
*Mid-Term Review of the project
Understanding and Managing Internal
Migration in Mongolia (UMIMM)*

Final Report

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Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CRS	Civil Registration System
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
EQ	Evaluation Question
FM	Flow Monitoring
GAIPSR	General Authority of Intellectual Property and State Registration
GASR	General Authority for State Registration
GDP	Governance and Decentralisation Programme
GOM	Government of Mongolia
IDF	IOM Development Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KAP	Knowledge, Attitude and Practice
MASAM	Mainstreaming Social Accountability in Mongolia
MCGA	Mongolian Customs General Authority
MCUD	Ministry of Construction and Urban Development
MiGOF	Migration Governance Framework
MLSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection
MRCS	Mongolian Red Cross Society
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MUB	Municipality of Ulaanbaatar
NDA	National Development Agency
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSO	National Statistics Office
NUM	National University of Mongolia
O	Outcome
OO	Overall Objective
PMU	Programme Management Unit
PSC	Programme Steering Committee
PSEAH	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
ROAP	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
UB EMA	Ulaanbaatar Emergency Management Agency
UMIMM	Understanding and Managing Internal Migration in Mongolia
WSP	Women for Social Progress

1 Executive Summary

Country context and project description

Promoting sustainable development and inclusive growth, economic opportunities and social protection for vulnerable population groups, including migrants, is one of the priorities of the Government of Mongolia defined in the Mongolia Long-Term Development Policy “Vision 2050”.

During a pilot phase funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in 2017-2018, two studies were produced which reflected the situation and needs of internal migrants as well as the lack of policy on internal migration at national and/or local levels. The studies also highlighted the challenges faced by rural-urban migrants, the lack of information and knowledge on public services and the need to improve access to such services for the migrants.

The “Understanding and Managing Internal Migration in Mongolia (UMIMM)” project has subsequently been designed with the aim to provide national and local authorities with regular, evidence-based data on internal migration, capacity strengthening and technical support to mainstream internal migration into policies and actions in a coordinated and comprehensive way which would allow to improve the management of internal migration and hence contribute to the development of Mongolia. It was also designed to address the need for better information and service delivery in order to reduce the migrant’s vulnerability and improve their socio-economic well-being.

The Overall Objective (OO) of the UMIMM project is to *“improve the socio-economic well-being of internal migrants through evidence-based, migration inclusive policies and concrete interventions on the ground aimed at enhanced access to information and services”*. It has been defined with the following outcomes:

- Outcome 1 (O1): the Government of Mongolia has improved quality of national data on internal migration for evidence-based policies and programmes (**migration data**).
- Outcome 2 (O2): internal migration is mainstreamed into national, local and sectoral policies (**migration governance**).
- Outcome 3 (O3): vulnerabilities of internal migrants are reduced through improved access to information, services and targeted programmes (**targeted interventions**).

The Mid-Term Review (MTR)

The purpose of the MTR is to assess the performance level, the status of implementation and the capacity to achieve the project objectives. Moreover, it assesses the potential impact and sustainability of results including the level of capacity development of local stakeholders, and highlight both positive and negative, intended, and non-intended results and processes. It covers the period from the project’s inception in September 2019 until 31 October 2021 and assesses the project along the six OECD-DAC evaluation criteria.

The MTR was undertaken by means of a systematic examination of all programme and project documents, in-country field visits (on-line meetings for the lead evaluator) to interview partners, stakeholders and final beneficiaries of the programme.

Findings of the review

Relevance

The UMIMM project has been designed on the foundations of the pilot project funded by the SDC in 2017-2018, during which two studies produced by the IOM highlighted the needs of internal migrants arising from their vulnerability.

The overall Objective of the project (*“improving the socio-economic well-being of internal migrants”*) responds to the national needs and priorities which have been defined in Mongolia’s Vision 2050 Long-Term Development Policy and the government’s successive Action Plans (2016-2020, 2020-2024 and 2021-2030).

The expected outcomes of the project on migration data, migration governance and targeted interventions are consistent with the needs of the target groups and the suggested activities to achieve the outcomes are logic and realistic.

Combining data generation, evidence-based policy making and interventions on the ground is a rational approach, which however requires adequate coordination. A clear linkage between the three outcomes however is missing in the project document.

Coherence

The UMIMM project is the only initiative directly covering internal migration issues in the SDC’s portfolio in Mongolia. The UMIMM project has synergies with the SDC funded project “Governance and Decentralisation Programme” (GDP) Phase I, II and III (2015-2022) of which the Phases II and III encompass the “Urban Governance Project” (UGP) which supports the government’s decentralisation reform to achieve more equitable and inclusive development. Among the other projects of SDC’s portfolio, the Mainstreaming Social Accountability in Mongolia (MASAM) project which aims at strengthening public sector agencies’ capacities in linking policy planning and implementation with budget planning and execution, also has a common goal with UMIMM, i.e. to support the government to improve the delivery of services.

The UMIMM is also coherent with the Asian Development Bank’s project on “Improved Registry System to Strengthen the Delivery of Social Services” aiming at improving the accessibility and quality of state registration services by supporting the General Authority of Intellectual Property and State Registration (GAIPSR) to strengthen Mongolia’s Civil Registration System (CRS) through improving the inter-sector coordination of agencies in charge of state registry which would also benefit to internal migrants.

Effectiveness

- **Migration data (R1)**

Improving the quality of national data on internal migration is meant to be achieved through an adjustment of the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) methodology to collect data, track and monitor the displacement and mobility of internal migrants.

While the DTM is considered to be an interesting instrument, it is in the first place perceived as a useful tool during a crisis or outbreak situation and/or to study temporary/seasonal migration flows, but not so effective in collecting general data on internal migration. It is not (yet) perceived by the potential users as the tool that can provide data to analyze impacts of demography, social and economic aspects. DTM data will be complementary to data obtained by traditional collecting methods and possibly fill some gaps in the availability of migration data.

- **Migration governance (R2)**

Internal migration is recognized by the government as an important issue to be taken into consideration at policy level. Regional/sector policies and action plans of the government are due to take into consideration internal migration as part of the Vision 2050 successive 10-year stages of implementation, in particular in the Social, Regional and Sector Development Programmes being prepared.

The reports on Migration and Employment and Effectiveness of Migration Restrictions provide a good basis for possible policy uptake which eventually will contribute to migration governance. This however implies the engagement of all parties involved (Cabinet Secretariat, NDA, MLSP) to mainstream internal migration into development plans and new policies.

Work on mainstreaming migration into national, local and sectoral policies is in progress with multiple initiatives of the project to advance towards this expected result. While all these initiatives are relevant and strive towards the same goal, they appear to lack formal coordination from the government side, which is acknowledged by the Cabinet Secretariat.

- **Targeted interventions (R3)**

The main contribution to reducing the vulnerability of migrants at short notice can be attributed to the information campaign, to the services provided to migrants by the NGOs and to the COVID-19 response of the project.

- **Information:** the dissemination of internal migration-related information has mainly been arranged through the national information campaign “Should I stay or Should I go, research it” aiming at encouraging internal migrants to research and plan their journeys before migrating and providing information about alternate destinations besides Ulaanbaatar to reduce the migration flow to Ulaanbaatar.
- **Services:** the delivery of services has been of great benefit to 10,753 migrants as stated by the project. Reported as being a success story, NGOs and beneficiaries confirm the positive outcome of the 17 projects. The 144 delivered services grouped under the headings of Psycho-Social support, Information and support, documentation and registration, training and support, job and income, education for migrants and government services, did not follow any priority guidelines. NGOs themselves have benefited from the intervention, in particular those which had little exposure to migration issues.
- **Targeted interventions:** opportunity-based interventions implemented to mitigate urban migrants’ vulnerabilities have only included COVID-19 related interventions.

External factors have affected the implementation of the project (2020 elections and COVID-19), to which an adequate response was produced, thanks to the support of SDC which has shown great flexibility in allowing resources to be reallocated accordingly.

Activities under Outcomes 1 and 2 have not experienced any major disruption, though the travel restrictions imposed by the pandemic have compelled the project to shift to more online actions. Outcome 3 has been the most affected by the pandemic when the focus shifted on providing support to migrants affected by the situation. The project’s response to the pandemic has been well received.

Efficiency

The overall level of operational expenditures by the end of August 2021, i.e. at 50% of implementation time, stands at 27.7% whereas 36.9% the budget for staff and office expenses has been used. The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic partially explain the low level of disbursements as travel restrictions made it impossible to organize certain activities like e.g. in-person training. Other reasons are to be found in a difficult start off due to the necessary time needed to fully engage the stakeholders in the approach proposed by the project and in delays occurred as a result of the 2020 elections.

The contractual financial allocation for operational expenses only represents 60% of the total budget. The split among the 3 Outcomes is adequate, with capacity building representing the largest share of operational expenses (40% earmarked as capacity building). Intensive training of different stakeholders may indeed be necessary, but in order to avoid repeated training activities, often justified by staff turnover, it would have been advisable to include more Training-of-Trainers (TOT) workshops to ensure better sustainability.

