

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Evaluation of Dutch involvement in the UN's MINUSMA mission

06-04-2021

Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Frequently used abbreviations and acronyms

AFISMA	African-led International Support Mission to Mali
ASIFU	All Sources Information Fusion Unit
DAF	Sub-Saharan Africa Department
DGB	Directorate-General for Policy
DSH	Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid Department
DVB	Security Policy Department
DMM	Multilateral Organisations and Human Rights Department
EUCAP	European Union Capacity Building Mission
EUTM	European Union Training Mission
ISR	Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance
IVS	Netherlands International Security Strategy
KMar	Royal Netherlands Marechaussee
MINUSMA	Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali
NLDA	Netherlands Defence Academy
SMO	Missions and Operations Steering Group
UNPOL	United Nations Police

1. Introduction

In May 2019, after five years, the participation of Dutch military units in the MINUSMA (*Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali*) UN mission was provisionally ended.¹ The UN mission had been established in 2013 in response to the sharply deteriorating security situation in Mali, where in the previous year armed conflict had broken out between the Malian government army and Tuareg separatists supported by Islamic fundamentalists linked to al-Qaeda. MINUSMA was set up to contribute to stability and the restoration of state authority in Mali.² The Netherlands participated in the mission from early 2014 to 1 May 2019, providing long-distance scouts, intelligence personnel, police trainers and civilian experts, among others.

There is a mandatory obligation for Dutch contributions to Article 100 missions,³ and thus also for the Dutch contribution to MINUSMA, to be evaluated after their termination.⁴ An internal evaluation of MINUSMA had already been set in motion by the ministries concerned (Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Justice and Security) when the Bosman motion was adopted in February 2020 requesting the government to involve an independent party in carrying out final evaluations.⁵ In response to this motion, the ministries involved requested the independent Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to carry out the final evaluation of MINUSMA.⁶ IOB agreed, on condition that it would have unrestricted access to all relevant information and persons and could carry out fieldwork in the areas involved in Mali. The evaluation and the lessons learned will also be relevant for the new Dutch contribution to MINUSMA, which the Cabinet decided on in November 2020.⁷

These Terms of Reference comprise a short description of MINUSMA, the Dutch contribution to it, the proposed research design for the evaluation and the associated planning and staffing.

2. MINUSMA

In January 2012, Tuareg separatists supported by jihadist groups started an uprising in northern Mali. The uprising was followed in March 2012 by a military coup, in which Malian President Touré was deposed. Under pressure from the international community, the coup leaders made way for an interim government, but in December 2012 they forced interim president Diarra to resign. Meanwhile, jihadist groups took control of northern Mali and advanced southwards. In response, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2085, which provided for the establishment of AFISMA

¹ Since May 2019, the Dutch contribution to MINUSMA has consisted of a number of staff officers, police officers (*Individual Police Officers*) and some military personnel for the ISR task force.

² The objectives of MINUSMA are shown in Table 1.

³ Article 100 missions are missions where the armed forces are deployed to maintain or promote the international rule of law. Article 100 of the Constitution states that the Cabinet must inform Parliament in advance of such deployment, unless compelling reasons prevent this.

⁴ See Letter to Parliament on the Functioning of the Article 100 Procedure and the Assessment Framework, Parliamentary Paper 29521, no. 226, 22 January 2014: "Upon termination of the Dutch deployment, a final evaluation will be drawn up which will address both the military and political aspects."

⁵ Parliamentary paper 27925, no. 699, 6 February 2020.

⁶ Parliamentary paper 27925, no. 721, 20 May 2020.

⁷ Parliamentary paper 29521, no. 417, 20 November 2020.

(African-led International Support Mission to Mali).⁸ In January 2013, at the request of the Malian authorities and with support of the UN Security Council, France also launched a military intervention (“Operation Serval”). Supported by AFISMA and the Malian armed forces, the French succeeded in recapturing northern Mali.

	Security policy developments in the run-up to MINUSMA
January 2012	Start of Tuareg separatist uprising
March 2012	Military coup
April 2012	Interim Government
December 2012	Interim president Diarra resigns under pressure from coup leaders
	UN Security Council Resolution 2085 ⁹
January 2013	Jihadist groups advance
	Launch of “Operation Serval”
	Launch of AFISMA
February 2013	Launch of EUTM Mali
April 2013	UN Security Council Resolution 2100 ¹⁰
June 2013	Provisional peace agreement
July 2013	Launch of MINUSMA

In April 2013, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2100, in which it was decided to establish the MINUSMA UN mission, the successor to AFISMA.¹¹ The mission was civilian-led and given a broad and integrated mandate (see Table 1).

