

# 1. SUMMARY

## 1.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AND EVALUATION CONTEXT

The project *Preparation and Introduction of Study Program Social Work Ulaanbaatar (MN/36/06/MPSV)* was implemented in 2006-2010 from funds provided under the Czech Development Cooperation (CZ DC). First objective of the project was the introduction of appropriate study program Social Work based on the needs of the social work system, including support and capacity building of relevant government institutions and other actors in the sector of social work and education. Second objective was the provision of systematic support to motivated social workers not working in their profession due to lack of opportunities and make it possible for them to gain practical experience from direct work with clients with clients and, at the same time, make social services of good quality accessible to handicapped and socially vulnerable groups in Ulaanbaatar.

After the project started it was found that the Study Program Social Work, including internships, has already been accredited and is taught at Mongolian universities. The Mongolian University of Science and Technology (SHUTIS) informed that this Study Program has been introduced at their University as well as at the Mongolian State University of Education as a four-year program in 1997 and the Curricula was approved in 2006. This fact necessitated modification of the first objective and related outputs in the Logical Framework Analysis which was completed by the evaluation team (Section 3.2).

The principal purpose of this evaluation was to obtain objective information to be used by the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA CZ) in cooperation with the Czech Development Agency (CZDA) for decision-making on the perspective and future focus of CZ DC in the social and related sectors in Mongolia.

The evaluation approach was comparative, non-experimental comparing the intervention areas and beneficiaries before and after the project. Baseline information was compared with information after the project completion. This approach does not allow convincing demonstration of causality between project interventions and the result, but in the absence of a reference group, it is the only approach possible. In theory, it could have been possible to compare groups participating in the project with groups outside the project bearing identical characteristic. This possibility, however, was excluded due to shortage of time and information required for the identification of such groups. Project impacts were therefore assessed on the basis of data before and after intervention.

Evaluation methodology took into consideration the evaluation objectives and client's expectations; conclusions and recommendation are evidence-based. The evaluation matrix including evaluation questions (Annex I) has been consulted with and accepted by the Reference Group. The evaluation approach was participatory, involving key stakeholders and other informants and information sources from both the public and the private sector including beneficiaries.

Evaluation was implemented at three stages: (i) Preparatory phase (before field work) aiming at the consolidation of and consensus on the evaluation questions and gathering information from available secondary data and interviews. (ii) Field investigations (project level) where additional information was gathered on specific outcomes and contribution of the project. This field phase included preliminary analysis of findings related to the evaluation questions as well as on factors influencing successes and failures in accordance with the methodology and objective of the evaluation. (iii) Final phase where information gathered during the preparatory phase and field investigation was analyzed sorted and assessed in relation to the evaluation questions.

## 1.2. MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Below is a summary of evaluation conclusions according to the evaluation criteria.

Evaluation criterion		Rating
Relevance		High
Effectiveness		High
Efficiency		Rather low
Sustainability		Rather low
Impact		Rather high
Cross cutting principles	Good governance	Rather high
	Human rights and gender	High
	Environment and climate	Not evaluated
Visibility of CZ DC <sup>1</sup>		Rather low

### Relevance

The evaluated project reflected priorities of Mongolia in the sector labor and social protection: Economic Growth Support and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EGSPRS) 2003. Support to development of social services, specifically introducing study program for social workers is among the priorities of the Program of Development Cooperation between Czech Republic and Mongolia 2006-2010. The Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour (MSWL) rated the project as very important. There has not been any similar project supporting Study Program Social Work. Study Center and Street Work Center were reportedly the only ones of their kind in Ulaanbaatar. Considering the priorities of MSWL, target groups and the Program of Development Cooperation of the Czech Republic 2011-2017, education and other social infrastructure and services remain key priorities. Close coordination with relevant ministries and other donors is however necessary. Overall rating of relevance is **high**.

### Effectiveness

The project succeeded in increasing capacity and competence of selected entities active in social work and education including increasing the quality and relevance of study program Social Work in four state universities in Ulaanbaatar. Nine teachers were trained in complex methodology for field social work developed under the project. This methodology facilitated good preparation and implementation of internships for 151 students. The internships contributed to the students' motivation as well as to their understanding of field social work. The project also helped to increase capacities of 19 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that accepted trainees. Equipped Study Center facilitated access to technical literature and information for students, social workers, teachers and experts. Six social workers found an opportunity of paid work with clients in the Street Work Center; the Center provided access to social services and information for handicapped and socially disadvantaged persons. There are no statistics but the attendance of the Center was according to information provided by the Embassy of the Czech Republic, Caritas CZ and Khoroo 11 high. According to available information, both the Study Center and the Street Work Center were the only ones of its kind in Ulaanbaatar. Effectiveness of the project is rated as **high**.

### Efficiency

In general, the structure of project financial documentation was found unclear and lacking sufficient transparency. This presents a limiting factor for evaluating efficiency. This structure also does not allow for transparent external financial monitoring including meeting contractual obligations by the implementer. On the basis of available information, project expenditure can be considered as necessary with some reservations: Payments to interns and remuneration of instructors are not considered essential. The Study Center could have been handed over to one of the partners at an earlier stage, thus saving on rentals of premises. As a result of rescheduling of some activities, the project ended in December instead in August 2010. In the view of the evaluation team however, these shifts did not influence the project results in any significant way. The possibility of shifting expenditure between 2009 and 2010 was taken care of by the Addendum 4 (2009) and 6 (2010) to the Contract. The project was managed in a systematic and participative manner, with the involvement of relevant actors. Monitoring of the project by the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Ulaanbaatar and by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic was hampered by the lack of some information from the implementer, in particular of annual and financial reports

<sup>1</sup> Visibility of CZ DC was added as additional criterion

as well as by the fact that the Logical Framework Analysis has not been revised and some indicators lost their relevance. On the basis of above, considering the overall contribution of the project, efficiency is rated as **rather low**.