Despite obstacles to the implementation caused by the 2020 elections and the COVID-19 pandemic, the project is reasonably on track.

The interim progress reports list the “major results delivered by IOM” for each outcome, but the achievements described reflect the activities undertaken and their respective outputs, rather than what these activities have actually achieved. This does not mean that the activities were not results-oriented, but the way in which the project reports the achievements gives the impression that the focus is on ticking the box for each planned activity rather than aiming at reaching a specific result.

The project has developed a Results Monitoring Framework showing indicators, data source and collection method, baseline, target values and assumptions for each Outcome, Output and Activity, but such a Framework is only one of the tools needed for a comprehensive monitoring system.

Impact

Awareness is the first and major impact of the intervention at this stage:

- greater awareness on migration related issues, potential problems and opportunities among the population with potential migrants being more inclined to seek advice and/or search for information when considering migrating
- enhanced awareness on the importance to mainstream internal migration into development plans and policies at the level of authorities
- awareness of complementary tools for data collection which can be used in emergency/crisis situations, but also in a development perspective.

Besides, the intervention has raised **self-assurance** among the migrants who received assistance and **interest** of NGOs to support migrants, as well as interest of local administrations to cooperate with NGOs as confirmed by agreements signed between NGOs and governors who see an opportunity to compensate for their lack of human resources in delivering services to migrants.

It is premature at mid-term to report any other significant impact of the intervention. This by no means diminishes the importance of what has been accomplished so far, but more time is required to achieve a meaningful impact.

Sustainability

While the achievements of the project will all potentially contribute to what it has been designed for, i.e. “improve the socio-economic well-being of internal migrants”, it cannot be taken for granted that DTM tools will be used, that policy uptake will happen, that services will continue to be delivered by NGOs, etc.

The project is taking several measures to enhance the potential sustainability of the whole intervention at all levels. These include cooperation agreements signed with the NSO, GASR, MUB, NDA, MLSP and close cooperation with the Cabinet Secretariat, supporting the formation of a network among NGOs, creating a bridge between NGOs and local administrations, etc.

The ongoing preparation of regional, local and sectoral development plans indicates that internal migration will indeed be taken into consideration, hence confirming the sustainability of the results achieved by the project, but an increased contribution of the government in all the initiatives taken by the project management to ensure sustainability would be welcome to enhance the effects achieved.

The socio-economic well-being of migrants will possibly improve if and when new policies are in place, which is likely to take some time. At shorter notice, delivering practical services to migrants is of immediate benefit and has a direct impact on their vulnerability. At the local level, officials recognize the need for some public services to be executed by the NGOs as the local public servants lack human resources, capacity and financial resources. NGOs also lack capacity and typically focus their activities on issues for which they can obtain funding from external sources. In absence of donor support to fund activities on migration issues, the interest of NGOs is likely to vanish over time, despite their pledge to support migrants.

Cross-cutting issues

Technical reports reviewed by the evaluators have taken **gender** issues into consideration and attendance lists of training activities confirm that women have been actively involved.

Considering that the project team has adhered to IOM's Gender Equality Policy which requires to ensure that gender is mainstreamed throughout all of its projects, policies and activities, it can be assumed that the UMIMM intervention has adequately addressed gender mainstreaming throughout all activities in adopting a gender-sensitive approach.

With regard to the issue of "**Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment**" (PSEAH), in Mongolia according to the Law on Promotion of Gender Equality and the new revised Labour Law to be in effect from 1 Jan 2022, employers are required to take certain measures to prevent from sexual harassment in the workplace and create a sexual harassment-free environment. Meanwhile most institutions/organizations already have put in place specific PSEAH measures, including public and private project stakeholders.

Training on organizational **governance** has been part of the capacity development programme for NGOs, covering the topics of Internal management, Organizational strategy and action plan Funding, Communication, Partnership, Advocacy and Monitoring with public participation.

Overall assessment

The UMIMM intervention is relevant and responds to the needs of both the migrants in their pursuit for reduced vulnerability and of the authorities in their mission to better integrate internal migration issues in their respective development policies guided by the Vision 2050 longer-term development policy. The project furthermore falls in line with one of the four thematic priorities defined in Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy 2021-2024 and with one of the focus areas of SDC's Cooperation Strategy for Mongolia (2018-2021).

Technically the project was well designed with three relevant Outcomes and a set of clearly defined activities, but the link between the expected results could have been better identified.

The project is being successfully implemented and has made good progress towards the achievement of the different outputs and outcomes. It has also delivered a comprehensive response to the COVID-19 situation which has been well received by all beneficiaries.

A substantial impact of the intervention has yet to materialize, but important results have already been achieved, including awareness on migration issues and self-confidence of migrants, better understanding of the importance to mainstream migration into policies, recognition of the role which can be played by NGOs in supporting migrants, etc.

Considering the planned phasing out of SDC funding on migration issues, the sustainability of the results needs to be secured at all levels in order to achieve a continued improvement of the socio-economic well-being of migrants beyond 2023.

Recommendations

Recommendations linked to operational issues

- **Migration data and migration governance (O1 and O2)**
 1. *Project management*: prepare a comprehensive roadmap on improving migration data and mainstreaming migration into policies.
 2. *Cabinet Secretariat and MLSP*: support a more pro-active engagement of all stakeholders with project management in all aspects of the responsibility assigned to the implementing agency.
- **Targeted interventions (O3)**
 3. *Project management*: continue and intensify the capacity building programme of NGOs

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4. *Project management*: define priorities for the next round on basis of the issues earmarked as priority by the migrants.
 5. *Project management*: review procedures for the designation of a selection panel for the round 2 of NGO interventions.
 6. *SDC*: divert part of the funding planned for Outcome 1 and 2 targeted interventions to reinforce the capacity building programme for the NGOs and to upscale the delivery of services in selecting more projects than planned.
 7. *Project management*: engage in capacity building for local government bodies in local soums.

- **General issues**

8. *Project management*: present more results-based progress reports in the future.
9. *Project management*: develop a comprehensive M&E plan

Recommendations focusing on sustainability

10. *Project management*: Involve the private sector in the preparation of the after-project time and promote a closer dialogue between the government and the Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry in discussions encompassing internal migration policies.
11. *Project management*: support NGOs in their search for financial resources with a focus on funding from international sources.
12. *Project management/MLSP*: engage with the ILO to assess their potential interest to work with the government on both internal and international migration.

2 Background information

2.1 Country context

Mongolia has undergone significant social, political and economic transformations during the past century, and its economy has moved from a collectivised to an open market system. The country's trade policy indeed aims at adopting market-oriented reforms and reducing dependence on the mining sector.

One outcome of the transformations has been a demographic transition and the emergence of a universal mobility trend resulting in a faster increase of the urban population.

Internal migration data have been collected using decennial censuses, with questions focusing on lifetime migration, place of residence five years ago and duration of residence. A system of civil registration also collects annual internal migration data. Census data suggest that Mongolia has been experiencing high migration intensity with flows focussed on the capital city, Ulaanbaatar, resulting in families settling informally in suburban “*ger*” areas and in areas with concentrations of social and environmental problems in the city of Ulaanbaatar.

Severe winters are also triggering out-migration from rural areas to Ulaanbaatar, while policies restricting registration of new migrants in the capital are seeking to stem internal migration flows. Internal migration is exacerbating regional inequalities and leading to significant expansion of the low-density peri-urban districts on the periphery of Ulaanbaatar. This presents pressing policy challenges for the authorities.

Promoting sustainable development and inclusive growth, economic opportunities and social protection for vulnerable population groups, including migrants, is one of the priorities of the Government of Mongolia defined in the Mongolia Long-Term Development Policy “Vision 2050”. Internal migration however is not specifically mainstreamed in development plans and policies. Although the Government of Mongolia’s Action Plan for 2020-2024 does not explicitly refer to internal migration, it targets the underlying causes of migration by taking necessary measures such as encouraging reverse migration within the framework of decentralization policy by *taking comprehensive measures of providing temporary housing for teachers, medical doctors and civil servants who came to soums or rural areas for the first time to work*¹. The Action Plan 2021-2030 associated to Vision 2050 only refers to internal migrants in the framework of access to education. Migrants are considered to be part of the general population and covered by policies for all Mongolians.

2.2 Project background

During a pilot phase funded by SDC in 2017-2018, two studies were produced by IOM (*Internal Migration Study* and *Urban Migrant Vulnerability Assessment*) which reflected the situation and needs of internal migrants as well as the lack of policy on internal migration at national and/or local levels.

The studies also highlighted the challenges faced by rural-urban migrants, the lack of information and knowledge on public services and the need to improve access to such services for the migrants.

The “Understanding and Managing Internal Migration in Mongolia (UMIMM)” project has subsequently been designed with the aim to provide national and local authorities with regular, evidence-based data on internal migration, capacity strengthening and technical support to

¹ Part 6.2.12 of Chapter 6. Capital City, Regional and Local Development Policy, Action Plan of the Government of Mongolia for 2020-2024.

mainstream internal migration into policies and actions in a coordinated and comprehensive way which would allow to improve the management of internal migration and hence contribute to the development of Mongolia.

