



Accountability Report of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry for Foreign
Affairs of Finland

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FOREWORD

Dear reader,

The UN's 2030 Global Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted in 2015. It guides the work of the UN member states to promote sustainable development and includes the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which are the same for all countries.

Even before the coronavirus pandemic, the 2030 Agenda had produced many positive developments in the world. At the same time, it was acknowledged that the positive development achieved under the 2030 Agenda was not sufficiently rapid. As a result of the pandemic, achieving the SDGs became even more difficult, and there were some setbacks in achieving many of the goals. The most recent factor complicating matters is the breakdown of peace resulting from the war initiated by Russia against Ukraine.

These challenges do not reduce the importance of the 2030 Agenda, but instead, further underline the importance of achieving the SDGs. Sustainable development creates security and better health, slows down climate change/biodiversity loss and reduces extreme poverty, to name but a few examples.

Finland is one of the global pioneers in sustainable development. This is evidenced by a global country comparison in the Sustainable Development Report published in June 2021, in which Finland ranked first for the first time ever. We, however, acknowledge that we still have a lot to do to achieve the SDGs. However, this work is well underway. The goal of Finland's national sustainable development strategy and the related 2030 Agenda roadmap, adopted in March by the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development, is to achieve all of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. This is a significant policy that we can also market at the global level.

Although the Government is responsible for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, achieving the objectives requires the input and participation of society as a whole. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs plays an important role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in our external relations. The handprint of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, i.e. the positive impacts at the global level, affects many sustainable development goals. As a result, we have selected a maximum number (five) of SDGs under the State Treasury guidelines for the present accountability



report. The selected SDGs are ones whose achievement we can most significantly promote through our actions: SDG 4 (quality education); SDG 5 (gender equality); SDG 13 (climate action); SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions); and SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals). We will also report on our footprint, namely the negative ecological, social and economic impacts that we have on the operating environment, particularly from the perspective of our efforts to reduce this footprint.

Enjoy the read!

Matti Anttonen

State Secretary
Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland



1 Description of the reporting organisation

1.1 Governance of accountability

Accountability is governed by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as part of the Ministry's normal management and the responsibilities of departments, services and units in accordance with the rules of procedure. There is no separate governance of accountability at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In relation to sustainable development, in the Budget, the explanation text of the main title 24 of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs describes the main issues in terms of both transfers and the Foreign Service's own operations.

In monetary terms, the majority of the management of accountability measures is carried out as part of the governance of development policy and cooperation and the allocation of funds and related granting decisions. The theories of change used in the development cooperation and the indicators created to support them have been partly drawn up to support the SDGs. Data on the changes are used to support strategic management and performance reporting for the development policy.

In addition, responsibility in the ministry's own activities will be promoted using an environmental programme updated in autumn 2021 for the period 2021–2030.

The 2030 Agenda network, established in 2018 at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, aims at the exchange of views on issues related to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the better integration of the Agenda into all activities at the ministry. The network consists of representatives of different departments and units and meets when necessary, but in principle at least twice a year, and topical information related to sustainable development is shared internally between the meetings.

1.2 Accountability objectives

Finland is committed to achieving all the goals set in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by the deadline. This commitment has been made in the



Government Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda (VNS3/2020VP) as well as the Strategy of the National Commission on Sustainable Development 2022–2030 and the related 2030 Agenda roadmap.

The Ministry's work on sustainable development is guided by instruments such as the Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government, the Government Report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy, and the Report on Development Policy across Parliamentary Terms. The 2022 implementation plan of the administrative branch of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs specifies the objectives of the Foreign Service in more detail.

A lot of data are already available on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, including Finland's Voluntary National Reviews to the UN on the implementation of sustainable development (2020 and 2016), the Government Reports on the 2030 Agenda (2020 and 2017), Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy (2020), Government Report on Development Policy (2016), Report on Development Policy across Parliamentary Terms (2021), Government Annual Reports, Finland's Development Policy Results Report (2018), the National Audit Office's Performance audit report on promoting sustainable development (2019) and PATH2030 – An evaluation of Finland's sustainable development policy (2019) and the strategic priorities of the Foreign Service set for the period 2018–2022.



2 The Ministry for Foreign Affairs' handprint on SDGs 4 (quality education), 5 (gender equality), 13 (climate action); 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), and 17 (partnerships for the goals)

Since spring 2020, the coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on the achievement of the SDGs and international development policy. Most of the key development paths in developing countries (democracy, equality, education, health care, including reproductive health and rights, employment) have intensively slowed down or taken a downward turn. On the other hand, the pandemic has further demonstrated the relevance of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and, at the same time, the related priorities linked to these in Finland's development policy. The breach of peace resulting from the war initiated by Russia in Ukraine is the latest major step backwards in the implementation of sustainable development.

