

Chapter 4 Overall Conclusions and recommendations

The third annual measurement of evaluation culture continued to reveal a good diffusion of evaluation culture within the Structural Instruments management system, quantified in an average achievement of the ECI of 59% of the maximum available score of 100% (compared to 59% achieved in the second cycle and 57% in the first cycle of evaluation).

The level of diffusion of the evaluation culture was determined by the good average achievement across Operational Programmes, showing more satisfactory results for ROP and SOP Environment and slightly poorer performances for SOP IEC.

At the level of dimension, the most developed seem to be the supply side and the dissemination of evaluation results, followed by the demand side, whereas there are areas for improvement regarding the institutionalization of the evaluation culture.

Comparing the ECI score obtained in all of the three measurement cycles, the supply side of evaluation registered the highest increase (from 45% in the first cycle to 63% in the last one), which was mainly based on the perceived performance of the dimension determined through the e-survey. The timeframe of one year difference between the measurement cycles of the evaluation culture may be too short in order to capture substantial improvements for all four dimensions.

In order to provide solid recommendations concerning either strategic changes in the design of KAI 1.2 or future activities that may be undertaken under the KAI in order to increase the level of diffusion of evaluation culture, we have cross-correlated at the level of criteria of the ECI all the evidences collected during the third measurement cycle.

Figure 41 - Structure of conclusions and recommendations table

ECI Criteria	CONCLUSIONS OF THE THIRD ANNUAL MEASUREMENT				RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF EVALUATION CULTURE	
	PERFORMANCE	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	KAI 1.2 IMPACT	OPERATIONAL	STRATEGIC

Following this approach, for each criteria we have summarized the key strengths and weaknesses related to evaluation culture emerging from the analysis of both primary and secondary sources, described the relevant activities developed under KAI 1.2 contracted projects and differentiated our recommendations into operational recommendations (i.e. short term actions that are implementable under the current structure of KAI 1.2) and strategic recommendations (i.e. recommendation requiring changes in the logic of intervention of KAI 1.2 and that therefore may require modifications of the existing programming and implementation documents) which reflect those of the previous annual measurement cycles.

Table 5 - Conclusions of the annual measurement and recommendations for improvement

ECI Criteria	PERFORMANCE	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	KAI 1.2 IMPACT	OPERATIONAL	STRATEGIC
(1)The architecture of Evaluation	ABOVE ECI AVERAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The architecture of the evaluation system is in place with dedicated Evaluation Units established and operational at Programme level, effectively coordinated by the Central Evaluation Unit set-up within MFE. Mission, roles and tasks of EUs are clearly defined and assigned based on ROF, procedures and job descriptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main downside concerning architecture relates to the fact that Evaluation Units are organized within compartments performing also other functions (ex: programming, communication) and that there is a lack of formal procedures linking evaluation to programming. The applied procedure concerning the coordinating role of the EWG is in draft status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is evidence of KAI 1.2 impact on the architecture of Evaluation (recommendation to have dedicated units, separated from other units) Half of EWG meeting were organized under KAI 1.2 KAI 1.2 has impact only on the linkage between evaluation and monitoring and not between evaluation and programming. 	<p>KAI 1.2 ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure continuity in the role of UCE. <p>Owner: Ministry of European Funds (MEF)</p> <p>Timeframe: ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support an international benchmarking study on organizational aspects of evaluation culture. <p>Owner: Ministry of European Funds (MEF)</p> <p>Timeframe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: Q.4 of 2014 End: Q.2 of 2015 	
(2) Financial and human resources allocated to Evaluation	BELOW ECI AVERAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The human resources allocated to evaluation are adequate both in terms of number (average 3 persons per evaluation unit in line with international benchmark) and competences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The financial resources are below the international benchmark (0.12% of the total budget of the operational programme is dedicated to evaluation). This gap was influenced by the fact that in the international benchmark was included aggregated data related to OPs which have a higher allocation of resources to evaluation compared to Romania. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KAI 1.2 contributed with financial resources to the evaluations carried out at OP level (i.e. OP TA) and NSRF level. KAI 1.2 financed training and professional development of staff at OP and NSRF level. KAI 1.2 has no impact in terms of coverage of salaries. 	<p>KAI 1.2 ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure availability of resources to support activities consistent with ECI in the future programming period. <p>Owner: MEF</p> <p>Timeframe: ongoing</p>	