It was also designed to address the need for better information and service delivery in order to reduce the migrant's vulnerability and improve their socio-economic well-being.

2.3 Description of the project

The Overall Objective (OO) of the UMIMM project is to *“improve the socio-economic well-being of internal migrants through evidence-based, migration inclusive policies and concrete interventions on the ground aimed at enhanced access to information and services”*. It has been defined with the following outcomes and outputs:

- Outcome 1 (O1): the Government of Mongolia has improved quality of national data on internal migration for evidence-based policies and programmes (**migration data**).
 - Officials of the National Statistics Office (NSO) and the Ulaanbaatar Emergency Management Agency (UB EMA) increased their technical capacity to systematically collect and analyse data on mobile populations in Ulaanbaatar City
 - A proposal to integrate internal migration indicators into the national census and surveys is submitted to the NSO for approval
- Outcome 2 (O2): internal migration is mainstreamed into national, local and sectoral policies (**migration governance**).
 - Relevant stakeholders have access to a broader knowledge base for policy making
 - An action plan with long, medium and short-term policy actions is submitted for approval to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection to mainstream internal migration into policies and actions
- Outcome 3 (O3): vulnerabilities of internal migrants are reduced through improved access to information, services and targeted programmes (**targeted interventions**).
 - Internal migration related information is available for prospective internal migrants in rural areas and urban migrants in Ulaanbaatar through communications campaigns
 - Khoroo personnel, including social workers and kheseg leaders as well as staff of Citizens' Integrated Public Service Centres in Ulaanbaatar have increased capacity to provide migration-related information and services, especially to female migrants
 - NGOs have improved capacity to deliver migration-related information and services, especially to female migrants
 - Opportunity-based interventions are implemented to mitigate urban migrants' vulnerabilities.

The project has a duration of four years and is being implemented from 1 September 2019 until 31 August 2023 with a total budget allocation of 3,336,140 CHF provided by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation – SDC, including the in-kind contribution of CHF 898,746 provided by the IOM.

Sixty percent of the budget is allocated to operational costs, of which half for targeted interventions under Outcome 3.

3 Purpose, scope and methodology of the Mid-Term Review

Purpose and scope

In accordance with the Terms of Reference, the purpose of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) is to inform to which extent the intended results (impacts, outcomes) of the project have been reached or about to be reached. It is also intended to recommend some adjustments until the end of the project.

The purpose of the MTR is to assess the performance level, the status of implementation and the capacity to achieve the project objectives. Moreover, it assesses the potential impact and sustainability of results including the level of capacity development of local stakeholders, and highlight both positive and negative, intended, and non-intended results and processes. The MTR is expected to focus on conclusions and recommendations which should serve as a basis for decision-making and steering for the remaining project period, but also for learning of the involved stakeholders and beyond. In a view of the full phase-out of SDC from Mongolia by 2024, the review findings, recommendations and the lessons learned might be used later on for a potential project's capitalization.

The MTR covers the period from the project's inception in September 2019 until 31 October 2021 and assesses the project along the six OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, while also considering the cross-cutting issues of Good Governance and Gender mainstreaming, as well as the issue of PSEAH (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment).

Methodology

To initiate the MTR, the evaluators completed a systematic examination of all programme and project documents provided by SDC and IOM. The desk analysis was then followed by in-country field visits (on-line meetings for the lead evaluator) to interview all partners of SDC, including civil society organizations, government officials, academia, consultants having provided an input to the project as well as final beneficiaries (migrant workers and their families) of the programme. The list of persons and organizations consulted is presented in Annex 2.

The Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) attached to the original project document has been used as the major reference document for the evaluation to assess achievements versus planned outputs and results.

The evaluation questions which have provided the basis for the review are presented in Annex 3.

Limitations

The main limitation for this review comes from the working conditions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic (travel restrictions, work from home, etc.) and the decision to undertake a partially remote evaluation.

The difficulties which have emerged during this review could be considered as lessons learned for future "remote" evaluations if such situations would occur again in the future:

- Some informants prefer to have face-to-face discussions and dislike Skype or Zoom interviews, which has been the case for some informants.
- Assessing the benefits of certain activities requires physical contact with beneficiaries;

visual verification in the field is often required, in particular with regard to services delivered to beneficiaries and/or capacity building activities.

- Informants connected via Skype or Zoom do not always pay full attention to the interview (informants working from home and are often distracted by different interferences like family, unexpected phone calls, somebody ringing at the front door, and even performing other tasks while on the call).
- Interviews are mostly limited to informants suggested by the programme team; not being present in the field excludes the possibility to encounter unexpected informants showing up at a meeting, and which often can provide valuable information.
- Triangulation of information is limited and leaves the evaluators with sometimes contradicting statements from different informants.

Compensating (at least partly) for the above weaknesses can only be done in involving national consultants/experts who can physically interact with informants and undertake limited field visits. In the particular case of the present review, despite the involvement of an excellent national consultant, the opportunity to fully address certain evaluation questions has been somewhat limited.

4 Findings of the review

The findings of the review based on the above evaluation questions are the following:

Relevance

EQ1: How consistent are the expected effects with the needs of the target groups?

The target groups of the programme were defined in the project document as:

1. prospective female and male internal migrants in rural areas and urban migrants in Ulaanbaatar,
2. the Government of Mongolia (GoM) including sectoral ministries, national and municipal agencies, municipal and local governments, research institutions, civil society organizations, and
3. host communities in Ulaanbaatar ger areas.

The needs of internal migrants arising from their vulnerability are well described in the two studies funded by the SDC and implemented by the IOM in 2017-2018 prior to the design of the UMIMM project².

The two studies, in particular the Internal Migration Study, proposed a number of recommendations to address the needs of all target groups, including:

- taking into consideration internal migration in development planning and sectoral and inter-sectoral policies
- improving migrants' access to information
- improving living conditions in places of origin
- developing a sustainable, balanced development policy directed towards eliminating urban-rural development disparities
- conduct regular national research on migration in order to support evidence-based policies.

The expected effects (outcomes) of the project on migration data, migration governance and targeted interventions are consistent with the needs of the target groups as they respond to most of these recommendations.

EQ2: To what extent are the project objectives responding to national needs and priorities?

Mongolia's Sustainable Development Vision 2030 described Socio-Economic Development at Aimag, Capital city, Soum and District levels as key driver to become an upper-middle income country, reduce inequalities, improve the living conditions of the Mongolian people and end poverty in all its forms, hence improve the socio-economic well-being of the Mongolian population. The Vision 2050 Long-Term Development Policy reiterates this objective, but migrants are not explicitly targeted in the government's action plans; it however implicitly covers the issues to address root causes of the migration, such as improving basic social services, creating economic incentives and opportunities in rural areas. As such, the government has an interest to increase the positive impact of migration as a key issue in the national development agenda.

There are only a few direct references to internal migrants in the existing strategic documents of the government relating to access to education, child and family-friendly social protection policies for children from migrant families and equal provision of essential social services and protection of the rights of the targeted groups including migrants. Being part of the Mongolian population the

² Internal Migration Study and Urban Migrant Vulnerability Assessment

enhancement of the migrants' well-being nevertheless is contained within all policies of the government. Migration is furthermore due to be given more consideration in the 30-year sectoral development policy being prepared by the National Development Agency (NDA), as well as in the successive 10-year action plans in the framework of Vision 2050.

Aiming at *"improving the socio-economic well-being of internal migrants"* (Overall Objective of the project), responds to the national needs and priorities which have been defined in the current government's Action Plans (2016-2020, 2020-2024 and 2021-2030) aiming at human, economic, social, regional and local development.

As the project mainly focusses on the peri-urban area of Ulaanbaatar with a target outreach to a vulnerable population, it also responds to concerns related to urban development and planning which are to be addressed in the new Regionalized Development Policy to be developed in the framework of Mongolia's Long-Term Development Policy (Vision 2050).

EQ3: To what extent is the development intervention technically adequate?

The UMIMM project has been designed on the foundation of the pilot project funded by the SDC in 2017-2018, during which the two reference studies mentioned above have been produced.

The three outcomes defined for the project respond to the recommendations of the studies and the suggested activities to achieve the outcomes are logic and realistic, though not clearly interlinked. The multi-stakeholder approach defined for the implementation, which proved to be constructive during the pilot phase, is expected to ensure that all relevant stakeholders will be involved in discussions and/or activities, hence potentially boosting the sense of ownership of the project.

Combining data generation, evidence-based policy making and interventions on the ground is a rational approach, which however requires adequate coordination which one can reasonably expect from the implementing agency. Suggested activities to achieve the different outputs leading to the respective outcomes are realistically defined and likely to be implemented without any major obstacle. Risks and assumptions have been correctly defined in the project document while suggesting acceptable mitigation measures ("risk treatment plan").

From a technical point of view the outcomes of the intervention have been correctly designed, but their possible connections are not clearly defined.