Finland's Development Policy Results Report is currently under preparation. The report will be published in autumn 2022 and it also stands as evidence of the Ministry's handprint. This report will provide a broader and more detailed description of the positive impacts of the Ministry's activities on the different sustainable development goals. Many of the concrete examples related to the handprint given in this report concern 2020 or time before this. This is due to the fact that handprint data for 2021 are not yet available at the time of preparing the accountability report.



2.1 Handprint: SDG 4 (quality education)



Education is one of the priorities of Finland's development cooperation. The country's development policy in the field of education supports the achievement of the SDG for education (with particular emphasis on supporting targets 4.1, 4.2, 4.5 and 4.c). In addition, the Unit for Civil Society supports global education by Finnish organisations, which supports the achievement of target 4.7. Finland particularly aims to improve access to high-quality primary and secondary education among girls and groups in vulnerable situations. This support strengthens the inclusivity and capacity of school systems to improve learning outcomes, and the practices and conditions for learning and teaching. Finland also supports the access of women with disabilities to vocational education and training.

More than half of the funding for the period 2019–2021 has been channelled through country-specific and region-specific aid. Education has been supported through country strategies for the period 2016–2020 in Afghanistan, Myanmar, Nepal, Palestine, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Ukraine. Education has also been supported in response to the Syrian crisis. In the 2021–2024 country strategies, support to the education sector will expand to Kenya, Somalia and Uzbekistan.

Examples of results: The results of the country strategies show that while access to education has increased and the share of pupils in secondary education has grown, the learning crisis is reflected in the poor quality of teaching and poor learning outcomes. Gender equality has grown stronger, although challenges remain. In many countries covered by the strategies, Finland supports interventions that operate at the interface between humanitarian and development aid and strengthen the resilience of school systems (e.g. Palestine, Ethiopia), or that are targeted at particularly vulnerable areas prone to conflicts (support launched in Myanmar to promote education in ethnic minority regions).

The coronavirus pandemic and also changes in the political situation have had a dramatic impact on the achievement of SDG4. In Afghanistan, for example, the positive development achieved in girls' school attendance is at stake.



Several Finnish non-governmental organisations (e.g. FCA, FIDA, Finnish Refugee Council, Felm, Plan, UFF, SOS Children's Villages and Interpedia) support the achievement of SDG4. Support from NGOs has enabled reaching particularly vulnerable refugees, illiterate adults, people with disabilities, girls and members of minority groups. Good results have been achieved at the grassroots level, for example in promoting the learning of mother tongue, education opportunities for persons with disabilities, literacy education, professional skills and teacher education. Less than one fifth of the aid provided to the education sector in the period 2019–2021 has been allocated through NGOs.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has gradually strengthened multilateral cooperation and advocacy to promote SDG4. The Ministry has closely cooperated with the Ministry of Education and Culture in global forums led by UNESCO. With regard to development funding for education, Finland has contributed to our multilateral partners, such as the EU, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, increasing their aid for inclusive and high-quality education.

Finland has launched assistance for the Global Partnership for Education Fund which supports the development of the education sector in the poorest countries and the Education Cannot Wait Fund which supports education during humanitarian and prolonged crises. Multilateral special funding is also allocated to the thematic programmes of the World Bank and UNESCO. Finland has also supported the WFP's school meal programmes.

Thematic cooperation with UNICEF will be strengthened within the framework of an innovative learning centre to be established in Helsinki. Finland also supports the work of multilateral actors by funding experts through UN and World Bank programmes. The Finnish Centre of Expertise in Education and Development, which was established as part of the Finnish National Agency for Education, is a new future-oriented investment aimed at strengthening Finland's role in solving the global learning crisis.

Cooperation with higher education institutions and research promotes not only SDG4 but also the entire Sustainable Development Agenda. Higher education partnership programmes support cooperation projects between higher education institutions from Finland and developing countries. The projects have developed the methodological, pedagogical and administrative capabilities of partner institutions. Private sector instruments have also contributed to the achievement of the goal set for education: Finnfund has made two investments in the education sector,



and teaching has been the most common sector covered by Finnpartnership projects.

2.2 Handprint: SDG 5 (gender equality)



In accordance with the Government Programme, Finland aims for 85 per cent of its new development cooperation programmes and projects to include objectives promoting gender equality. According to preliminary calculations, 71% of development cooperation funding in 2021 was targeted at measures that included objectives promoting gender equality.

Finland supports sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for all women and girls. This includes activities that ensure access to high-quality and equal sexual and reproductive health services. Finland promotes comprehensive sexual education, contraception, maternal health, the right to safe sex and, if necessary, access to safe abortion.

