_Geymd ehf._03.docx
1520 drög að samningi_Geymd ehf..docx
1521 drög að samningi_Geymd ehf._02.docx
1522 Samningur_Geymd ehf.docx
1523 Svarbréf_Geymd.docx
1524 drög að samningi_T16 ehf.docx
1525 T16 - svarbréf.docx
1526 Svarbréf_GEG.docx
1527 lokadrög að samningi - GEG ehf_.docx
1528 220531 Viðauki við Samning Hananja.docx
1529 Lokadrög samnings - Hananja ehf..docx
1530 Svarbréf_Hananja.docx
1531 220428 Framvinduskýrslur viðauki við samning.docx
1532 220428 Intellecton framvinduskýrslur yfirlit - viðauki við samning.docx
1533 Samningur_Intellecon ehf.docx
1534 Svarbréf_Intellecon.docx
1535 ~\$ög að samningi_Intellecon ehf..docx
1536 drög að samningi_Intellecon ehf._loka.docx
1537 drög að samningi_Intellecon ehf..docx
1538 auglSamstarfssjóðurOkt20_Gsal_SA.docx
1539 Heimasíða samstarfssjóðsins - Auglýsing haust 2020.docx
1540 Lokadrög_Auglýsing haust 2020.docx
1541 Lokadrög_Auglýsing haust 2020_Island.is.docx
1542 Lokadrög_Auglýsing haust 2020_vantar nr. reglna.docx
1543 drög_Auglýsing haust 2020.docx
1544 drög_Auglýsing haust 2020_1.docx
1545 drög_Auglýsing haust 2020_sá.docx
1546 drög að frétt GEG ehf..docx
1547 drög að frétt GEG ehf_SE.docx
1548 Drög að frétt_Geymd ehfGB-AAA.docx
1549 drög að frétt_Geymd ehf.docx

1550 Samantekt verkefnis.docx
1551 Tillaga að Fréttatilkynningu.docx
1552 drög að frétt Intellect.docx
1553 drög að frétt Intellect_SA.docx
1554 Samantekt T16 ehf..docx
1555 Samantekt verkefnis T16 120621.docx
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1558 210611_drög að álitssgerð.docx
1559 210616_drög að álitssgerð.docx
1560 210621_drög að álitssgerð_Final.docx
1561 Sniðmát_drög að álitssgerð með töflum gömlum.docx
1562 drög að álitssgerð.docx
1563 drög að minnisblaði 5 úthlutun.docx
1564 drög að tölvupósti 5.úthl.docx
1565 drög að tölvupósti 5.úthlutun.docx
1566 Skapalón - styrkur hafnað júní 2021.docx
1567 Skapalón - styrkur veittur júní 2021.docx
1568 Cognitio ehf. - styrkur hafnað júní 2021.docx
1569 North Tech Energy ehf. - styrkur hafnað júní 2021.docx
1570 1. Ísland.is Afgreiðsla.docx
1571 BBA_Fjeldco ehf. og Intellect ehf.- styrkur veittur júní 2021.docx
1572 BBA_Fjeldco ehf.- styrkur veittur júní 2021.docx
1573 Pólar toghlerar ehf.- styrkur veittur júní 2021.docx
1574 Áveitan ehf. - styrkur veittur júní 2021.docx
1575 drög að bréfi_Cognitio ehf.docx
1576 Svarbréfið_Cognitio ehf. - styrkur hafnað júní 2021.docx
1577 Viðauki Áveitan framvinduskýrslur.docx
1578 Viðauki við samning Áveitunnar um framvinduskýrslur.docx
1579 Álitssgerð_Áveitan ehf.docx
1580 Álitssgerð BBA Fjeldco ehf..docx
1581 Álitssgerð_Pólar toghlerar ehf.docx
1582 Auglýsing vor 2021.docx
1583 drög að minnisblaði til ráðuneytisstjóra.docx
1584 drög að auglýsingu fyrir fréttamiðla.docx
1585 drög_Auglýsing vor 2021_track changes.docx
1586 211019 Gátlisti með umsókn 66Norður og UN Women.docx
1587 2021 10 14 Verkefnalýsing.docx
1588 211019 Gátlisti Kerecis.docx
1589 c Eigendaskrá.docx
1590 e De minimis yfirlýsing.docx
1591 f Kerecis Annual Sustainability Report.docx
1592 h 2021 10 14 Verkefnalýsing.docx
1593 Nánar um bruna í Egyptalandi.docx
1594 211019 Gátlisti vegna umsóknar 2021 - Centra.docx
1595 211105 Matsnefnd fundur um umsóknir.docx
1596 211025 Starfsáætlun matshóps 6.úthlutun 1. drög.docx
1597 ~\$1213 66Norður samningur vegna Heimsmarkmiðasjóður des. 2021.docx
1598 ~\$0207 Gátlisti með umsókn Pólar.docx
1599 ~\$0215 Gátlisti með umsókn Pólar.docx