Table 1: MINUSMA mission main objectives

1. Stabilisation of the main population centres
2. Support for the restoration of state authority throughout Mali
3. Support for the implementation of the government of Mali's transition plan, including dialogue and elections
4. Protection of the population and UN personnel
5. Promotion of human rights
6. Support for the delivery of emergency aid
7. Protection of Mali's cultural heritage
8. Support for efforts to punish war criminals

The mission was authorised to use all necessary means to achieve these objectives, except in the case of mediation in dialogue, reconciliation and elections (item 3, see Table 1).¹² In addition, the French Operation Serval was authorised to support MINUSMA in the event of acute security threats.¹³ In August 2014, Operation Serval was succeeded by Operation Barkhane.¹⁴ At its inception, MINUSMA had an authorised size of 11,200 military personnel and 1,440 police officers and justice

⁸ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2085, 20 December 2012.

⁹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2085, 20 December 2012.

¹⁰ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2100, 25 April 2013.

¹¹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2100, 25 April 2013.

¹² Based on chapter VII of the UN Charter.

¹³ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2100, 25 April 2013.

¹⁴ Operation Barkhane is a French counter-terrorism operation supported by Mali, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Niger and Chad.

officials. The mission's headquarters were established in Bamako. Regional offices were opened in Gao, Timbuktu, Kidal and Mopti.

In the years that followed, MINUSMA's mandate was modified in a number of ways. For example, MINUSMA was given a role in implementing the peace agreement signed in June 2015 between the Malian government and two coalitions of armed groups.¹⁵ Other amendments to the mandate were that the troop ceiling was increased to 13,289 soldiers, the mandate area was broadened to include Central Mali and more tasks were added.¹⁶ The additional tasks included strengthening cooperation between MINUSMA and the G5 Sahel force established in 2017, and providing support to the 2018 elections.¹⁷

3. Dutch contribution to MINUSMA

Dutch involvement

The Dutch Cabinet decided in the autumn of 2013 to contribute to MINUSMA. The Article 100 letter of 1 November 2013, in which the Cabinet informed the House of Representatives about the intended deployment, stated that the Dutch contribution would consist of staff officers, intelligence personnel, police trainers and civilian experts (see Table 2).¹⁸ Dutch involvement focused particularly on strengthening MINUSMA's intelligence chain.

Table 2: Dutch MINUSMA contribution at start

- 220 military personnel for the intelligence chain of the military component of the UN mission. They comprised: 70 analysts and intelligence personnel for the All Sources Information Fusion Unit (ASIFU), working at and from headquarters in Bamako and Gao.
 - A reconnaissance unit of 90 soldiers of the special forces, operating from Gao.
 - A detachment of 60 soldiers with four Apache attack helicopters, stationed at the airfield near Gao.
- 128 military support staff employed by the above-mentioned units. (This included a national support detachment).
- Additional military personnel for support at the start and end of the mission.
- 30 officers for the police component (maximum 20 KMar officers and 10 police officers).
- A contribution from civilian experts, including on the protection of citizens, rule of law development, security sector reform, gender and the protection of cultural heritage.

Objectives set by the Netherlands

According to the Cabinet, Dutch participation in MINUSMA served various interests, including those of international security, stability and a properly functioning rule of law.¹⁹ The Article 100 letter had

¹⁵ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2227, 29 June 2015.

¹⁶ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2295, 29 June 2016; United Nations Security Council Resolution 2364, 29 June 2017; United Nations Security Council Resolution 2423, 28 June 2018.

¹⁷ The G5-Sahel is a 2014 initiative of Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad to promote cooperation among these countries on security, economy and good governance. In July 2017, the G5 launched a regional force to combat insecurity in border regions.

¹⁸ Parliamentary paper 29521, no. 213, 1 November 2013.