Finland promotes the prevention of gender-based violence and supports access to services for victims of gender-based violence. We particularly support vulnerable groups and persons with disabilities. We promote awareness among all women and girls about their rights and their opportunity to advocate for their rights, such as bodily integrity. We also raise awareness about the extent of gendered online violence and the need to prevent it.

Finland promotes the role of women in the economy, especially by increasing women's employment opportunities and directing financial services to female entrepreneurs and companies that aim their products and services at women. We strengthen women's participation in decision-making. We improve women's participation in solving problems related to peace and security.

Finland promotes gender equality through targeted measures and gender mainstreaming in all areas of development policy. Above all, Finland's support is channelled through UN organisations, CSOs and bilateral cooperation. Finland's support has enabled different agents to respond to the challenges to gender equality posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Finland emphasises addressing the root causes of gender inequality, discriminatory structures and social norms. This requires the



participation of not only women and girls but also men and boys in the process of change. We also emphasise the elimination of discrimination emerging at the intersections between gender and other personal characteristics.

Finland engages in political dialogue and advocacy in the European Union, the UN, development funding institutions and partner countries. Gender equality is Finland's priority as a member of the Human Rights Council in the period 2022–2024.

Gender equality and women's rights are subject to increasing global resistance, which further emphasises Finland's role in promoting gender equality and combating multiple discrimination.

Examples of results: In 2020, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) secured sexual and reproductive health services for 50 million women and young people with Finland's support among others. 506,000 girls and women who were victims of gender-based violence were able to access mental health and psychosocial support services. UNFPA humanitarian aid helped provided more than 11 million people with sexual and reproductive health and rights services, 1.3 million with safe childbirths in 39 countries and 4.4 million with family planning services.

Finland has supported long-term work in Nepal to change structures, norms and attitudes that maintain inequality. Since 2016, a project related to menstrual hygiene has been producing long-term results. Girls and women, who were previously forced to sleep in a cattle shed during menstruation without access to the water points in their communities, are now freely using water points and toilets in households. Thanks to a change in societal attitudes, women are no longer ashamed or discriminated against during their period. Men support women and older generations no longer pass harmful beliefs related to menstruation on to the next generation.

In the period 2020–2021, UN Women supported more than 114,000 women in 33 countries to develop their financial skills with funding from Finland among others. In 2020, the International Trade Center joined 1.9 million women in the market through the SheTrades platform, which is co-funded by Finland. A Finnish Refugee Council project in Uganda provided 2,185 people with business training. The majority of the participants were refugees, and more than half of them were women. After the training, most of the participants joined a savings and loan group. The number of self-employed people tripled among the participants.



A Demo Finland programme has supported the competence of party actors in themes that are central to democracy (equality, women's participation in politics, central and local government, budgeting processes, citizenship, rights and freedoms). Schools of politics supported by Demo Finland help politicians play a more active role within political parties and progress in their political careers. The development of cooperation across party boundaries and dialogue is an important outcome of the training and multiparty dialogue.

As a result of Finland's advocacy efforts, the prevention and elimination of online gender-based violence became one of the objectives of the Action Coalition on Technology & Innovation for Gender Equality, an international campaign to advance gender equality. Thanks to the advocacy, the principles, objectives and monitoring of structural causes of inequalities (transformative approach) and multiple discrimination (intersectional approach) were also included in the EU Gender Action Plan III.

2.3 Handprint: SDG 13 (climate action)



In international climate policy, Finland has profiled itself as one of the forerunners and among the most ambitious countries in the EU. In accordance with the Government Programme, the objective of national climate neutrality in 2035 has laid a good foundation for international advocacy. In 2019, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs drew up an Action Plan for Climate Smart Foreign Policy which mainstreams climate change into all activities of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs: foreign and security, trade and development policy. Finland has been actively involved in EU as well as in international climate diplomacy. Key themes have included expanding the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action and marketing its work globally, promoting climate cooperation in the Arctic region, reducing black carbon emissions and promoting Finnish climate, environmental and circular economy solutions. The links between climate change and biodiversity loss, both in regard to challenges as well as solutions, have been systematically highlighted in Finland's advocacy efforts.

Climate change is also included in trade policy influence in the EU and in the WTO context. Finland has promoted carbon pricing globally, for example as a member



of Friends of Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform and also through development cooperation by supporting and influencing the pricing of carbon in the Partnership for Market Implementation of the World Bank.

Finland has drawn attention to the theme of climate and security in the international arena and has particularly shared its expertise in water-related climate and security. Finland is actively involved in the Water and Climate Coalition established by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in 2021. The coalition's main objective is to combine water and climate agendas and to provide decision-makers with hydrological and meteorological data that takes climate change into account for the purpose of policy planning and implementation to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. Finland is also a founding and board member of the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership (REAP) initiative focused on early warning systems and preventive action. REAP was launched at the UN Climate Summit in 2019.