EQ4: To what extent does the project address the policy, sector or region promoting inclusion of the most excluded?

The UMIMM project was designed in line with the "Sustainable Development Vision 2030" which aims at sustainable development to promote inclusive growth, economic opportunities and social protection for vulnerable population groups, including internal migrants. It is intended to contribute to improving the situation of poor and vulnerable populations by targeting internal migrants who face poverty.

In facilitating and promoting policy-making on internal migration, the project contributes to the inclusion of the most excluded while simultaneously implementing targeted interventions aiming at reducing the vulnerability of internal migrants.

Coherence

EQ5: Internal coherence: to what extent is the intervention compatible/coordinated with other SDC and IOM cooperation?

The UMIMM project is the only initiative directly covering internal migration issues in the SDC's portfolio in Mongolia. Migration is one of the four thematic priorities defined in Switzerland's

International Cooperation Strategy 2021-2024 and one of the focus areas of SDC's Cooperation Strategy for Mongolia (2018-2021).

The UMIMM project has synergies with the SDC funded project "Governance and Decentralisation Programme" (GDP) Phase I, II and III (2015-2022) of which the Phases II and III encompass the "Urban Governance Project" (UGP) implemented by the Asia Foundation. The GDP supports the government's decentralisation reform to achieve more equitable and inclusive development. One of the means to achieve this goal is to empower local governments to be democratic and accountable to citizens and encourages civic active participation in local budgeting namely the Local Development Fund which aims to foster local development, improve the living standards of local residents through the projects, programmes and activities tailored to the needs of the locals. If the living standards of people in rural areas gradually improve with contribution of the GDP and the government's decentralisation reform, then it would also potentially reduce the influx of rural-urban migration in the long-term.

These development interventions work in the areas of capacity building and empowerment of national, local government bodies and civil society organizations to deliver equal and accessible information and public services responding to the needs of vulnerable groups especially those living in ger areas. Those migrating from rural-to-urban areas would have become inevitably target groups under the UGP since they often settle in ger areas and would benefit from the enhanced public services at khoroo level. For example, the UMIMM project's Output 3.2 that is to produce separate training material and conduct separate trainings for khoroo personnel is being complemented by adding and updating internal migration-relevant content and case studies into the existing training materials developed for Municipality of Ulaanbaatar (one of the project beneficiaries) under the UGP.

Among the other projects of SDC's portfolio, the Mainstreaming Social Accountability in Mongolia (MASAM) project which aims at strengthening public sector agencies' capacities in linking policy planning and implementation with budget planning and execution, also has a common goal with UMIMM, i.e. to support the government to improve the delivery of services.

With the use of adapted technology and methods to collect essential data whether on migration flow or on local priorities, these interventions seek to contribute to Mongolia in shaping evidence-based, inclusive, and effective policies which will potentially reduce the vulnerabilities of the targeted groups and further bring informed citizens who are empowered to claim and exercise their rights.

IOM activities in Mongolia grounded on a Cooperation Agreement signed on 27 November 2010 are funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the IOM Development Fund and The United States' Department of State's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons.

IOM's migration activities focus on three thematic areas: Strengthening Counter-Trafficking Cooperation, Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration, Climate Change and Disaster Related Migration. Since 2010, the IOM has been implementing several projects on migration management, as well as on the protection of vulnerable migrants.

The UMIMM intervention is a perpetuation of IOM's activities in Mongolia which aim at supporting the government to manage migration efficiently and is compatible with previous and ongoing projects, as for example the "Digitalising the registration services and supporting the documentation of target group citizens" project implemented with the Civil Registry Office of the GASR aiming at facilitating citizens' access to public services, such as registering for migration, receiving medical care, employment, obtaining a bank loan, receiving government subsidies, enrolling their children in a local school or kindergarten, and receiving welfare services.

EQ6: External coherence: to what extent is the intervention compatible with interventions of other actors (bilateral and multilateral donors, private sector, NGOs, etc.) in Mongolia and thematic field (complementarity and synergies)?

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has been implementing a project on “Improved Registry System to Strengthen the Delivery of Social Services” as part of its Technical Assistance (TA) to Mongolia from 2017 onward. The project aims to improve the accessibility and quality of state registration services in Mongolia by supporting the General Authority of Intellectual Property and State Registration (GAIPSR) to strengthen Mongolia’s Civil Registration System (CRS) through improving the inter-sector coordination of agencies in charge of state registry; supporting the shift from manual to electronic format; reducing data gaps and improving overall data quality. The expected results would be quality and timeliness of data for policymaking and ensure equitable access to registry services for all citizens. This project also contributes to the implementation of the Government’s One Citizen-One Registration Program. Thus, the ADB’s project complements the intervention by improving the state registration services and applying electronic system which would significantly reduce the hurdles and bureaucracies faced by internal migrants. In short, the potential internal migrants could benefit from the accessible registry services.

Another project that is compatible with the intervention is the World Bank’s project “Third Sustainable Livelihood Project” (SLP3) (2014-2020), which sought to enhance governance and community participation in the planning and delivery of local priority investments in rural areas of the country by co-financing the Local Development Fund and by building capacity of local authorities and communities. While the intervention aims to improve the socio-economic well-being of those who already migrated or who potentially migrate to urban areas from rural areas, SLP3 aspired to help Mongolia to develop its rural areas based on local priorities voiced by its respective communities who would prefer to stay in their hometown if the living conditions are improved with the LDF projects and programs.

Effectiveness

EQ7: How did the intervention contribute to the results? To what extent the changes can be attributed to the development intervention and not to external factors?

Migration data (R1)

Improving the quality of national data on internal migration is meant to be achieved through an adjustment of the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) methodology to collect data, track and monitor the displacement and mobility of internal migrants.

The DTM tools and tracking system were first introduced in Mongolia in 2018 in the framework of the project “Climate Change and Disaster Related Migration in Mongolia (2017-2019) funded by the IOM Development Fund (IDF) with the Mongolian National Emergency Agency (NEMA) as project implementing partner.

Adapting the DTM Flow Monitoring methodology and tools to the particular needs and context of Mongolia until now involved capacity building for the potential users of the methodology, piloting the implementation, producing initial reports and preparing the institutionalization of the methodology, which are all necessary steps to contribute to the expected results. IOM having conceptualized the DTM-based system in 2004 and introduced it in many countries all over the world, the approach used in Mongolia, backed by their long experience and know-how, is expected to contribute to the result of improving data on internal migration.

Changes which have resulted from the multiple activities carried out so far have allowed consultations with the National Statistics Office (NSO) to be initiated to discuss a plan for further activities related to internal migration, including reverse migration. NSO subsequently established a working group to institutionalize the key migration research activities.

Work on improving migration data is in progress and further steps will include a review of the Mongolian migration statistical system, including the census data, population and household surveys, as well as existing administrative data and administrative procedures.

Migration governance (R2)

While producing data is a technical issue, using data for policy making is not a straightforward process. The project however reported that “data collected using DTM FM methodology is being used for policy making and emergency response purposes³” already in the first year of implementation which was a first accomplishment.

Reports produced by NUM and IRIM (Migration and Employment, Effectiveness of Migration Restrictions) with the support and guidance of the United Nations University – Maastricht, Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT), provide a basis for possible policy uptake which eventually will contribute to better migration governance. At this time, there is no legal framework that regulates migration issues, though there are some partial regulations on internal migration reflected in different sector policies (as of 2019 Mongolia had over 200 sectoral policy documents with no inter-linkages).

The recommendations of the studies are aimed at providing an input into policy documents as part of the sectoral action plans/programmes currently being formulated under the Vision 2050 Long-Term Development Policy. This however implies the engagement of all parties involved (Cabinet Secretariat, NDA, MLSP, NSO and others) to mainstream internal migration into the new policies.

At this point in time, the project has organized different workshops to advance the process, established a formal cooperation with NDA for joint activities to mainstream migration into regional development policies and with the Cabinet Secretariat to conduct a comprehensive policy assessment relevant to internal migration at the national, sectoral and regional level, and engaged with Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MLSP) for mainstreaming migration dimensions into the new population development cycle of the Population Development Policy and into the Labour Market planning model.

Considering the challenges faced by the project in its early days of implementation to engage with the government, the major change and success of the UMIMM project so far is to have been able to enhance awareness among policy makers on the importance of mainstreaming internal migration into development policies and to put it on their agenda.

Non-Covid targeted interventions (R3)⁴

Activities under R3 were designed to cover three issues: information, services and opportunity based targeted interventions in response to new migration data generated and research findings generated under Outcomes 1 and 2.

- Information: the dissemination of internal migration-related information has mainly been arranged through the national information campaign “Should I stay or Should I go, Research it” aiming at encouraging internal migrants to research and plan their journeys before migrating and providing information about alternate destinations besides Ulaanbaatar to reduce the migration flow to Ulaanbaatar. Communication means included online interaction due to COVID-19 restrictions, cell phone calls for advice, Facebook groups, video presentations, etc. as well as assistance for target groups. Besides reaching out to potential internal migrants, the campaign has also drawn the attention of the government and the general public. The Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) survey implemented

³ September 2019-August 2020 report

⁴ COVID-19 related interventions are covered in EQ20

by the project concluded that the campaign was able to improve knowledge and strengthened intentions of potential migrants to seek information in khoroo offices and/or from other available sources (e.g. from the website www.E-Mongolia.mn which provides over 700 online services and references, including a section on internal migration). In addition, information is also disseminated by means of a Migration manual for municipal public servants.