¹⁹ Parliamentary paper 29521, no. 213, 1 November 2013.

referred to the International Security Strategy (IVS) issued in 2013, in which the Cabinet had announced its intention to focus on unstable regions in the vicinity of Europe. According to the Cabinet, this included Mali, because of “the combination of the lack of effective and legitimate state authority, cross-border crime and terrorism [which threatened to] further destabilise not only Mali but also the already fragile region on Europe's southern border”.²⁰

The following objective was formulated to strengthen the mission's intelligence chain: “The objective of the Dutch contribution to the MINUSMA intelligence chain is to increase the effectiveness of this chain and thus the success of MINUSMA as a whole. The Dutch activities within the chain will be organised in such a way that they can be transferred to other countries at the end of the contribution”.²¹

With its contribution to UNPOL (the police component of MINUSMA), the Netherlands intended to “contribute to a joint and broad development of the security forces in the Gao region”.²² Moreover, the Cabinet wanted to focus specifically on “the development of community policing, access to justice, police-justice cooperation and border control related to combating cross-border crime, including countering drug smuggling”.²³ In addition, gender was “one of the spearheads of Dutch policy”.²⁴ Police and Royal Marechaussee (KMar) officers supported UNPOL staff,²⁵ the Directorate-General of the *Police Nationale* and the schools of the security services by giving training and advice.

No specific objectives for the civilian contribution were formulated in the 2013 Article 100 letter. It did, however, mention the ambition to place the civilian experts in Gao and Bamako and to seek to connect the civilian arm of MINUSMA with the Dutch Security and Rule of Law Policy.²⁶

Finally, the Cabinet noted that it was important for the Dutch involvement to have an integrated character, whereby “interventions in the areas of security, rule of law, strengthening of government structures, socio-economic development and promotion of the political process [...] [must] be carried out in mutual coherence”.²⁷

Termination of Dutch involvement

At the start, in 2013, the Dutch contribution was planned to last until the end of 2015, but it was later extended four times.²⁸ The 450 military personnel initially comprising the Dutch contribution decreased in the following years and was 250 upon termination of participation in May 2019. The Dutch deployment of helicopters was terminated in 2017 due to a lack of training and spare parts after long-term deployments in Afghanistan and Mali.²⁹ In 2018, the Cabinet decided to terminate the contribution of military units to MINUSMA as of 1 May 2019.³⁰ An important consideration in

²⁰ Parliamentary paper 29521, no. 213, 1 November 2013.

²¹ Parliamentary paper 29521, no. 213, 1 November 2013.

²² Parliamentary paper 29521, no. 213, 1 November 2013.

²³ Parliamentary paper 29521, no. 213, 1 November 2013.

²⁴ Parliamentary paper 29521, no. 213, 1 November 2013.

²⁵ At the request of UNPOL, Dutch police officers joined the staff of the transnational crime unit and the gender unit.

²⁶ Parliamentary paper 29521, no. 213, 1 November 2013.

²⁷ Parliamentary paper 29521, no. 213, 1 November 2013.

²⁸ Parliamentary paper 29521, no. 293, 19 June 2015; Parliamentary Paper 29521, no. 327, 7 October 2016; Parliamentary Paper 29521, no. 349, 11 September 2017; Parliamentary Paper 29521, no. 368, 14 September 2018.

²⁹ Parliamentary paper 29521, no. 327, 7 October 2016.

³⁰ Parliamentary paper 29521, no. 368, 14 September 2018.

this regard was the impact of the MINUSMA deployment on the armed forces. In a report on this topic, the Netherlands Court of Audit had concluded that the Dutch contribution to MINUSMA had structurally negative consequences for the deployability and sustainability of the armed forces.³¹ Since the termination, the Netherlands has contributed a few staff officers and a maximum of ten officers to the police component. The civilian contribution to MINUSMA was terminated and followed by an enhanced contribution of Dutch civilian experts to EU missions in the Sahel. In November 2020, the Cabinet decided to make another contribution to MINUSMA as of November 2021: a C-130 transport aircraft, including crew and support staff.³²

4. Purpose and research questions

Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to examine the extent to which the objectives of the Dutch contribution to MINUSMA have been achieved and which lessons can be learned from this for the decision-making process about, and the design and execution of future missions. The entire Dutch contribution within MINUSMA will be examined: the deployment of military units, police officers and civilian experts.

Research questions

Main question:

To what extent have the objectives of the Dutch contribution to MINUSMA been achieved and what lessons can be learned for future missions?

1. Mission objectives and set-up

- a. What were the objectives of the Dutch contribution to MINUSMA?
- b. By what means and methods did the Netherlands intend to achieve these objectives?