Finland's public international climate finance is part of global responsibility and the obligations of the UN's climate frameworks. In line with the objectives of the Government Programme, Finland's international climate finance transitioned to a steady growth path in 2019, when a record EUR 147 million in climate finance was channelled to developing countries. In March 2022, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs published the Plan for the Implementation of Finland's Public International Climate Finance.

In accordance with the Government Programme, Finland has also strived to balance mitigation and adaptation funding in its international climate finance. In 2020, the share of adaptation was 41% and mitigation 59%, compared with 36% and 64% in 2019. Gift-based support for mitigation and adaptation measures in developing countries is in balance. Approximately half of Finland's international climate finance consists of investment funding in the form of loans and capital. This helps multiply the impact of public funding by leveraging private funding. Finland has made significant additional investments in adaptation financing, such as EUR 7 million for the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) in 2020, EUR 7 million for the Adaptation Fund in 2021, and EUR 5 million for the CREWS initiative for climate risk preparedness and early warning systems in the least developed countries and small island developing states in 2020.

In 2021, Finland joined the Champions Group on Adaptation Finance alongside other forerunner countries in climate adaptation financing. The group wishes to improve the quality, quantity and availability of climate adaptation funding, especially for the least developed countries and small island developing states. The aim



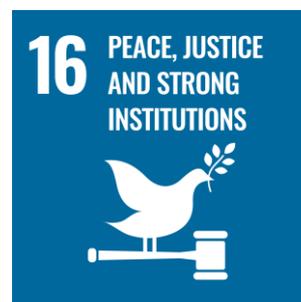
is to also contribute to climate negotiations related to adaptation financing and to restore trust between the negotiating parties, for example by promoting dialogue with developing countries. In this context, Finland will organise a ministerial conference in Lahti in April, to which several ministers for development and other high-level participants have been invited from the EU, OECD and international climate funds, among others.

Examples of results: As Finland has state-of-the-art expertise and products to offer, we have particularly invested in supporting weather and climate services and early warning systems in developing countries through Finnish funding, expertise and technology exports. Public and private sector actors and NGOs have participated in the cooperation. The national meteorological institutes of developing countries have been supported by the Institutional Cooperation Instrument (ICI) and concessional credits. As a result of projects underway in 2021, the improved weather and climate services and early warning systems will indirectly benefit almost 300 million people in six countries. Furthermore, the early warning and response systems launched or piloted by the multilateral CREWS funding mechanism in 2020 will benefit over 114 million people in eight countries.

Data on Finland's public international climate finance in 2021 will be available in September 2022, when it will be reported to the OECD. In addition, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will report on the country's climate finance in 2022 in numerous other reports, such as Finland's 8th national communication and the biennial report to the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), a climate finance report to the EU in accordance with the governance regulation, the development policy results report, and the annual report on Finland's Plan for the Implementation of Finland's Public International Climate Finance.



2.4 Handprint: SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions)



DEMOCRACY, RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS WORK:

Progress in the development of democratic institutions, the rule of law and the state of civil society has been declining for several years. The coronavirus pandemic has further impaired the situation, as many countries have used the pandemic as an excuse for restricting their citizens' fundamental and human rights and making it more difficult for the media, civil society and human rights defenders to act.

Despite changes in the operating environment, the Finnish actors and key international and local partners supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs have mainly been able to work effectively. For example, the work of Demo Finland and the International IDEA has allowed Finland to promote equal opportunities for participation among different population groups, especially women and people with disabilities, dialogue across party boundaries and pluralistic political debate. UN Women and local NGOs are also important partners. In fact, a positive trend has been observed in the implementation of women's political rights.

Founded in 2021 with development cooperation funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Rule of Law Centre strengthens Finland's possibilities of expanding democracy and rule of law cooperation with developing countries. Through bilateral development cooperation, Finland has been supporting the construction of legal aid systems and improving the legal protection of citizens in several partner countries.

As part of its human rights based foreign and security policy, Finland is committed to actively supporting human rights defenders in third countries. Finland particularly invests in the promotion of the rights of vulnerable persons and anti-discrimination activities. Finland's support has strengthened the work of international and regional human rights monitoring systems and measures against impunity, especially the protection and status of victims. Finland's membership of the UN Human Rights Council in the period 2022–2024 strengthens Finland's possibilities of promoting human rights. Nevertheless, strengthening democracy, the rule of law and



human rights requires long-term work, the results of which will be partly only visible after a delay.