- Services: services have been delivered with the support of 17 NGOs in Ulaanbaatar and 10 provinces selected by the project from a list of 51 applicants to implement different interventions/activities after capacity building aimed at increasing their skills to successfully implement them. The activities (144 types) grouped under the headings of Psycho-Social support, Information and support, documentation and registration, training and support, job and income, education for migrants and government services, do not follow any priority guidelines. The different interventions and activities are said to be specific to the needs of each province and/or area, but rather appear to be a melting pot of activities which have reached out to 10,753 direct beneficiaries⁵.

The NGO Women for Social Progress (WSP) was chosen by the project as “umbrella” NGO to and Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) was chosen to join IOM and WSP in the selection committee potentially paving the way to a potential conflict of interest as both WSP and MRCS were among the applicants. Branches of MRCS were indeed selected as implementing NGOs in 4 provinces, while WSP was also selected for one. The NGO intervention is nevertheless reported as a success (higher awareness on migration issues, increased confidence and motivation of migrants, team collaboration among NGOs, identification of issues to be addressed, etc.).

- Targeted interventions: opportunity-based interventions implemented to mitigate urban migrants’ vulnerabilities have only included COVID-19 related interventions (see EQ20). Non-COVID targeted interventions specifically linked to Outcomes 1 and 2 have not been implemented.

EQ8: To what extent were the intended results of the intervention achieved (or likely to be achieved) at the levels of output, outcome and the overall goals of the intervention?

Based on the indicators of the project’s result’s framework, the reported achievements are as follows:

Overall Objective

- 75% of surveyed migrants have improved their socio-economic well-being

The indicator is not yet formally established as a KAP survey is planned for the end of the project.

Migration data (R1)

- DTM tools tailored to UB context are available
- UB EMA and NSO officers have been trained and 80% of trained officers have increased their knowledge on interpretation of DTM data
- 8 DTM assessments have been carried out
- Proposal to integrate migration indicators into national census and surveys presented to NSO.

While the DTM is considered by most informants as an interesting instrument, it is in the first place perceived as a useful tool during a crisis or outbreak situation and/or to study temporary/seasonal migration flows, but not so effective in collecting general data on internal migration. It is not (yet) perceived by the potential users as the tool that can provide data to analyze impacts of

⁵ Number reported by the project but not verifiable in the framework of this review.

demography, social and economic aspects. DTM data will be complementary to data obtained by traditional collecting methods and possibly fill some gaps in the availability of migration data. In general, it is the tool that can be useful for implementing an activity for a short-period of time.

According to the NSO, the DTM is not suitable for collecting data on internal migration in a long-term development perspective. The reason might be the lack of experience with DTM under “normal” circumstances; DTM has until now indeed been used in emergency and crisis situations (2018 - Climate Change and Disaster Related Migration in Mongolia project – COVID-19). Changing the current perception will require a shift in considering DTM under emergency circumstance to DTM in a development context, for which baseline data has yet to be established.

The proposal to integrate new migration indicators into national census and surveys might face a financial obstacle as NSO claims not having the resources to do this. As an example of financial implications NSO mentioned that it costs over 200 million MNT for conducting a sample survey in two provinces for a duration of 6 months. In addition, a decision to integrate new migration indicators into national census and surveys will also depend upon the results of the pilot implementation of DTM in two provinces, which is to be launched soon, as well as the decision of the Methodological Steering Committee.

Further activities are planned under Outcome 1 to achieve the expected result of “providing the government with improved quality of national data on internal migration”. Whether or not the word “improved” will be recognized by the government or not, the UMIMM intervention will have provided the government with “additional” data which eventually will be used for the formulation of policies.

Migration governance (R2)

- Two thematic research studies have been completed (Migration and Employment, Effectiveness of Migration Restrictions) providing recommendations which the government may consider when preparing future policies and actions plans.
- Support for the development of a Labour Market Model provided to MLSP
- An action plan on mainstreaming the needs of internal migrants is being initiated while related initiatives have been implemented (agreement with NDA, with Cabinet Secretariat, several relevant activities supporting MLSP e.g. evaluation of state policy on population development, challenges and gaps in implementing 2030 agenda for sustainable development, recruiting a migration expert at Cabinet Secretariat to work on cross-sectoral development policy documents to specifically integrate migration issues into the relevant policy formulation etc. as well as multiple policy and advocacy events)
- Capacity development on policy making has been delivered (with 75% recognition of enhanced knowledge on migration research tools and data collection methodologies).

Work on mainstreaming migration into national, local and sectoral policies is in progress with multiple initiatives of the project to advance towards this expected result. While all these initiatives are relevant and strive towards the same goal, they appear to lack specific coordination from the government side, which is acknowledged by the Cabinet Secretariat. The Cabinet Secretariat ensures policy coordination among the ministries and agencies but does not specifically grasp into sectoral issues.

Internal migration is recognized by the government as an important issue to be taken into consideration at policy level, though developing a proper migration policy is not on the agenda. Regional/sector policies and action plans of the government are due to take into consideration internal migration as part of the Vision 2050 different 10-year stages of implementation, in particular in the Social, Regional and Sector Development Programmes being prepared.

Targeted interventions (R3)

The main contribution to reducing the vulnerability of migrants at short notice can be attributed to the information campaign, to the services provided to migrants through the NGO network and to the COVID-19 response of the project.

The delivery of services has been of great benefit to a small number of migrants (10,753 as reported by the project). Reported as being a success story, NGOs involved, and beneficiaries confirm the positive outcome of the 17 projects, but the scope in terms of direct benefits remains limited. The main priorities for assistance among the migrants, according to the sample of beneficiaries interviewed, relate to registration, health service, issuance of legal documents, education, employment and housing. The sample of migrants interviewed may not be representative of the whole NGO intervention, but at least tends to indicate that the support services required are those typically expected from the authorities.

NGOs themselves have benefited from the intervention as several of them had little exposure to migration issues, with a stronger focus on improving the legal framework, governance, public participation, public awareness raising, environment, health, anti-corruption, education, human rights, etc. The main reason is that migration was not a “hot” topic for them in the past. Most NGOs in the countryside typically lack capacity, including financial and human resources, as compared to more established NGOs in Ulaanbaatar. The capacity building workshops organized by the project were found to be very useful and contributing to their own development in supplying them with new knowledge and skills. The intervention has furthermore created new links among the participating NGOs which have resulted in joint interventions to solve specific issues brought up by migrants.

As stated earlier in this report, the awareness on internal migration issues has been raised at the level of authorities which eventually will lead to a reduction of the migrants’ vulnerability once adequate policies are in place. This may indeed happen faster at the level of local administrations which *“consider migrants to be a big enabler for development and recognize them as a vulnerable group that needs better inclusion and targeted services”*.

Khoroo personnel participated in workshops/training on emerging issues faced by internal migrants, during which social workers of khoroo as well as social welfare officers discussed and identified problems and bottlenecks faced by internal migrants. The training was considered to be very informative for khoros: they do not receive any information related to registration of internal migrants as the process goes through the state registration office, but they provide them with information related to child allowance, school enrolment, temporary assistance to needy families and other necessary information regardless of their registration status.

Targeted interventions linked to Outcome 1 and 2 as suggested by the project document have not been initiated yet and the interventions have only focussed on a response to COVID-19 (see EQ20 for further details).

EQ9: Which major factors have influenced the achievement or non-achievement of the expected results?

External factors which have affected the implementation of the project until now are the 2020 Parliament elections, the 2021 Presidential elections and the COVID-19 situation, to which the project has adequately reacted, thanks to the support of the SDC which has shown great flexibility in allowing resources to be reallocated accordingly.

Activities under Outcomes 1 and 2 have not experienced any major disruption, though the travel restrictions imposed by the pandemic have compelled the project to shift to more online actions.

Outcome 3 has been the most affected by the pandemic when the focus shifted on providing support to migrants affected by the situation. As shown below (EQ20), the project's response to the pandemic has been well received, but other "targeted" interventions did not materialize.

An important factor which contributes to the progress of the project is the commitment and efforts of the Team Leader to advance the agenda on all fronts and engage all stakeholders in the multiple activities. His commitment has been praised by all informants and is seen as a major contribution to the success of the project.

EQ10: To what extent were the specific project products responding to the needs of the target population, considering the socio-cultural, ecological and economic aspects?

As already stated above, the intervention responds to the needs of the migrant population in search of improved living standards and reduced vulnerability. Under Outcome 3, information and services have been delivered which, to a large extent, correspond to the priorities of the migrants. It would however be of added value to prioritise the services rather than spreading it to 144 different types of services with the justification that they were "adapted to the specific needs of every geographical area". This would also have avoided services like paying for health insurance of migrants and/or hiring a lawyer to resolve disputes on child relocation after a divorce, which are somewhat disconnected with the initial intentions of the NGO intervention. Such services have allegedly been discussed with the project team and approved.