2. Dutch contribution to MINUSMA

- a. To what extent have the objectives of the Dutch contribution been achieved?³³
- b. What went well and what went less well? To answer this, it will be investigated to what extent at least the following have been achieved:

Mission design and implementation

- I. The establishment of the mission, including the political decision-making process, influenced the design and implementation of the mission.
- II. The objectives (and underlying assumptions) were realistic and achievable, given the context and the time, resources and manpower available.

³¹ Netherlands Court of Audit, “*Inzet Netherlands krijgsmacht voor VN-missie in Mali: goed improviseren vergt goede voorbereiding*”, [“Deployment of Dutch armed forces for UN mission in Mali: good improvisation requires good preparation”] 11 June 2018.

³² Parliamentary paper 29521, no. 417, 20 November 2020.

³³ For activity, output and outcome levels, see section 6: Method and limitations.

- III. Possible non-formalised objectives had an impact on mission design and implementation.
- IV. Lessons from previous missions were taken into account in the design and implementation of the mission.
- V. The preparation was adequate.
- VI. Means and methods were attuned to the objectives.
- VII. The mission was carried out as planned or adapted to changed circumstances.
- VIII. The transfer between different rotations went well.
- IX. The Netherlands succeeded in achieving the transfer of Dutch tasks in a UN context.

Alignment

- X. The extent to which the Dutch objectives and working methods and those of other international actors complemented each other and the extent to which cooperation went well. The actors include the MINUSMA mission as a whole, MINUSMA partner countries, relevant Malian actors and locally active international actors such as Operation Serval, Operation Barkhane, G5 Sahel Force, EUTM Mali and EUCAP Sahel.
- XI. The cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (including the missions), Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Justice and Security went well, both in Mali and in the Hague.
- XII. The Dutch contribution to MINUSMA was consistent with Dutch bilateral and regional policy.

Unintended consequences

- XIII. The mission has had unintended consequences (positive or negative).

The analysis of these factors will take into account developments over time and possible differences between rotations.

3. Overall MINUSMA mission

To what extent has the MINUSMA mission as a whole achieved its objectives so far and what factors have contributed to this?

The focus of this evaluation will be on the Dutch contribution to MINUSMA and not on MINUSMA as a whole. One of the Dutch objectives, however, was to contribute to the success of MINUSMA as a whole. Therefore it is important to take this into account as part of the context. In paragraph 5 the scope of this research question is narrowed down.

4. Lessons

What lessons can be learned for the decision-making on and design and implementation of future missions?

These lessons follow from research questions 1 to 3.

5. Scope

Period evaluated

The focus of this evaluation will be on the Dutch contribution to MINUSMA from early 2014 to May 2019 and the preceding political decision-making and preparation. For the period from May 2019

until the completion of the evaluation, the evaluation will include factors and developments affecting the long-term objectives of the Dutch contribution.

The Dutch contribution

This evaluation will focus on the entire Dutch contribution within MINUSMA and will therefore examine not only the contribution of the military units, but also the deployment of police and KMar officers and civilian experts.

The evaluation will focus on the Dutch contribution to MINUSMA and not on the contribution of other countries or on MINUSMA as a whole. However, to be able to carefully evaluate the Dutch contribution, it is important to examine the consistency with the efforts of other countries and actors and the cooperation with them. The Dutch long-term objectives are also closely linked to the extent to which MINUSMA as a whole has so far achieved its objectives. A literature study on this topic will therefore serve as a building block for the evaluation. In addition, the context of the broader MINUSMA mission will be included in the interviews.

Incidents that occurred during the Dutch mission – such as accidents – are not a separate subject of investigation and will be included only if relevant for answering the research questions.

Integrated approach

This evaluation will investigate to what extent the Dutch contribution to MINUSMA was designed in an integrated manner. Besides the coherence between the different elements of the Dutch contribution (military, police, civilian), the coherence between the contribution and other Dutch policies in Mali and the Sahel (diplomatic efforts and development cooperation) will also be investigated. We will only look at coherence. The effectiveness of Dutch programmes that have to contribute to stability in Mali are the subject of the IOB evaluation of the Dutch contribution to stability in fragile contexts (see below).³⁴