Finland strengthens the ability of a free, independent and pluralistic civil society to act effectively and participate in decision-making. Freedom and participation of civil society contribute to democratic governance, transparency and accountability, which in turn lead to peaceful and more democratic societies.

MEDIATION AND PEACEBUILDING:

Finland strengthens the stability of societies by supporting inclusive peace processes, peaceful conflict resolution, the development of the rule of law and democratic decision-making as means of building lasting peace. An increasingly significant share of Finland's development cooperation takes place in fragile states and in situations involving the mutual connections between conflicts, climate change and poverty and their consequences. In this context, a need to strengthen the coordination, and coherence between humanitarian aid, development cooperation and peacebuilding (the so-called triple nexus approach) also gains prominence.

Established under the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 2020, the Centre for Peace Mediation reflects the increasingly important role of conflict prevention and mediation as one of Finland's foreign policy priorities. Launching the activities of the Centre for Peace Mediation, networking and more in-depth cooperation with Finnish and international actors have strengthened Finland's profile in mediation. Finland's active role in supporting peace processes and dialogues as well as mediation activities in multilateral forums (such as the EU, the UN, the OSCE, the AU) also provides an opportunity to promote the use of the triple nexus approach.

Finland has promoted the opportunities of women, young people and people with disabilities to participate in peace and security issues, and supported the safety and welfare of civilians living in countries recovering from conflict. Finland has supported the preparation and implementation of a national Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in many countries. Several Finnish civil society actors and the UN are key partners in this work. In accordance with its own national Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, Finland has emphasised the need to strengthen the role of women and their participation in conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding. For instance, in 2019, Finland launched the initiative "*Commitment 2025 on Women's Inclusion in Peace Processes*" together with Spain. Finland is also particularly well known for its work and support for strengthening networks of women mediators both in Finland and globally.



In recent years, Finland's mediation and peacebuilding efforts have also focused on the promotion of a positive role of religious and traditional actors and particularly water diplomacy, which utilises Finland's expertise in water in conflict prevention and resolution.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT:

Finland contributes to security and takes responsibility for maintaining international peace and security by actively participating in international crisis management tasks. Crisis management is a key foreign and security policy instrument used to support conflict resolution, post-conflict stabilisation and the building of secure societies. Activities are based on strengthening the security and stability of a conflict area and protecting civilians. Participation in crisis management operations contributes to promoting democracy, good governance and human rights, including women's and children's rights and the prevention of sexual violence in conflicts. The aim has also been to ensure women's participation and human rights knowledge in Finnish civilian crisis management.

Finland uses a comprehensive approach in its crisis management, taking into account the development stages of conflicts and the combined impact of various instruments and policies. Crisis management, mediation and reconstruction must form a coherent whole. It is important to identify the needs of the target countries, which can be used as the basis of targeting support to specific areas, such as strengthening the development of the rule of law and legal protection. Strengthening stability and the capacity of authorities in the security sector also prevents terrorism and international crime. Finland is a pioneer in the development of civilian crisis management. In the EU, this work is based on the Civilian CSDP Compact, a commitment implemented to develop cooperation between capabilities, rapid response and EU actors. The goal-oriented and efficient use of a comprehensive crisis management policy is outlined in a crisis management policy that extends beyond a single term government, published in the report by the Parliamentary Committee on Crisis Management.



2.5 Handprint: SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals)



FINANCING:

Finland's Official Development Assistance (ODA) amounted to EUR 1.212 billion in 2021, corresponding to approximately 0.47% of Finland's gross national income. The budget for 2022 is EUR 1.275 billion, amounting to an estimated 0.49 per cent of the GDP. No parliamentary consensus was reached on the road map towards the achievement of the target of 0.7% of the GDP in 2030 promised in the government programme in connection with the Report on Development Policy across Parliamentary Terms. Some of Finland's official development cooperation occurs as loan-based and investment-based financial investments, which can be used to mobilise more funding from several different sources. Where possible, financial investments are also used to increase investments in the least developed countries. Debt relief through the World Bank and the African Development Fund and for individual countries, such as Somalia, also supplements the funding for developing countries.

TAXATION:

Finland approached the goal of doubling its official development aid by 2022 to strengthen the taxation capacity of low-income countries by implementing its Tax and Development Action Plan covering the period 2020–2023. The Government will contribute to improvements in the taxation systems of developing countries. Finland particularly supports the strengthening of the taxation capacity and competence in African countries and other developing countries and the fight against illegal financial flows. Finland will also ensure that companies supported with development cooperation funding comply with the criteria of tax responsibility and transparency. In the EU, the OECD and the UN, Finland plays an active role in curbing aggressive tax planning, tax evasion and harmful tax competition. Finland is also actively involved in the efforts to develop the EU's tax haven blacklist.