Among the priorities highlighted by the beneficiaries interviewed is the support needed for finding a job.

The study "Migration and Employment" mentioned that "migrants are more likely to work in the private sector than non-migrants" and recommended that "programmes to stimulate entrepreneurship and support small and medium businesses by internal migrants" should be developed and implemented. Surprisingly, the private sector at institutional level has been left out from the study.

The lesson learned from the first round of NGO interventions is that finding a job is a major concern and needs to be prioritized in the future as employment is the key to improved socio-economic well-being of internal migrants.

EQ11: What changes occurred in terms of living standards or of the specific needs for the target groups addressed by the project?

The interview with a sample of migrants reveals that the services delivered by the NGOs have had a significant impact on their daily life in giving them greater self-confidence for example in (successfully) passing job interviews, securing legal documents from the administration which was found to be challenging and time-consuming, benefiting from the social security scheme after leaving the informal sector and gaining access to health services, etc.).

Whether this is the case for all the 10,753 migrants who have benefited from the services cannot be established, but there are good reasons to believe that the situation will generally have improved for most, if not all of them. Prioritizing the services to be delivered based on the most relevant needs highlighted by the migrants will result in an even better improvement of their living standards.

The assistance delivered under the COVID-19 response has also been a changing factor, in particular for the most vulnerable.

Efficiency

EQ12: To what extent was the intervention implemented cost-effectively and in a timely manner?

The overall level of operational expenditures by the end of August 2021, i.e. at 50% of implementation time, stands at 27.7% whereas 36.9% the budget for staff and office expenses has been used. The lowest disbursement rates relate to outputs 1.2 (7.9%), 3.2 and 3.3 (average of 12.8%).

The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic partially explain the low level of disbursements as travel restrictions made it impossible to organize certain activities like e.g. in-person training. Other reasons are to be found in a difficult start off due to the necessary time needed to fully engage the stakeholders in the approach proposed by the project and in delays occurred as a result of the 2020 and 2021 elections.

According to the statements made by the project manager at the last PSC in June 2021, the level of expenditures was due to significantly rise as of October, when contracts signed during the first half of the year would be reflected in financial statements.

With regard to IOM's contribution in kind, the evaluators are not in a position to comment as the details of the contribution are not reported.

Despite obstacles to the implementation caused by the 2020 and 2021 elections and the COVID-19 pandemic, the project is reasonably on track.

EQ13: Are there any lessons learnt which should be highlighted?

The main global lessons learned at programme level from the mid-term review, based on facts, comments and observations made by the evaluators are the following:

- Migration governance is complicated and entails engaging all parties to ensure the development of policies which are able to reduce the vulnerability of migrants.
- Working with NGOs is more important for the delivery of services for the vulnerable groups at short-notice than advocacy for improved data collection and policies.
- Media plays an important role for the dissemination of information and complements the work done by civil society.
- The adequate choice of suitable partners to implement a programme reflects in the achievements.
- Programmes can survive and achieve their objectives, even in a politically instable environment and/or under crisis situations.

EQ14: Was there a difference between planned inputs and the input actually needed? What is the reason for this difference?

The evaluators did not identify any discrepancy between planned inputs and inputs actually needed.

EQ15: Was the development intervention implemented on the basis of a results-oriented approach?

The interim progress reports list the "major results delivered by IOM" for each outcome, but the achievements described reflect the activities undertaken and their respective outputs, rather than what these activities have actually achieved, e.g. for Outcome 1 as shown in the last report:

- IOM conceptualized the DTM ... and adapted it to the UB city context
- IOM developed the DTM guidelines
- IOM signed a cooperation agreement with the NSO

- IOM organized training on DTM methodology for 20 staff and researchers
- IOM conducted a field mission ...
- Etc.

Each reported “achievement” raises the question “so what?”. It would be unrealistic to conclude that the activities were not results-oriented, but the way in which the project reports the achievements gives the impression that the focus is on ticking the box for each planned activity rather than aiming at reaching a specific result.

The chapter on Progress made towards realizing outcomes and outputs provides additional details on the activities implemented but does not clearly report on the results of the individual activities, other than general statements.

The request to produce better quality outcome-based reporting was already mentioned by SDC in response to the first annual report and the evaluators reiterate the request for further reporting.

Similarly when presenting the next steps for the following reporting period, the interim report only lists activities (conduct, finalize, develop, launch, etc.) rather than presenting which results are expected to be achieved during the next reporting period.

EQ16: Is the monitoring system in place to track the impact of the development intervention suitable in terms of its objective?

As stated in the project document *“monitoring accounts for 2 per cent of the overall budget. Monitoring and oversight of the programme will ensure timely implementation and effectiveness, as well as support strategic partnerships with government agencies, and ensure strategic decisions are made throughout the programme based on need and desired impact”*.

The project has developed a Results Monitoring Framework showing indicators, data source and collection method, baseline, target values and assumptions for each Outcome, Output and Activity, but such a Framework is only one of the tools needed for a comprehensive monitoring system.

A comprehensive M&E plan is not available.

EQ17: Did the targeting of the intervention mean that resources were allocated efficiently?

The contractual financial allocation for operational expenses only represents 60% of the total budget of which half for Outcome 3.

The evaluators are not in a position to comment on the pertinence of this allocation for the UMIMM project, but would like to mention that the allocation for operational expenses in similar SDC funded projects on migration is on average much higher (e.g. 76% for a project in Sri Lanka, 81% for a regional project in the Middle East, 86% for a regional project in South Asia, etc.)

Within the 60% allocation, the split among the 3 Outcomes is adequate, with capacity building representing the largest share of operational expenses (40% earmarked as capacity building). Intensive training of different stakeholders may indeed be necessary, but in order to avoid repeated training activities, often justified by staff turnover, it would have been advisable to include Training-of-Trainers (TOT) workshops to ensure better sustainability. This has not been done until now.

Finally, the allocation for Output 3.4 (opportunity-based interventions to mitigate urban migrants’ vulnerabilities) is rather small to achieve a meaningful impact.

EQ18: What have been the investments (time, finance, capacity, reflection) of the project for reaching out to the excluded groups? Were they sufficient?

The project reports that “the primary target was placed on those internal migrants who face poverty and exclusion with respect to services, information, economic opportunities as well as human rights and dignity, especially in Ulaanbaatar”.

The COVID-19 intervention targeted the most vulnerable internal migrants who were hit by the related restrictive measures after the start of active community transmission in Mongolia and imposition of a very strict lockdown.

Besides the COVID-19 intervention, specific activities reaching out to the excluded groups have not yet been implemented, other than isolated initiatives of the NGOs.

Impact

EQ19: Which positive, lasting effects and behavioural changes can be identified or flagged as likely to be anticipated? Which unexpected and unintended positive and negative (side) effects have occurred?

Awareness is reported by the project as a main impact of the intervention. Greater awareness on migration related issues, potential problems and opportunities among the population has indeed been achieved through the wide-ranging information campaign. Before people really were not paying too much attention to the implications of migration, but now their perception seems to have changed. Potential migrants are more inclined to seek advice and/or search for information when considering migrating, which is a positive attitude likely to last.

The project reports that “IOM’s policy work has persuaded key government institutions like CabSec, MLSP, NDA to mainstream internal and international migration into the key policy documents”. Increased awareness on the importance of taking internal migration into consideration at policy level however should not be solely attributed to the UMIMM intervention. The authorities are well aware of the need to mainstream migration into their different policies in order to achieve the goals of Vision 2050. UMIMM is contributing to the process in providing tools and advice which is well received by the policy makers at national and local levels.

Besides awareness of potential migrants, the intervention has raised **self-assurance** among the migrants who received assistance so far. Interviews with a sample of beneficiaries confirm that the potential availability of support provided by NGOs gives them more confidence when considering migrating as there possibly would be a fall-back option provided by NGOs if things go wrong.

For some of the NGOs involved in the programme until now, internal migration is a new topic which was not part of their portfolio. Their participation in the project has raised their interest, their understanding of the importance of internal migration and of the potential role they can play in aiding migrants. This is particularly the case for NGOs outside of Ulaanbaatar, now eager to continue as they have seen migrants calling on them after the small projects ended.

According to the NGOs interviewed, governors in the province have mostly been supportive and collaborative; MOUs between NGOs and governors have been signed to cooperate with each other. They see an opportunity in allowing NGOs deliver services to migrants which they sometimes cannot provide due to lack of human resources in the administration. Not all local administrations however support the NGO initiative.

Expectations are high among the participating NGOs to be again involved in the next round of projects, during which they hope to develop new services, possibly in cooperation with local authorities.

At the level of national authorities, the intervention is demonstrating that additional data generated in using the DTM tools can effectively complement the data collection system in providing rapid and accurate data which cannot be captured in using traditional means. Whether or not, DTM will become part of the data collection tools after the project ends remains to be seen, but at this stage there is a willingness to proceed with the support of the project, as confirmed by the different agreements signed and pilot projects being implemented.