Evaluation stability in fragile contexts

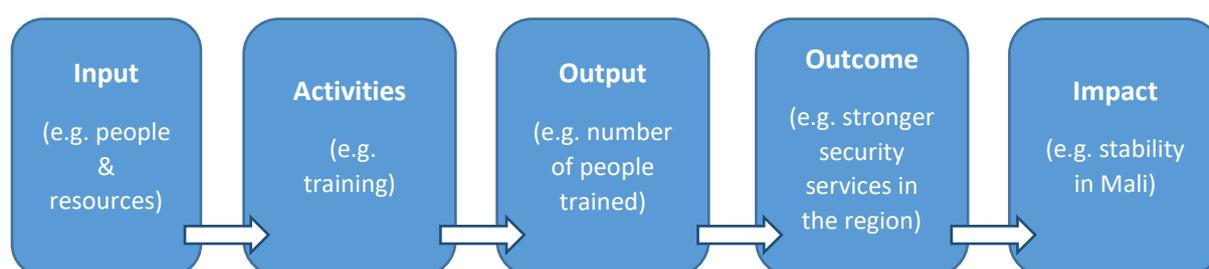
IOB will, partly in the same timeframe as the MINUSMA-evaluation, conduct an evaluation of the Dutch contribution to stability in fragile contexts. In this evaluation all instruments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promote stability in fragile countries and regions are assessed: projects, programmes, diplomatic efforts and contributions to UN- and other (peacekeeping) missions and operations. Dutch interventions in Mali are one of the case studies, besides South-Sudan and Afghanistan. The stability-evaluation will investigate the effectiveness of, and coherence between, different types of interventions. This means that there will be partial overlap between the Mali case study and the MINUSMA-evaluation. The perspective from which the research is undertaken differs. Where the MINUSMA-evaluation uses the mission as a starting point to assess coherence with other interventions, the stability-evaluation will assess coherence between the totality of interventions in Mali that have to contribute to stability in Mali. Both evaluation teams will coordinate regularly to work together where possible and to prevent unnecessary duplication.

³⁴ IOB, 5 October 2020 “[Terms of Reference – Evaluatie van de Nederlandse bijdrage aan stabiliteit in fragiele contexten](#)” [Terms of Reference - Evaluation of the Dutch contribution to stability in fragile contexts].

6. Method and limitations

This evaluation will investigate to what extent the objectives set for the Dutch contribution to MINUSMA have been achieved. It will not be possible to determine exactly to what extent the Dutch deployment contributed to some of the mission's objectives, such as stability in Mali, because the Dutch involvement took place in a complex political and security context in which a multitude of actors (national and international) were active. Moreover, the Dutch contribution formed only a small part of the broader UN mission. All these factors will have affected whether the objectives set for the Dutch contribution were achieved. Moreover, the MINUSMA mission is still ongoing.

Although in a number of cases it will therefore be difficult to establish a direct causal relationship between the Dutch contribution and the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives, it will be possible to approximate this relationship by analysing the policy theory underlying the Dutch contribution. The theory of change provides insight into how an intervention should lead to the achievement of the objectives. It is the plan of how, via its contribution, the Netherlands intends to achieve the objectives set. A distinction is made between objectives at different levels (the figure below gives an example of a very simplified representation). By examining the policy theory and the assumptions behind it and analysing the extent to which they are realistic and how they work out in practice, it will be possible to make a substantiated statement about the relationship between the Dutch contribution and the achievement of its objectives.



Research question 1 is intended to result in a description of the policy theory of the mission.

Research question 2 analyses the logic behind this policy theory, what was achieved in practice at the activity, output and outcome levels, and why.

Research question 3 looks at the extent to which objectives at the impact level have been achieved so far, and why.³⁵

The research questions will be answered making maximum use of triangulation: using different types of sources to answer a research question in order to determine whether findings from different types of sources match, thus increasing the reliability of the findings. More information on the types of sources that will be used is given below.

³⁵ It will not be attempted to make statements on the extent to which the Dutch effort has contributed to this. However, analysing the policy theory does make it possible to make a statement about the likelihood that Dutch involvement has contributed to achieving the objectives at the impact level.

