



Management Response

To the External Evaluation of the REPIC Platform

(conducted by JaLogisch Consulting GmbH)

May 2017

1. Introduction

REPIC is an interdepartmental platform for the promotion of renewable energy, energy efficiency and resource efficiency in international cooperation. It is a joint initiative of the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Swiss Federal Office of Energy (SFOE) and the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN).

The current (fourth) phase of REPIC expires on 31 March 2018. The REPIC Steering Committee composed with representatives of the 4 offices, decided in December 2016 to conduct an external evaluation of the REPIC-Platform.

The REPIC Steering Committee has retained the services of JaLogisch GmbH, an independent development and evaluation enterprise based in Austria, in consultation with the SECO evaluation division. Prior to this evaluation, REPIC has been evaluated internally in 2013 at the occasion of a one-day workshop. The last external evaluation was conducted in 2010.

The objective of this evaluation was to assess the performance of REPIC, with regard to its overall goal, namely:

- (1) Maintaining a network of interested entities in Switzerland
 - a. With a focus on the instrument as a mean for this goal
- (2) Supporting know-how and technology transfer to developing countries
 - a. With a focus on the entire portfolio and not on single projects

The evaluation consisted of a web-based survey of the Swiss organizations and their local partners which requested project-financing during the current fourth phase of REPIC, as well as the (partly overlapping group) of participants in REPIC network events since 2013. The survey questions were oriented to the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria and supplemented by specific questions from the participating organizations.

2. Overall Statement regarding the Evaluation Report

The REPIC Steering Committee endorses in general the findings and conclusions of this external evaluation. As such, the Evaluator presented a clearly structured report, well written and very concise and precise. Its conclusions support the general view the Steering Committee has of the platform, namely that REPIC:

- is well-regarded by and relevant for Swiss organizations;
- is relevant for the countries where REPIC-funded projects are implemented;
- fits well with the Message on the International Cooperation 2017-2020.

The used methodology proved to be very adequate for the kind of feed-back the Steering Committee was looking for. The questions of the web-based survey have been thoroughly chosen and targeted on the different focus groups (e.g. Swiss or local organizations, supported or refused projects). 73 persons out of 144 invitees have taken part in the survey. The response rate has been higher for certain categories (e.g. supported projects) than for others, however the Evaluator has transparently presented possible limits due to categories with low response figures. The Steering Committee is very satisfied to have chosen this innovative evaluation method and was impressed by the work of the Evaluator who has been able to translate the results of the survey in a clear and well-summarized DAC criteria assessment.

3. Specific comments

The Steering Committee would like to make specific comments on the evaluation results:

- The Steering Committee notes that the survey respondents were favorably disposed towards the **coaching**, noting that the coaching improved both the quality of the application and of the project. However the survey did not ask whether the Secretariat provided support 'to prepare the projects for their subsequent phase', whether this support was helpful, and whether 'replication is a key issue' for the Swiss organizations. Nevertheless, the focus of the coaching should be discussed for a next REPIC phase in the light of these available results.
- The relevance of REPIC to the Swiss government is presented in accordance with the Message on the International Cooperation 2017-20 and with the **promotion of Swiss organizations** in developing and transition countries. For the latter, the Steering Committee would like to add the fact that REPIC is one of a few instruments of the Swiss government providing Swiss organizations with grants for technology transfer projects to developing countries¹. It also provides a network for Swiss SMEs active in the area.
- For the Evaluator, REPIC "is governed by a committed group of professionals who work well together". This is in line with the impressions of the representatives of the four Federal Offices in REPIC. This model of **Whole of Government Approach** makes REPIC a unique instrument in comparison to initiatives in other donor countries.
- The Steering Committee notes that survey participants wish an **extension of REPIC's mandate** to other thematic areas. A move has been made in this direction with the addition of the resource efficiency to the REPIC thematic portfolio in 2016/17. Stakeholders gave a positive feed-back on this extension and the Steering Committee does not plan to extend the REPIC mandate further at this stage. Survey participants proposed, among others, the WASH ("Water, Sanitation and Hygiene") thematic to be developed in a REPIC-like format.
- Survey participants suggested that REPIC should expand or utilize its full **geographical scope**. This represents a misunderstanding, considering that all

¹ Cf. responses of the Swiss government to Members of Parliament:
<https://www.parlament.ch/en/ratsbetrieb/suche-curia-vista/geschaefte?AffairId=20163537>
<https://www.parlament.ch/en/ratsbetrieb/suche-curia-vista/geschaefte?AffairId=20163062>

REPIC support is already open to projects implemented in all ODA recipients' countries (DAC List). This will be communicated in the next REPIC newsletter.