EQ20: How effective was the COVID-19 response and what were lessons learnt?

The project initiated and implemented a very strong and comprehensive response to the COVID-19 situation in collaboration with multiple stakeholders including the government, non-government organizations and international development agencies:

- Conducted Ulaanbaatar Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Flow Monitoring exercise between February 27 and May 31, 2020 in cooperation with the Municipality of Ulaanbaatar to support the Government of Mongolia's efforts in planning prevention and response measures amid COVID-19 pandemic, specifically to monitor the flow of people transferring through six checkpoints around the capital city thereby ensuring availability of data on potential community transmission patterns as well as insights into possible preparedness and prevention actions.
- Implemented a radio program to inform herders on the otor move, who are usually stranded in a different location than their origin for at least four to eight months, on COVID-19 and protective measures tailored to them in cooperation with the Mongolian National Public Radio and State Emergency Commission, twice a day starting from 8 December 2020 until 9 January 2021.
- Joined and supported the campaign "Wear Mask and Wash Hands" run by the Government in partner with UNICEF to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and the campaign reached around 1.7 million people.
- Initiated and led the "Support and Thank" campaign against the stigma associated with COVID-19, in cooperation with government and international development agencies, to reduce stigmatization and discrimination towards infected people as well as internal migrants and to encourage the public to thank frontline workers for their hard work and effort to keep the public safe. As a result, the government no longer put markings on the doors of households who tested positive for COVID-19.
- Conducted a Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) post-survey to assess the impact of the information campaign and to determine the impact of the corona virus and how it has influenced people in their decision to migrate.
- Provided food and heat package assistances to vulnerable households nationwide with the approval of the donor and of the Steering Committee: Food package to total of 1485 people, i) who were stranded in UB from countryside during the lockdown; ii) vulnerable households and unregistered migrants, who have lost their income due to the pandemic or who have no income other than Government allowance in UB, and iii) vulnerable families in Orkhon province. Coal package to 1000 vulnerable families in Darkhan soum of Darkhan-Uul province.
- Provided necessary goods and 652 pieces of PPEs to government agencies including the frontline officials of NEMA, General Authority for Specialized Inspection and social workers of 171 khoros in UB.
- Disinfected 1,600 buses of the National Centre of Passenger's Transportation and provided 3,200 pieces of PPE to the drivers to support the safe return of 68,000 internally stranded people during the lockdown.
- Provided support to the Immigration Agency of Mongolia (MIA) by facilitating the access to information of all foreign nationals through the digitalization of information platforms to prevent potential violations and risk of infection due to lack of information.
- Supported the officials, especially those who are working at the borders, of the Mongolian Customs General Authority (MCGA) physically and mentally, while also preventing prolonged customs operations at the borders with COVID-19 rapid tests, disposable gloves and face masks that would be provided to around 1,000 officials.

The COVID-19 response was effective in a way that it was provided in a timely manner. Information campaigns used a variety of communication tools including social media, TV shows and video

productions, radio program and print media, and targeted the general population as well as sociodemographic subgroups such as children, youth, and herders. The advocacy and information campaigns on preventative measures for COVID-19 were not only effective in preventing the spread of the virus for a while, but they also proved to have an impact on the flu season too. For example, H3N2 cases and flu gastrointestinal infections among children significantly dropped in 2020 compared to the previous years.

EQ21: To what extent do the actual impacts caused by the development intervention match the anticipated impacts?

Besides rising awareness at different levels, it is premature at mid-term to report on any significant impact of the intervention. This by no means diminishes the importance of what has been accomplished so far, but more time is required to achieve a meaningful impact.

Sustainability

EQ22: What evidence is there that the achieved effects will continue after the completion of the project?

What will be left from the project is that the different stakeholders involved will have:

- a better understanding of the DTM tools and their potential use to complement migration data;
- an enhanced capacity to use these tools for the preparation of national, sectoral and local policies;
- benefited from the production of research studies on internal migration providing useful recommendations for policy uptake;
- an increased awareness of the need to provide services to migrants and potential migrants, in particular on priority issues including registration, employment, housing and health services;
- the possible recognition of the role NGOs can play in providing such services;
- a better awareness that evidence-based policies and the delivery of relevant services lessens the vulnerability of migrants.

While the above achievements will all potentially contribute to what the project has been designed for, i.e. “improve the socio-economic well-being of internal migrants”, it cannot be taken for granted that DTM tools will be used, that policy uptake will happen, that services will continue to be delivered by NGOs, etc.

The project is taking several measures to enhance the potential sustainability of the whole intervention. These include cooperation agreements signed with the NSO, GASR, MUB, NDA, MLSP and close cooperation with the Cabinet Secretariat, supporting the formation of a network among NGOs, creating a bridge between NGOs and local administrations, etc.

All these initiatives are indeed aimed at enhancing the sustainability of the project results, but they are all organized by the project management as isolated initiatives which need to be coordinated. This coordination is currently done by the project management, but a stronger coordination input from the government side would be advisable to intensify the potential sustainability of the intervention after August 2023.

EQ23: Which major factors might enhance the effects achieved or prevent them from continuing?

In direct relation to the above, increased contribution of the government in all the initiatives taken by the project management to ensure sustainability would be welcome to enhance the effects achieved. Interviews have revealed that the Cabinet Secretariat is more than willing to endorse

more responsibility in engaging more with the project which naturally falls within its mandate to coordinate the national development policy of the country as defined in Article 33 of the Law on the Government and Resolution 38 (1996) of the Parliament of Mongolia.

Factors which may prevent further developments of the intervention are likely to be unpredictable external factors similar to those which affected the UMIMM project, i.e. crisis situations (e.g. natural disasters, national health issues, etc.), changing political circumstances and priorities, conflict situations on the world map which could affect Mongolia, etc.

EQ24: Can the partner institutions and involved stakeholders (target group) continue the activity independently (existence of financial resources) and adjust their strategies to changing conditions?

Currently, there is no institution or department that oversees internal migration in Mongolia. The MLSP has a Department of Population and Development that will soon have an officer to be in charge of migration. However, the assigned officer does not have much experience of or knowledge about the migration issue and will have other issues to cover including social welfare, poverty and possibly more.

The NDA will carry on with the development of regional and other policies in which migration issues will be given attention. The Regional Development Policy is expected to include a chapter on internal migration.

At the local level, officials recognize the need for some public services to be executed by the NGOs as the local public servants lack human resources, capacity and financial resources. This is e.g. the case in Darkhan where the intervention was found to be very useful as reported to the evaluators. Officials expressed their interest in scaling up the activities, which can only be done with the support of the project. There is a Cabinet resolution recently adopted which is to relocate some branches of public universities from Ulaanbaatar to rural areas, e.g. it was decided to establish schools of the NUM, the University of Science and Technology and the University of Agriculture in Erdenet, Darkhan and Umnugovi provinces, which would inevitably bring internal migrants to those rural areas. As such, the project on internal migration is definitely needed to assist them in integrating those migrants into the communities as part of potential reverse migration from UB. Some of the NGOs in UB seem to have the potential to carry training programmes for youth including young migrants with employability skills in collaboration with the General Office for Labour and Social Welfare Services and Authority for Family, Child, and Youth Development.

Nevertheless, NGOs typically focus their activities on issues for which they can obtain funding from external sources, which is no different than what UN agencies and other international organizations do. In absence of donor support to fund activities on migration issues, the interest of NGOs is likely to vanish over time, despite their pledge to support migrants. Regrettably, many donors tend to shift priorities over time and the response of NGOs follows the pattern of funding. With climate change, global warming and the pandemic situation being the hot topics at this time, it will be challenging for NGOs to find new resources for migration issues.

EQ25: Which project's element should be taken over/taken up by or with other stakeholders?

Upon completion, the project will have provided tools to the government to collect complementary data which could facilitate evidence-based mainstreaming of internal migration into development plans. It will be the government's responsibility to make use of these tools if they are deemed to be useful and to decide if and how they intend to consider internal migration in their future policies.

The socio-economic well-being of migrants will possibly improve if and when such policies are in place, which is likely to take some time. The Regional Development Policy which will include a chapter on migration is for example not expected to be approved before the end of next year, hence becoming operational in 2023.

At shorter notice, delivering practical services to migrants is of immediate benefit and has a direct impact on their vulnerability. The NGOs already have delivered services to more than 10.000 migrants and a further round of small interventions is expected to reach 30.000 migrants, which largely exceeds the initial target of UMIMM. Despite this performance, tens of thousands migrants will remain exposed to vulnerability and the delivery of services will remain the only instant relief they can expect.

The NGOs therefore need to be prepared to further support the migrants in providing them with the services the administration is not able to deliver. In its exit strategy, the project should therefore ensure the sustainability of service delivery in suggesting the most appropriate ways to secure the further engagement of NGOs.

It is our understanding that discussions have taken place with other potential donors, including the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the European Union, the latter one being a possible source to secure funding in the field of migration.