ECI Criteria	PERFORMANCE	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	KAI 1.2 IMPACT	OPERATIONAL	STRATEGIC
(3)Quality of monitoring system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Below ECI AVERAGE 	The quality of the indicator system is considered adequate and capable of providing timely information.	Areas of improvement have been indicated in relation to the indicator system at NSRF level	No evidence was found of projects financed under KAI 1.2 that may have an impact on the quality of the monitoring system.		<p>KAI 1.2 ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify 2007-2013 indicators to be used in 2014-2020 and assess reliability and consistency across OPs and improvement. <p>Owner: MEF</p> <p>Timeframe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: Q.4 of 2014 End: Q.2 of 2015
(4)Efficiency and effectiveness of the evaluation function	ABOVE ECI AVERAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning of evaluation is ensured by the existence of multiannual plans. Single evaluation assignments are effectively managed by Evaluation Steering Committees (ESCs) set-up at Programme level producing terms of reference of medium-high quality. EUs are consulted by MAs in decision making processes, but not in a formalized manner. Procedures are in place for design, implementation and use of evaluation and provide for the involvement of Evaluation Units in decision making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiannual and annual plans are not regularly updated and the degree of accomplishment is not always satisfactory. The multiannual evaluation plans registered an average delay of 6 months between the planned date and the completion date. Procedures are not regularly updated, in order to reflect the latest organizational changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KAI 1.2 produced recommendations related to the regular update of annual and multiannual evaluation plans. No evidence was found related to the impact of KAI 1.2 on structures of ESC. There are guidelines produced under KAI 1.2 related to the drafting of the ToRs KAI 1.2 produced recommendations related to the regular update of procedures 	<p>KAI 1.2 ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for the structuring and animation of EWG sub-groups focusing on specific themes and on regular update of evaluation function. Plan new measurement cycles with intervals adequate to capture the impact of OPTA actions. <p>Owner: MEF</p> <p>Timeframe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: Q.4 of 2014 End: Q.3 of 2016 	

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(5) Socio-economic data are available and reliable	BELOW ECI AVERAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio-economic data are available in a timely manner. 	Other data such as micro-data at beneficiary level are only partially available and their consistency is considered of medium level.	No specific action undertaken.	<p>KAI 1.2 ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support a project in collaboration with the National Institute of Statistics to develop a statistical baseline for counterfactual analyses an review information needed to construct socio-economic indicators to be used to capture impacts. <p>Owner: MEF</p> <p>Timeframe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: Q.1 of 2015 End: Q.4 of 2016 	
(6) Availability and quality of evaluation expertise	ABOVE ECI AVERAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a supply side in possession of the required thematic and methodological expertise active in the Romanian market composed of both national and international companies. Specific check-lists to assess the quality of evaluation are in use and, based on the e-Survey respondents, evaluation reports are of medium to high quality. Evaluators are considered independent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is room for improvement of market competitiveness. The involvement of universities in evaluation activities is not yet developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large multi-annual framework contracts have attracted a number of international players in the national evaluation market. KAI 1.2 is not currently financing trainings for the supply side. 	<p>KAI 1.2 ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure complementarity with POCU to finance training and educational options in the field of evaluation for supply side. <p>Owner: MEF</p> <p>Timeframe: in parallel with the programming process</p>	
(7) Dissemination of evaluation outputs	BELOW ECI AVERAGE	A number of Evaluation Reports are publicly available on the website of the Evaluation Working Group (www.evaluate-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not all the evaluation reports are publicly available in their integrity; some of them are published only in terms of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of the EWG website (and of the Evaluation Library) Publication on the EWG website of the 	<p>KAI 1.2 ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support a study aimed at identifying the most appropriate forms of communication towards 	