4. Recommendations by the Evaluator and Management Response

Recommendations by the Evaluator	Management Response	Responsability and deadline
<p>1. to continue providing financial support to relevant projects and maintain the emphasis on the replication of the underlying project ideas. Replication is the way for REPIC to have impact, i.e. positively contribute to addressing climate change and improving access to energy.</p>	<p>Agreed, the Steering Committee takes note of the positive evaluation results. This confirms that the focuses developed in the Phase IV of REPIC (especially the one on replication) were right. It shows also that REPIC should continue.</p> <p>→ The Steering Committee will prepare a new REPIC phase.</p>	<p>Offices + secretariat / Q1 2018</p>
<p>2. to focus REPIC's attention in the pillar 'networking, information, communication and coordination' on the networking function. REPIC should continue to actively assist Swiss organizations to forge partnerships with each other and with local partners in developing countries.</p>	<p>Agreed, the REPIC platform has organized each year at least one event on subjects of interest for the stakeholders (e.g. project finance, project clinic, project exchange, events by technology or approach). It is currently testing a new approach with exchanges taking place in knowledge communities ("Wissensgemeinschaften").</p> <p>→ Building and where appropriate expanding on the above mentioned activities, the REPIC secretariat will focus on networking needs of Swiss organizations. It will offer, where possible within the existing structures and with a focus on project support, further assistance in partner search, be it between Swiss partners, local and Swiss partners or Swiss and local partners.</p>	<p>Secretariat / Q4 2017</p>
<p>3. to investigate more closely which international renewable energy and energy efficiency initiatives, programs and challenge funds potentially provide value-added to REPIC partici-</p>	<p>Agreed in principle, the Steering Committee distinguishes between the flow of information and follow-up financing for REPIC supported projects.</p> <p>For the flow of information, the contact to these programs is assured by the competent office (e.g. SDC for EnDev, SFOE for IRENA, SECO for ESMAP, FOEN for GEF). The re-</p>	<p>Offices + secretariat / Q2 2018</p>

<p>pants (in terms of follow-up finance, sourcing and dissemination of knowledge, certification, etc.) and establish working relationships with the identified programs.</p>	<p>spective office assures the link to REPIC, where appropriate and needed.</p> <p>Regarding follow-up finance for projects, REPIC reached out to several of these programmes and to potential financing organizations for a more systematic approach at the beginning of phase IV. Unfortunately, this has met with very limited success. However, during Phase IV the Steering Committee has observed that various projects had secured financing from international sources (e.g. GIZ, ADEME) or domestic instruments (e.g. Swiss BlueTech bridge, Technology Fund, SECO Start-up fund). Further the Steering Committee notes that an important part of REPIC projects seek replication through commercial financing.</p> <p>➔ The positioning of a REPIC platform in the sustainable infrastructure finance (e.g. Cascade approach) should be further assessed, for example by organizing a PPP round table bringing together representatives of the main financing vehicles of the Swiss government (e.g. REPIC, Bluetech Bridge, Technology Fund) and at a later stage representatives of the private sector.</p>	
<p>4. to limit its information dissemination activities to knowledge generated within REPIC and that supports REPIC's funding and networking function (e.g. by sharing positive examples of REPIC funded projects). Other international initiatives provide better 'knowledge banks' on renewable energy and (energy) resource efficiency.</p>	<p>Agreed, the Steering Committee notes that the blog on the REPIC webpage is not very popular with the survey participants. It shows that the way of information dissemination should be adapted.</p> <p>➔ The REPIC secretariat will refocus its way of communicating with the stakeholders. It will put more weight on the dissemination of information through a regular (quarterly) newsletter with a particular focus on REPIC projects (e.g. presentation of completed projects, lessons learned, partner search).</p>	<p>Secretariat / Q3 2017</p>

This Management Response has been approved by the Directors of SECO, SDC, SFOE, FOEN at the occasion of the meeting of the Strategic Committee on 30 June 2017.