**TRADE:**

Finland is committed to maintaining and strengthening the functioning of a multilateral, rule-based trading system. While we support the continuation of the negotiations on the open topics of the WTO Doha Development Round, we at the same time find it important that new topics can also be negotiated in the WTO. For example, Finland supports the efforts of developing countries to integrate better into the international trade system and to gain more benefits from trade opportunities in order to promote societal development. This creates mutual business opportunities and wellbeing.

Finland contributes to the promotion of open international trade by the European Union. It is important for the EU to extend the coverage of bilateral trade agreements in Asia, Africa and Latin America and to strengthen the binding nature and monitoring of the SDGs in trade agreements. Finland supports duty and quota free access to the EU market granted by the EU to the least developed countries. We also support the transparency and simplification of the rules of origin related to preferential treatment for the least developed countries to promote their trade in EU markets.

INNOVATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY:

One of the key aims of Finland's development policy is to make better and more comprehensive use of technology and innovation activities to support sustainable development. Finland pursues this objective by means such as strengthening the innovation activities of international organisations and developing countries as well as their ability to apply and develop new technologies. Cooperation with the UN, the EU and the private sector has emerged as an important channel. The activities support the implementation of SDG targets 17.6 and 17.7. Finland supports multilateral efforts to bridge the digital gap, for example by supporting the implementation of the UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation and the UN's innovation work. Finland plays an active role in the Digital for Development (D4D) operating model of the European Commission and contributes to the growth of the EU's development cooperation and investments that aim to support the sustainable digital transformation of developing countries.

There is active work to develop policy coherence between development and innovation policy in Finland and internationally to ensure that research and development investments would better support in the implementation of the SDGs. Private sector cooperation instruments (Finnfund, DevPlat, Finnpartnership) and loan-based and



investment-based development policy investments (granted to impact investment companies or international funds) support the transfer of technology and expertise through business activities, private investments in developing countries, and companies' ability to contribute to solving global challenges through market-based solutions. Finland supports the digital transformation of the economies in developing countries and strengthens the technological and innovation capacity of different actors. We are involved in major regional digital and green transition Team Europe Initiatives in Africa and other continents.

In close cooperation with relevant central government actors and other partners, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has been making Finland into a centre of UN's research and innovation activities by attracting UN actors operating in the field to Finland. The UNU-WIDER, UNOPS S3i, UN Global Pulse and UNICEF innovation hubs operating in Finland produce new data, technological solutions and innovations that support sustainable development for the use of the UN Member States and developing countries.

PARTNERSHIPS:

Finland promotes the coherence of sustainable development measures through political commitment, the involvement of the entire central government and multi-actor cooperation. Finland is committed to the implementation of principles for the evaluation of development cooperation (ownership in the developing country, aiming for results, broad-based partnership, transparency and mutual accountability) and participates in monitoring the implementation and development of the monitoring system through the OECD and the EU. The renewed monitoring system will be completed by the end of 2022. Important areas for Finland in this renewal include the promotion of multi-actor cooperation and broad-based partnerships and the stronger use of monitoring data as an element guiding policy-making in developing countries. The monitoring carried out in 2018 showed that the reporting of Finland's development assistance is transparent and that we supported local ownership in developing countries and the use of local systems better than the European average.

Finland supports civil society partnerships and promotes a human rights-based approach. Finland implements the OECD Development Cooperation Committee's (DAC) recommendation on enabling civil society in development cooperation (also including humanitarian assistance). We support the long-term, multidisciplinary development cooperation of NGOs and encourage the continuous development of



multi-actor cooperation. We also support the strong contribution of NGOs to the least developed countries and fragile regions.

Development cooperation projects also involve strengthening statistical competence and providing support for measuring categorised data.



3 The Ministry for Foreign Affairs' footprint, i.e. the negative ecological, social and economic impacts of its activities on the operating environment, and efforts to reduce the footprint

3.1 Ecological dimension

The State Treasury is currently working on producing a carbon footprint assessment on the central government together with the group operators. As a result, this report does not separately address the carbon footprint of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Current information on the establishment of a data bank describing the carbon footprint of the central government is presented on the website:

<https://www.valtiokonttori.fi/uutinen/vastuullisuusraportointi-datapankki-kokoaajalanjalkitiedot-yhteen-paikkaan/>

The first environmental programme for the Foreign Service (covering both the Ministry and its diplomatic missions abroad) was published in 2013. Since then, the Foreign Service has made systematic efforts to pursue environmental goals in its operations. The first environmental programme covered the period 2013–2016, and was later updated for the period 2017–2020; the latest update was made for the period 2021–2030.