### **Sustainability**

Sustainability of results was ensured only partially which reduces the project's long-term contribution to the development objective. The methodology for field social work continues to be used, although it has not been officially handed over. Study Center was handed over to the Mongolian University of Science and Technology (SHUTIS) and continues serving its purpose; attendance has however decreased due its location at the University premises (difficult accessibility). Internships continue, albeit their quality decreased compared with quality during the project implementation. This is reportedly due to shortage of funds for replication of the project approach. The Street Work Center has not been handed over and ceased serving its purpose after the project completion. Cooperation with the Mongolian Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences may have helped to build capacity and raise awareness about the project in the Ministry. This could have resulted in budgetary allocations for continuation of internships at the same level as during the project implementation. Clarification at the ministerial level of legal aspects related to handing over the Street Work Center could have facilitated at an earlier stage a suitable solution for the continuation of the Center's activities. Representative of the MSWL considers activities of the Center important and proposed that Caritas CZ identifies a competent and trustworthy NGO that could take the Center over and revive its activities. The Ministry would assess the professional competence and capacity of the NGO and, depending on the result of the assessment, support such solution. The evaluation team informed the office of Caritas CZ in Ulaanbaatar about this possibility; Caritas CZ is now considering this alternative. Proper institutional anchorage and increased likelihood of sustainability could have been achieved by initial review of the institutional framework, by signing all necessary Agreements, as well as by involving more the Embassy of the Czech Republic and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic. Sustainability is rated as **rather low**.

### **Impact**

Project activities, results and approach contributed to increased awareness about the role of social workers as well as to building intellectual and physical capacities and to development and increased accessibility of technical information. The enhanced program of internships including complex methodology for practical education and access to information in the Study Center also contributed to improved qualification of students/interns, teachers and other experts as well as of organizations providing field social services. Systematic support to direct work with clients and complex menu of social services and information in the Street Work Center contributed to access to relevant field social services and their quality. Short-term positive impacts were noted by all target groups including universities, teachers and students at social departments, social workers and host organizations as well as by handicapped and socially disadvantaged groups. Considering the considerable contribution to education and improved qualifications, impact is rated as **rather high**. Low sustainability of some of the results is however likely to reduce the long-term impact of the project.

### **Good Governance**

Caritas CZ included relevant local stakeholders including universities, students of social work, organizations providing internships, social workers and experts in the project planning and implementation as well as in discussions related to handing over the project outputs. Study materials and methodology were prepared by Caritas CZ in cooperation with Czech and Mongolian specialists, which increased their local ownership. Project reports were shared with all participating institutions, although some information was incomplete (missing was in particular relation between progress and indicators and financial reconciliations). These information gaps affected monitoring, particularly by the Embassy of the Czech Republic. Good governance is therefore rated as **rather high**. Since project objectives and indicators were not revised and results based monitoring (including expenditure) was not followed, higher rating could not be considered.

### **Human rights and gender equity**

The project benefitted both men and women. The evaluation team has not detected any stereotypes related to gender. Majority of beneficiaries were however women because of their higher interest in social work. The project complied with the rights to education and contributed to support of handicapped and socially disadvantaged persons. Overall, human rights and gender equity are rated as **high**.

### **Environment and climate**

This criterion was not evaluated; the project did not actually influence the environment.

### **Visibility of CZ DC**

Limited visibility of CZ DC pointed out by the Embassy of CR in Ulaanbaatar was during implementation of the project partially improved. In the Study Center, Czech national flag is placed along with the Mongolian national flag. Information panel and logos are visibly placed in the library as well as on computers. Information about the formal hand over of the Center was in the local press. Mass media were according to information provided by the Embassy of the Czech Republic not present during the formal closing of the project on 16.12.2010. (Caritas CZ advised that media were invited but did not attend.) For the above reasons visibility is rated as **rather low**.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendations related to project and continuation of CZ DC**

Recommendation	Main addressee	Degree of importance
Inform the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Ulaanbaatar about the current situation related to continuation of activities in the Street Work Center and the need for support in discussions with the MPWL regarding possible hand over to an NGO.	Caritas CZ	1
Preparing Inception Report (IR) that would include possible changes and modification in the institutional framework, completing baseline, improve the accuracy of technical and financial framework and updating the Logical Framework Analysis including updating the assessment of risks to the sustainability and utilization of results. IR should be prepared within 3 months from the commencement of project.	CZDA	1
Focus of further cooperation on support with formulating sector strategy and sector program as well as on institutional capacity building, relevant legislative framework, increasing public awareness on social issues and support to practical education and development of study program social work also in provincial universities.	CZDA	2

### **Recommendations to processes and mechanism**

Recommendation	Main addressee	Degree of importance
Debriefing of key stakeholders by the evaluation team	MFA CZ	1
English as the language of project documentation and evaluation reports	MFA CZ	1
Continuous external financial monitoring of the project	CZDA	1
Detailed phasing out and handing over plan	CZDA	1
Financial allocations for evaluations to be at least 3% of the budget of the evaluated project	MFA CZ	2
The possibility of transferring project funds not utilized in a given year to the following year during project implementation	CZDA	2