1600 Starfsáætlun Heimsmarkmiðasjóðs atvinnulífs 7. úthlutun.docx
1601 ~\$itsgerð_BBA Fjeldco og Intellecton.docx
1602 211201 Gátlisti Heimsmarkmiðasjóður.docx
1603 220408 Gátlisti Heimsmarkmiðasjóður vegna 3. maí úthlutunar.docx
1604 220531 Yfirlit umsókna 8 úthlutun.docx
1605 220518 Gátlisti AM Praxis.docx
1606 220518 Gátlisti Consent Energy.docx
1607 Gátlisti Consent Energy.docx
1608 220518 Gátlisti Geoneer.docx
1609 f Kerecis Annual Sustainability Report.docx
1610 Gátlisti Kerecis.docx
1611 220509 Gátlisti með umsókn MAR Advisors.docx
1612 220518 Gátlisti með umsókn MAR Advisors.docx
1613 Erindi MAR Advisors með umsókn.docx
1614 220509 Gátlisti með umsókn RetinaRisk .docx
1615 220518 Gátlisti með umsókn RetinaRisk .docx
1616 220520 Viðbótar verkefnaáætlun RetinaRisk .docx
1617 RetinaRisk erindi með umsókn.docx
1618 Gátlisti Rvk Geothermal.docx
1619 drög samningur Reykjavík Geothermal.docx
1620 Reykjavík Geothermal - skýrsla matshóps.docx
1621 Punktur fyrir viðtal við RG.docx
1622 Reykjavík Geothermal_Jarðhitarannsóknarstofa_Fyrirspurn.docx
1623 ID-500 RG Company References.docx
1624 ID-505 RG Staffs Resumes.docx
1625 ID-510 RG Consulting Factsheet.docx
1626 OD-030 Organization chart.docx
1627 OD-035 RG structure chart.docx
1628 OD-050 Social responsibility system.docx
1629 OD-055 RG Board and committees.docx
1630 PD-050 Social responsibility policy.docx
1631 PD-060 Health, safety and environment policy.docx
1632 220520 Gátlisti Verkís.docx
1633 ~\$0511 Gátlisti Verkís með umsókn .docx
1634 220518 Gátlisti með umsókn VHS ehf.docx
1635 VHS erindi með umsókn.docx
1636 ~\$0509 Gátlisti með umsókn VHS ehf.docx
1637 220510 Gátlisti með umsókn Össur.docx
1638 Erindi Össurar hf. með umsókn.docx
1639 220513 Starfsáætlun matshóps 8. úthlutun - endanleg útgáfa.docx
1640 220513 Starfsáætlun matshóps 8. úthlutun.docx
1641 220603 Heimsmarkmiðasjóður 8 úthlutun álitserð fyrir rýni UTN RB-ABB.do
1642 220607 Heimsmarkmiðasjóður 8 úthlutun álitserð fyrir rýni UTN .docx
1643 220608 Heimsmarkmiðasjóður 8 úthlutun álitserð fyrir rýni UTN.docx
1644 Matshópur 2. fundur punktar.docx
1645 ~\$0608 Heimsmarkmiðasjóður 8 úthlutun álitserð fyrir rýni UTN.docx
1646 ~\$tshópur 2. fundur punktar.docx
1647 Fræðsla í skólum frá Menntamálastofnun.docx
1648 Heimsmarkmið og þróunaraðstoð- hæfnisviðmið skólanna.docx
1649 Re_Thoregs slf.msg