A voluntary group, Ekotiimi (“Eco team”) operates under the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The group’s task is to monitor and coordinate the progress of the implementation of the programme in relation to set objectives and, if necessary, to submit proposals for new measures.

The group has annually compiled a monitoring report for the ministry’s management on the implementation of the environmental programme in the Foreign



Service. When the report is processed, the focus areas for the following period have also been defined. The concrete impacts of the coronavirus pandemic are visible in the monitoring report as a significant decrease in travel and other forms of movement, and the energy consumption of properties and facilities was also affected due to their lower utilisation rate. As a result, the data covering the period 2020–2021 in the monitoring report do not provide an accurate situation picture of the promotion of the goals in the Foreign Service.

Summary of the implementation of the environmental programme since 2013:

- The Foreign Service has participated in Motiva's energy saving week campaign, organised various events related to the environment, published information bulletins on its intranet and conducted environmental surveys and competitions.
- Efforts have been made to take sustainability and environmental aspects into account in the preparation and implementation of high-level visits. Minivans and environmentally friendly car alternatives are always used in the transport of visitors as appropriate. When serving food to visitors, the aim is to favour environmentally friendly alternatives (local and organic food) and avoid waste. The nature of the visits places certain restrictions on the activities, but the aim is to take sustainability and environmental friendliness into account in all activities as far as possible.
- In March 2019, guidelines for organising environmentally responsible meetings prepared for Finland's Chairmanship of the Arctic Council in the period 2017–2019 were introduced for the entire Foreign Service. The guidelines have also been translated into Swedish and English, which also makes them easier to use for foreign missions. The guidelines have also been presented in an international accountability network of ministries for foreign affairs.
- The environmental programme contains an annual target for reducing paper consumption of 5%. Already before the coronavirus pandemic, paper consumption had decreased by a total of approximately 55%.
- In line with the goals set in the programme, video conferencing equipment was significantly increased as a means of supporting the reduction of travel / mitigating an increase in travel both in the foreign missions and the ministry.
- Bicycles purchased for the ministry have been used actively. Bicycles are also used in some missions.



- The energy efficiency of the properties used by the foreign missions has been promoted in renovation projects and also by adjustments made to building technology systems. Efforts have been made to increase the use of renewable energy in connection with renovation projects, but so far only in a relatively limited number of sites.
- Environmental goals have been promoted in the vehicle purchases of foreign missions, for example by selecting hybrid power and taking into account life-cycle costs. The procurement of equipment has paid particular attention to energy efficiency, while the procurement of goods has taken the ecological properties of products into account, including recycled materials. The procurement of furniture has paid attention to materials used in the products and their long service life.
- Over the years, the foreign missions have been encouraged and activated to pursue the environmental goals in various ways. Some of the missions have been very active in this area and have also succeeded in gaining positive local attention and publicity through their own actions. Examples include the Permanent Representation of Finland to the European Union and the Embassy of Finland in Brussels, which have created a joint sustainable development programme that enables the foreign missions to participate in combating climate change.

3.2 Social dimension

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs Human Resources Strategy (2021–2025) supports the implementation, management, wellbeing at work and development of the Ministry's strategic objectives. The strategy was updated in 2021 based on the Strategy for Public Governance Renewal, the values of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the results of personnel workshops.

The focus areas of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Human Resources Strategy 2021–2025 are: 1. Our work will focus on the most important 2. We support the development of expertise and wellbeing through group work practices and reorganising work 3. Through good interaction, listening and respectful dialogue, we strengthen the sense of togetherness. Equality and diversity are interlinked.

The ministry provides young people with regular opportunities to familiarise themselves with work and careers in the Foreign Service by offering traineeships and summer jobs for higher education students. This year, the ministry offers 62 traineeships and around 40 summer jobs. In addition to these, there is a 13-person



quota for young adults carrying out their non-military service and a 6-person quota for persons completing a work trial by the TE Services. The figures do not include foreign missions.

Taking care of employees' wellbeing at work is a key priority in the operating culture of a modern work community. A healthy, motivated and dedicated staff will continue to be the ministry's most important resource in the future. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Unit for Human Resources Development and Occupational Wellbeing supports managers and work communities in developing wellbeing at work, implementing organisational changes and solving problems.