Interviews

The IOB research team will conduct interviews with interviewees from different categories, who will be selected at a later stage. The interviews will be confidential: findings based on the interviews will not be traceable to individual respondents. The categories are:

The Netherlands

- Current staff and staff deployed in the mission, including those involved in policy:
 - Ministry of Defence
 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs (including missions)
 - Ministry of Justice and Security
 - Police
- Staff from various levels of seniority who were deployed to Mali:
 - Defence personnel
 - Police officers and KMar officers
 - Civilian experts
- Politicians involved at the time:
 - Current and former members of the government
 - Parliamentarians

Mali

- Policy staff currently posted to the Netherlands embassy in Bamako
- Dutch personnel now deployed in MINUSMA
- MINUSMA personnel (to be specified)
- Malian counterparts (to be specified)
 - Government representatives
 - Civil society representatives
- Staff of relevant missions and organisations (to be specified)
 - Operation Barkhane
 - G5 Sahel
 - EUTM Mali
 - EUCAP Sahel
 - EU Special Representative

For the research in Mali, the IOB research team will recruit local researchers to conduct the interviews together with IOB researchers, to help with the establishment of contacts and other practical aspects, and to assist with translation where necessary.

New York

- Policy officers from the Netherlands Permanent Representation in New York
- Policy officers from UN Headquarters
- If relevant: policy officers from other Permanent Representations

These interviews will be conducted by video conferencing or in person, depending on the Covid measures and the expected costs and benefits of travel.

Paris

- Senior staff officers and policy officers at the French Ministry of Defence with whom the Netherlands has worked
- Policy officers from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- Scientists/researchers/think tank members

These interviews will be conducted by video conferencing or in person, depending on the Covid measures and the expected costs and benefits of travel.

Other

- If relevant: policy officers from other relevant European partner countries (Germany, Belgium)
- If relevant: policy officers at the European Commission and/or EEAS
- Academics and think tank members
- Employees of relevant civil society organisations

Document analysis

Analysis of government and programme documents, including parliamentary papers, programme descriptions, procedural regulations and other documents of a regulatory nature, reports of consultation and steering groups, internal evaluation reports, internal working arrangements, embassy reports, general reports of project managers, reports on project visits by operational management, etc. The document analysis will be carried out by the IOB research team.

Literature study

In addition to analysing internal documents, a study will be conducted of publicly available secondary literature, including scientific literature, evaluations of and reports on MINUSMA, survey reports and statistics databases.

This literature study will be contracted out to external researchers by IOB and will focus on the success of and lessons learned from the broader MINUSMA mission. The study will also include literature on the political, security and economic contexts. The precise details of the study will be worked out at a later date.

7. Access to documents and handling of classified information

In accordance with the decision of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of 27 May 2019, no. MinBuZa.2019.3926-31, IOB must be given full and unhindered access to all information held by policy departments and implementing organisations.

This also applies to state secret or otherwise classified documents, provided the investigators concerned have undergone the requisite security screening. The IOB investigators assigned to this investigation have all undergone security screening for access to information at NATO COSMIC TOP SECRET / EU TOP SECRET level.

Classified written sources will, where necessary, only be viewed on stand-alone computers or in a secure environment within the ministries. In draft versions of the report, IOB will explicitly indicate the classification of the source documents. The representatives of the policy departments involved in the reference group will then be asked to draw the researchers' attention to references to source material classified as confidential or higher, which may be sensitive for security reasons.

8. Planning

A draft timetable is given below. The exact timetable will depend on a number of factors, including Covid measures, the security situation in Mali and how quickly access to the necessary documents can be obtained.

Date	What?
December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft ToR completed and sent to reference group
End Jan/early February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first reference group meeting
February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ToR revised in light of reference group feedback • Prepare call for proposals for literature study
First half of 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ToR presented to SMO (Missions and Operations Steering Group) ToR adopted by IOB Director • Outsourcing of literature review • Preparing for interviews
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews in the Netherlands
Summer 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of literature review
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processing of interviews and writing first parts of the evaluation
October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews in Mali
Second half of 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First version of report shared with reference group
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15% unforeseen overrun
First half of 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report adopted by IOB Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report and policy reaction submitted to House of Representatives

9. Risk analysis

Risks	Mitigating measures
<p>1. The Covid measures and dangers, and/or the general security situation in Mali mean that travel to or in Mali for IOB on-the-spot investigations is impossible or irresponsible.</p> <p>NB: the IOB team is aware that these impediments are structural in nature. The mitigating measures will attempt to address this. The IOB team will travel under the guidance of MINUSMA and/or the French military forces and will not travel over land. Only Bamako and Gao will be visited.</p>	<p>Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IOB will postpone this part of the evaluation, with the aim of carrying out the fieldwork itself later. In the meantime, the research on other components will continue, insofar as this is possible. As a result, the study will probably be delayed. IOB hires a locally operating research team and directs them from the embassy, on condition that the risks to a local team are acceptable. In all cases, IOB will, in consultation with the embassy, make a risk assessment for both the IOB researchers and the locally recruited researchers and will act accordingly.