1650 RE_ Samningur - breyting.msg
1651 Ósk um breytingu á verkefni.msg
1652 Geymd-undirritaður ársreikningur_ .msg
1653 Tölvupóstur_ Staðfesting Rahul Gudjon Bjarnason_THE DINO SMART BUS ST
1654 Tölvupóstur_Nordic Flex house Smart Nordic Bus Stand.msg
1655 FW_ Suss Education - Umsókn - frestun.msg
1656 RE_ Suss Education - Umsókn - frestun (1).msg
1657 RE_ Suss Education - Umsókn - frestun (2).msg
1658 RE_ Suss Education - Umsókn - frestun (3).msg
1659 RE_ Suss Education - Umsókn - frestun.msg
1660 Suss Education umsókn.msg
1661 Framvinduskýrsla CARICE.msg
1662 Re_ Framvinduskýrsla CARICE.msg
1663 Styrkumsókn.msg
1664 FW_ Confirmation.msg
1665 Fréttatilkynning Þróunarfræ 26.feb 2021.png
1666 Áfangaskýrsla - undirskrift 20.01.20 - ÞES.png
1667 03 Adivasi menntasetið hönnun.png
1668 04 Hagkvæmishús Kenýja-framhlið.png
1669 05 Hagkvæmishús Kenýja-hverfi.png
1670 Mynd 1.png
1671 Mynd 2.png
1672 Mynd 3.png
1673 Sjá viðskiptablað viðtal 4.mars 2021.txt
1674 3-4. Umsókn og verkefnaskjal umsóknaraðila _island.is.txt
1675 3-4. Umsókn og verkefnaskjal umsóknaraðila _island.is.txt
1676 Sjá viðskiptablað viðtal 4.mars 2021.txt
1677 Málsnúmer UTN20110093.txt
1678 3. Verkefnaskjal, sbr. c-lið 2.mgr.5.gr. reglna 1080_2018.txt
1679 00 LESTU MIG - fór ekki í gegnum Island.is.txt
1680 #00 ATH Sami samstarfsaðili og Sæbjúguverkefnið sem reyndist ekki vel.txt
1681 2. Vesen með skráningu Verkefnaskjals á island.is - barst í t.póstik.txt
1682 3-4. Umsókn og verkefnaskjal umsóknaraðila _island.is.txt

Annex 10 – Fund survey



Evaluation of Iceland's Mechanism for Private Sector Collaboration

Heimsmarkmiðasjóður atvinnulífs / SDG Partnership Fund

Survey for Companies

1. Where did you learn about the SDG partnership fund?

- From the Ministry for Foreign Affairs/utanríkisráðuneytið
- From Business Iceland/Íslandsstofa - Heimstorg
- From business partners
- From my executive manager
- From my network (e.g. friends)
- Other (please specify)

2. Has your company worked internationally prior to receiving funding from the SDG partnership fund?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

3. In which field is your project?

Other specialities (please specify)

4. Is this your first project in a developing country / emerging market?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

5. What country is your project in?

6. What stage is the project in?

- Planning stage (inception)
- Early stage implementation (civil works, expert team mobilised for field work, data collection)
- Late stage implementation (completed: data analysis, civil works, training)
- Final stage

7. When was the application submitted to the SDG partnership fund?

8. When was the application to the SDG partnership fund approved?

9. Please state the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Disagree	I don't know
The project application process was simple.	<input type="radio"/>				
The project application process was time-consuming.	<input type="radio"/>				
MFA was supportive during the application process.	<input type="radio"/>				
MFA provided adequate feedback after the application process.	<input type="radio"/>				
The company engaged with outside support to assist with the application.	<input type="radio"/>				

Other comments on the application process (please elaborate)

10. What, if any, obstacles during project implementation have you faced? (rank by priority, 1 = highest, 6 = lowest)

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Legal (e.g. setting up a company in another country)	<input type="radio"/>					
Permissions (e.g. works, run database platform)	<input type="radio"/>					
Global shipping and delivery issues	<input type="radio"/>					
Energy	<input type="radio"/>					
Financial (e.g. unforeseen costs, inflation)	<input type="radio"/>					
Cultural challenges (e.g. working with local partners/experts)	<input type="radio"/>					

Other comments on the obstacles (please specify)

11. Please state the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

Strongly agree

Agree

Slightly Agree

Disagree

I don't know

We needed support from the MFA during the project implementation.