High-quality competence and its continuous development and renewal will remain the key and most important resource of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the foundation for future success. An education and training plan has been prepared for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs based on the Government's competence and development plan for the two-year period 2021–2022. Its focus areas include further development of basic education, an increase in training in hybrid and multi-space work, and training aimed at developing management and digital skills. In addition to the courses offered by the Government, the course selection of HAUS and other service providers is widely available, and selective training opportunities are provided abroad (e.g. courses offered by the EEAS). The Ministry for Foreign Affairs also strives to increase the number of online courses to also expand the available independent studies that best support missions.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has a personnel policy (2019–2021) and operational non-discrimination and equality plan (2018–2022), which are currently being updated. The objective of the operational non-discrimination and equality plan is to promote the implementation of the Government's Action Plan for Gender Equality and to create and establish the administrative and operating methods required by the Act on Equality between Women and Men and the Non-Discrimination Act in the areas of responsibility of the Finnish Foreign Service. The aim of the personnel policy non-discrimination and equality plan is to strengthen the experience of equality and non-discrimination in different personnel groups, to prevent harassment and inappropriate treatment in work communities, and to promote diversity and its management in the Foreign Service. In order to solve problems in the work community and to implement the zero-tolerance policy for harassment, the ministry follows the Government's VARTU model and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' own guide on responsible work behaviour.



Finland is committed (under, among others, the framework of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Recommendation) to preventing and eliminating sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment in development cooperation and humanitarian aid. The development of measures that aim at this goal (e.g. risk management, reporting mechanisms) will be continued, for example, by developing instructions and training.

3.3 Economic dimension

BUDGETING:

The budgeting of responsibility issues is carried out as a part of other budgeting in the State budget main title, chapters and items concerning the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs does not have a separate, official budget set aside for accountability; instead, the structure complies with the overall budget structure, and the funding and measures related to accountability are part of this.

In the Budget, the explanation text of the main title 24 of the administrative branch of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs describes the goals set for the social impacts for 2022 cutting across the ministry's activities, also including the promotion of the goals of the 2030 Agenda:

- The Foreign Service promotes the safety and well-being of Finland and Finns
- The Foreign Service promotes the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and takes action to combat climate change
- The Foreign Service promotes a rule-based international system
- The Foreign Service works to strengthen human rights, equality, democracy and the rule of law
- The Foreign Service promotes open economic relations that support Finland's growth and supports the participation of Finnish companies in international trade and value chains.



In addition, the explanation and context contain and describe the inclusion of sustainable development in the budget as follows:

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs implements the Government Report on the Global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its administrative branch, particularly with regard to Finland's global responsibility. Finland's foreign policy as a whole promotes sustainable development and the consistency of its activities will be improved between all administrative branches. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs will promote the implementation of climate agreements and participate in international cooperation to limit climate change and promote adaptation to climate change. The development policy is based on the 2030 Agenda and it supports the ability of developing countries to achieve the SDGs, while also highlighting Finland's experiences and practices. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs also works actively to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda by means of trade policy, and promotes the efforts to combat climate change and adaptation to climate change in all foreign and security policy sectors. In its own development policy and advocacy in the EU, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs acts in a manner that promotes attracting private funding and companies to the sustainable development investments in developing countries. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs also supports the prerequisites for sustainable development by means of civilian crisis management, peacebuilding and mediation.

PROCUREMENT:

The procurement services of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs comply with the obligations set for public procurement under the EU directive, legislation and government resolutions in order to promote accountability objectives.

The accountability goals set for products and services in the procurement of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and missions mainly concern environmental goals. They are generally related to energy efficiency, power consumption, materials, recyclability and life cycles.

Requirements are imposed on tenderers and contractors to ensure the realisation of social aspects, such as compliance with fundamental rights and human rights in working life and the management of social obligations to combat the grey economy.



The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has introduced comprehensive guidelines on responsible procurement:

- One of the key objectives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' procurement strategy, which dates back to 2014, is responsible procurement and sustainable development.
- In the implementation of the National Public Procurement Strategy in the Government (in the so-called TOIMI project), the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has selected increasing procurement skills, ecological sustainability and economic sustainability as the first strategic areas to be promoted.
- The newly updated procurement standard of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs also provides instructions on responsible procurement.
- The environmental programme of the Foreign Service for the period 2021–2030 provides fairly comprehensive instructions and guidance divided by product and service groups on how to promote the SDGs in related procurement. When the programme was updated, it was recognised that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' procurements can also contribute to the following 2030 Agenda goals to a minor extent: SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth); SDG 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure); SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities); SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production); SDG 13 (climate action); SDG 15 (life on land), and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions).



4 Description of how the report was prepared

At its meeting on 27 April 2021, the steering group of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs confirmed, which Sustainable Development Goals the Ministry's report will include. For the purpose of drawing up the accountability report, a group was set up to agree on the practical arrangements for preparing the report. The work to prepare this report involved the input of the Department for Development Policy, the Political Department, the Department for International Trade, the Department for Communications, Administrative Services, the Legal Service, Protocol Services, Financial Management Unit, and the Unit for Policy Planning and Research. The report was submitted for presentation and approval by the Ministry's steering group on 29 March 2022.