Risks	Mitigating measures
The mitigating measures will apply if travel is impossible or irresponsible.	
2. The Covid measures and dangers and/or the security situation in Mali mean that on-site research is irresponsible even for local consultants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IOB will postpone this part of the evaluation, with the aim of carrying out the fieldwork itself later. In the meantime, the research on other components will continue, insofar as this is possible. As a result, the study will probably be delayed.
3. The situation in Mali represents a security risk for interviewees and/or recruited local researchers: for example, because of possible threats or travel to certain locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultants bidding for the on-site study will be asked to include in their bids an explanation of the specific security risks, how the consultants themselves propose to mitigate these risks and how IOB/the Dutch government can assist. The explanation will be used as a criterion for assessing the bids. • IOB will also consult with the embassy on possible risks that should be taken into account and how to do so. • If the security risks are too high for interviews at a particular location or time, or for certain potential interviewees, the interviews will be left out of the study. • The researchers should be thorough in anonymising interviewee names and checking that nothing in the report can be traced back to the interviewees.
4. There may be obstacles to gaining access to respondents in Mali, such as opposition from (local) actors that may prevent people from cooperating with the research, or staff turnover that may make it difficult to identify and contact the right people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before the field visit, extensive contact will be made with the ministries involved, the UN and the embassy. Thorough preparation can overcome this risk, at least partially. During the field visit there will also be contact with relevant stakeholders.
5. Interviewees are not familiar with IOB and/or independent evaluation services, which – as the Netherlands is a participating party in MINUSMA - may cause us to be seen as biased/ non-objective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IOB will remind all interviewees and relevant stakeholders of its independent position and explain it.

10. Organisation and budget

Research team

The evaluation will be carried out by the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This department operates independently of the policy departments and has its own independent position within the ministry. The evaluation will be conducted by Anne Bakker, Wendy van der Neut and Sam Streefkerk of IOB. Martijn Kitzen (Netherlands Defence Academy – NLDA) will be seconded part-time to support the research team.

In addition, one or more external researchers will be recruited to conduct a literature review, and local Malian researchers will be recruited to assist with research in Mali.

Internal peer review

The peer review will be carried out by a group of IOB staff: Marieke van Egmond, Rens Willems, Arjan Schuthof and Wendy Asbeek Brusse (chair of the sounding group). The research team and the internal group will meet once every six weeks.

Reference group

The evaluation will be guided and quality-assessed by a reference group of representatives from relevant policy departments plus three external experts. Its members will be:

Name	Function/organisation	Role in reference group
Dr Wendy Asbeek Brusse	IOB Director	Chair
Col. Dirk-Jan Broks	Ministry of Defence, Directorate-General for Policy (DGB)	Representing the policy directorate
Col. Olivier Loos	Ministry of Defence, Evaluation Department	Representing the Evaluation Department
René van Dijk	Ministry of Justice and Security, Police Policy and Task Performance portfolio, International and Caribbean Affairs programme	Representing the policy department
Vera Mulder	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Security Policy Department (DVB)	Representing the policy department
Martin van Vliet	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sub-Saharan Africa Department (DAF)	Representing the policy department
Maarten Broekhof	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid Department (DSH)	Representing the policy department
Prof. Mirjam de Bruijn	Leiden University	External expert on Africa studies
Dr Christ Klep	Military historian	External expert on defence and peace-keeping operations
Dr Niels van Willigen	Leiden University	External expert on defence and peace-keeping operations

In addition to the three external experts in the reference group, Dr Sebastiaan Rietjens (NLDA) will advise on the intelligence aspects of the evaluation.

The draft documents will also be shared with the Multilateral Organisations and Human Rights Department (DMM) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Reporting and publishing

The evaluation report will be written in Dutch. It will be submitted to the Senate and the House of Representatives and published on IOB's website.

Should it be necessary in view of national security, the investigators may decide by mutual agreement not to publish certain sensitive findings and only to explain them to members of the House of Representatives in an oral technical briefing behind closed doors.

Budget

IOB will bear the costs of the study.