During implementation we received useful support from MFA.

We have had frequent contact with other companies that have received funding from the SDG partnership fund.

We would consider applying for funding from the SDG partnership fund or other MFA funds again.

The challenges of implementing the project was greater than expected.

We expect the SDG funded project to be successfully and timely concluded.

Other comments (please elaborate)

12. Please state the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Disagree	I don't know
MFA instructions for receiving payments are clear.	<input type="radio"/>				
MFA instructions for receiving payments are clear.	<input type="radio"/>				
MFA payments were timely.	<input type="radio"/>				

13. Please state the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Disagree	I don't know
The SDG partnership fund was fundamental for the company to go forward with the project.	<input type="radio"/>				
We (the company) adapted our services/products to meet the needs of the new markets/country.	<input type="radio"/>				
Experience during our project has led to change (innovation) in our services/products.	<input type="radio"/>				
Projects have led to the transfer of skills, new solutions, and financial support to the partners and beneficiaries.	<input type="radio"/>				
We would recommend the SDG partnership fund to other companies.	<input type="radio"/>				

The SDG funding

has opened up new opportunities for my company in development cooperation.

The SDG funded project has increased my understanding and interest in working in developing countries.

We would recommend the SDG Partnership Fund to other firms/companies.

Other comments (please specify)

14. I believe that the following are important factors for private sector projects in development cooperation to become successful and sustainable. Select all that apply.

- A continued official co-funding by the government through the SDG Partnership Fund or similar mechanisms.
- Better access to beneficial financing through other international financial mechanisms such as international funds, development banks, financial guarantee mechanisms or other programs.
- Better overview of and understanding of need for cooperation in developing countries.
- Better access to good and trustworthy partners in developing countries.
- Other (please specify)

15. We consider projects in developing countries to be of interest because ...

- It allows for direct involvement in fighting hunger and poverty and improve economic development in developing countries.
- It allows the company to better contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals.
- It is the social responsibility of the company to work in developing countries.
- Developing countries are emerging markets for the company.
- Other (please specify)

16. Please select which other financial mechanisms are most interesting for your company.

↕

Other financial mechanisms (please specify)

17. What are the challenges of the SDG partnership fund? Please elaborate.

18. The most negative thing about the SDG partnership fund is...

19. The most positive thing about the SDG partnership fund is...

20. Anything else you would like to add / comment on?

21. What is your position?

- Executive
- Specialist
- Other (please specify)

22. I am

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say

Annex 11 – TAP survey



Evaluation of Iceland's Mechanism for Private Sector Collaboration

Ráðgjafalistar / Technical Assistance Program

Survey for Consultants

1. Where did you learn about the TA program?

- From the Ministry for Foreign Affairs/utanríkisráðuneytið
- From Business Iceland/Íslandsstofa - Heimstorg
- From business partners
- From my executive manager
- From my network (e.g. friends)
- Other (please specify)

2. What is your field of speciality?

- Fisheries
- Gender equality
- Geothermal energy
- Hydropower energy
- Land restoration
- Sustainable management
- Health technology
- Food production
- Financial / legal

Other speciality (please specify)

3. How many assignments have you carried out through the TA facility?

4. Before the TA program, had you previously consulted for any of the agencies listed below?

- World Bank
- FAO
- IFAD
- none of the above
- Other agencies (please specify)

5. Please state the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Slightly agree	Agree	Disagree	I do not know
The TA program has opened up new opportunities for my firm.	<input type="radio"/>				
The TA program has opened up new opportunities for me.	<input type="radio"/>				
The TA work has increased my understanding of developing countries.	<input type="radio"/>				
I believe my TA contribution was valuable for the multilateral agency.	<input type="radio"/>				
The challenges of providing TA was greater than expected.	<input type="radio"/>				
MFA should continue with the TA program.	<input type="radio"/>				
I would recommend the TA program to other consultants.	<input type="radio"/>				

Other (please elaborate)

6. Would you like to work with more agencies? Please specify.

7. The most positive thing about this TA program is ...

8. The most negative thing about this TA program is ...

9. Please feel free to add any additional comments you have regarding the TA program.

10. What is your position?

- Executive
- Specialist
- Independent consultant
- Other (please specify)

11. I am

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say