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		structurale.ro) and public debates have been organized in order to present and discuss evaluation findings.	Executive Summary. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average number of public debate organized per OP in the last 12 months appears to be low. 	evaluation reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planned organization of wider dissemination events under LOT 2 of the Framework Agreement on Structural Instruments. 	SI stakeholders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue embedding in evaluation projects wide communication events and publishing evidences on evaluation library. <p>Owner: MEF</p> <p>Timeframe: ongoing</p>	
(8) Use of evaluation results	ABOVE ECI AVERAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures for addressing evaluation results and their follow-up are in place. <p>The use of evaluation results is considered higher at OP level than at NSRF level.</p>	No weakness identified.	No specific action undertaken.	KAI 1.2 ACTIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly discuss within the EWG the follow-up on evaluation recommendations. <p>Owner: MEF</p> <p>Timeframe: starting from Q4 of 2014</p>	
(9) Mental framework	BELOW ECI AVERAGE	Evaluation is considered an important part for achieving success at institutional level both by management/executive staff and policy makers.	There is still space for improvement, especially among policy makers.	No specific action undertaken.	KAI 1.2 ACTIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the organization of an international conference aimed at exchanging experiences on "Impact of evaluation evidences on policy making process". <p>Owner: MEF</p> <p>Timeframe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: Q.4 of 2014 End: Q.2 of 2015 	
(10) Legal context of evaluation	BELOW ECI AVERAGE	The national legal provisions regulating evaluation are the transposition of the EU Legal Framework and provide for	There are elements of the Romanian legal framework hampering evaluation, in particular public	No specific action undertaken.		

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		the additional requirement of preparation of multiannual and annual evaluation plans.	procurement rules, national ordinances on staff hire and rules on expense eligibility.			
(11) "Evaluative" human resources policy - targeted at ensuring adequate human resources, at all level	ABOVE ECI AVERAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are evaluation champions (i.e. persons supporting the evaluation process) both at OP and NSRF level. There are training options on the market. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less than half of the civil servants are trained in social sciences. The degree of participation of civil servants (other than those dedicated to evaluation) has substantial room for improvement. The number of training options remains limited and do not cover all developmental and training needs. 	Some of the EWG participants hold decision making position and are able to support the evaluation process (i.e. evaluation champions)		<p>KAI 1.2 ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure complementarity with POCU to finance training and educational options in the field of evaluation for demand side and capacity development actions for academia. <p>Owner: MEF</p> <p>Timeframe: in parallel with the programming process</p>
(12) Embedded/bottom up evaluation demand(in SIS)	BELOW ECI AVERAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a demand for evaluation. <p>At NSRF level, evaluations are triggered in response to a need of knowledge, and not in response to a compliance imposed by the EU.</p>	The overall demand for evaluation as well as the number of evaluations triggered in response to a need of knowledge can be improved at OP level.	KAI 1.2 financed evaluations triggered in response to a need for knowledge.		
(13) Networking	BELOW ECI AVERAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There exists a national organization of evaluators. <p>There is a mechanism of cooperation between Government and academia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The contribution of the national organization of evaluators to the dissemination of good practices is low. The involvement of academia has been very limited up to date. 	No specific action undertaken.		
(14) Civil society and	BELOW ECI AVERAGE	No strengths identified.	The level of participation of civil society in evaluation related activities is low as	Addressed to a very limited extent (i.e. out of the ten projects involving civil	<p>KAI 1.2 ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue performing 	

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mass media			well as the number of public events organized per year.	society, two were financed under KAI 1.2)	communication activities especially targeted to policy makers and the civil society. Owner: MEF Timeframe: ongoing	
(15) Governance	BELOW ECI AVERAGE	Voice and accountability, regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption are above the world average as measured by the World Bank Governance index.	Political stability and government effectiveness are below the world average as measured by the World Bank Governance index.	Not addressed within the framework of KAI 1.2	KAI 1.2 ACTIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support pilot on Regulatory Impact Assessment. Owner: MEF Timeframe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: Q.4 of 2014 End: Q.2 of 2016 	
(16) Impacts in long-run and outside SIS	ABOVE ECI AVERAGE	The perceived sensitivity to evaluation on behalf of institutions involved in the Structural Instruments System is good. An important development is represented by the first contracting of evaluation assignments through Joint Technical Secretariats under ETC Programmes.	Institutions involved in Structural Instruments have internalized evaluation only in part.	Addressed to a very limited extent.		