The Multi-annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2021 – 2027 for Mongolia focuses on two priority areas: (1) Green Sustainable Development and (2) Democratic and Economic Development. Under priority area 2, migration and support to civil society are two thematic areas the EU might consider funding.

EQ26: Which socio-cultural, institutional, ecological, financial or technical measures could be implemented to increase the chances of the development intervention having a sustainable impact?

As already mentioned above, increased participation of the government in all the initiatives taken by the project management would ensure sustainability of the results achieved by the project. This requires shifting certain coordination responsibilities from project management to the Cabinet Secretariat or the MLSP, which in turn implies two conditions:

- project management should progressively change its role to an advisor function to the government and no longer organize all activities, but rather suggest them
- the Cabinet or the MLSP should assign a member of the Secretariat or of the Ministry to take over certain operational responsibilities of the project manager.

Besides its advising role to the Cabinet, the project manager should dedicate more attention to support the NGOs in their role of service providers and prepare the development of this important component beyond the project's lifetime.

EQ27: Are intervention on COVID-19 taken up by the government, municipality and can they be rolled out in case of future emergencies?

Upon request of the Municipality of Ulaanbaatar (MUB), the project provided technical assistance to the Government of Mongolia (GOM) in monitoring the flow of people at six checkpoints around the capital city Ulaanbaatar by implementing its Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM). To carry out the intervention, a total of 10 trainings on the DTM Flow monitoring methodology were provided to more than 500 staff members, including 254 resident physicians, 60 teachers, and more than 200 public servants. The data on mobile population was instrumental for the MUB to identify potential community transmission routes to and from Ulaanbaatar city as well as insights into possible preparedness and prevention actions. During the DTM Flow Monitoring operation period, the project produced, among others, a report on potential COVID-19 transmission hotspots to suggest recommendations and potential response measures for the GOM.

The project provided specific recommendations in terms of operational level of DTM such as improving working conditions and environment in checkpoints; clearly planning the duration of the flow monitoring; anticipating possible turnover of staff; strengthening the involvement and

supervision of partner organizations; and involving the MUB Statistics Office and the MUB Information Technology Department in institutionalizing the use of the DTM methodology in flow monitoring. Therefore, taking into consideration of these recommendations fully, the government has some potential to carry out the DTM FM activity on its own.

EQ28: Are the changes at people’s level or at the institutional or policy levels sustainable?

Besides improvements in a small number of people’s life as a result from the NGO intervention, there is not much evidence that the general socio-economic well-being of migrants has improved. Pertinent policies need to be in place before significant changes will be noticeable.

At institutional level, the project has generated interest to use additional tools for data collection and supported the idea that internal migration needs to be better mainstreamed in development plans and related policies, which the government was already aware of.

The ongoing preparation of regional, local and sectoral development plans indicates that internal migration will indeed be taken into consideration, hence confirming the sustainability of the results achieved by the project.

Cross-cutting themes

EQ29: How adequately were issues of gender and good governance addressed across the project’s interventions? How did it contribute to the achieved results?

Gender

The project reports that *“during the project implementation, special attention was dedicated towards making sure that all activities account for both perspectives of men and women. This was especially evident during the inception meetings and trainings for DTM rollout when IOM, NEMA and UB EMA worked with an equal number of women even among the uniformed personnel. All the participants’ lists for the events carried out within the project were disaggregated by sex. Importantly, all the research, including DTM daily and analytical reports, clearly disaggregate data by sex making sure that the specific standpoints, patterns of/for women are duly reflected and considered when the data are used for policy and decision-making. Due attention to gender considerations was offered as part of the COVID-19 response as well”*.

During the course of the review, the evaluators were not able to verify the absolute correctness of this statement, but comments provided by different informants confirm that gender mainstreaming has indeed been given the necessary attention by the project. Technical reports reviewed by the evaluators have taken gender issues into consideration and attendance lists of training activities confirm that women have been actively involved.

Considering that the project team has adhered to IOM’s Gender Equality Policy which requires to ensure that gender is mainstreamed throughout all of its projects, policies and activities, it can be assumed that the UMIMM intervention has adequately addressed gender mainstreaming throughout all activities in adopting a gender-sensitive approach.

With regard to the issue of **“Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment “(PSEAH)**, in Mongolia according to the Law on Promotion of Gender Equality and the new revised Labour Law (to be in effect from 1 Jan 2022) employers are required to take certain measures to prevent from sexual harassment in the workplace and create a sexual harassment-free environment.

Most institutions/organizations already have put in place specific PSEAH measures, e.g.

- The Cabinet Secretariat’s Administration office has taken an internal survey on sexual harassment in the workplace twice in 2021. The Cabinet has a code of conduct covering

this kind of issue in general terms and an ethics committee, but currently there is no specific rule or regulation regarding the PSEAH.

- The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection is in process of receiving comments from their staff about sexual harassment in the workplace to draft the regulation on it.
- The National University of Mongolia has adopted an ethics code of conduct which prohibits sexual harassment in the workplace which stipulates that any violation of the code of conduct will be reported to the Administration which will take the necessary action.
- The Municipality of Ulaanbaatar has adopted a code of ethics requiring all employees to sign a statement which includes a provision related to sexual harassment.
- The National Statistics Office has internal labour rules covering the issue.
- Some of the NGOs have different internal policies in place which cover PSEAH and also child protection.
- Last, but not least, IOM has a policy for preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse, and IOM staff members are required to
 - understand what sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) is,
 - engage in behaviour that respects and fosters the rights of beneficiaries,
 - report in good faith any SEA allegations, concerns or suspicions, or retaliation related to SEA.

Mongolia furthermore has a National Committee on Gender Equality which is responsible for ensuring equal participation of the public and the government in, and sustainability of, the implementation of gender equality policies. The committee has produced a template on prevention of sexual harassment for both state and non-state organizations which is being used by different organizations to draft internal policies on prevention of sexual harassment tailored to the organizations' specific needs. As of the 1st of January 2022, every organization/entity shall have a mandatory internal policy on prevention of sexual harassment in accordance with the newly revised Labour Code.

Good governance

Training on organizational governance has been part of the capacity development programme for NGOs, covering the topics of Internal management, Organizational strategy, Funding, Communication, Partnership, Advocacy and Monitoring with public participation.

The project has furthermore taken into consideration IOM's Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF) when reviewing policy documents and guidelines. MiGOF's principles (adherence to international standards and fulfilment of migrants' rights, evidence-based policy formulation and engagement with partners) have been respected throughout the implementation.

5 Conclusions

The UMIMM intervention is relevant and responds to the needs of both the migrants in their pursuit for reduced vulnerability and of the authorities in their mission to better integrate internal migration issues in their respective development policies guided by the Vision 2050 longer-term development policy. The project furthermore falls in line with one of the four thematic priorities defined in Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy 2021-2024 and with one of the focus areas of SDC's Cooperation Strategy for Mongolia (2018-2021).

Technically the project was well designed with three relevant Outcomes and a set of clearly defined activities, but the link between the expected results could have been better identified.

The project is being successfully implemented and has made good progress towards the achievement of the different outputs and outcomes. It has also delivered a comprehensive response to the COVID-19 situation which has been well received by all beneficiaries.

The project team has been very pro-active and has managed to engage with all stakeholders in the implementation.

A substantial impact of the intervention has yet to materialize, but important results have already been achieved, including awareness on migration issues and self-confidence of migrants, better understanding of the importance to mainstream migration into policies, recognition of the role which can be played by NGOs in supporting migrants, etc.

Considering the planned phasing out of SDC funding on migration issues, the sustainability of the results needs to be secured at all levels in order to achieve a continued improvement of the socio-economic well-being of migrants beyond 2023.

6 Recommendations

Based on the above analysis and conclusions, the evaluators would like to present the following recommendations:

1. Recommendations directly linked to the evaluation of the project and focusing on operational issues
2. Recommendations focusing on sustainability

6.1 Recommendations linked to operational issues

Migration data and migration governance (O1 and O2)

1. The MTR has confirmed that work is in progress and that the multiple initiatives taken by the project to advance the agenda on both expected results are logical and coherent. The different initiatives however are all driven and coordinated by the project management, which can only be praised for the commitment shown to make progress in the right direction. The project intends to summarize the achievements of all the initiatives and prepare an Action Plan with recommendations for the government. Whilst this is a sensible plan, the evaluators recommend taking this a step further and **prepare a more comprehensive roadmap on improving migration data and mainstreaming migration into policies**. Such a roadmap should describe all further steps to be considered during the remaining time of implementation and beyond, also clearly suggesting milestones to be met and defining the responsibilities of the different stakeholders involved in the process. Such a roadmap would furthermore serve as a communication tool to articulate strategic thinking when setting the goals and the plan for achieving them. *(Recommendation addressed to project management)*
2. In line with the above recommendation, the preparation of such a roadmap implies a close engagement of the government in defining the priorities and the goals to reach. Besides the initiatives taken by the project team, **it would be most welcome to see the stakeholders engaging more pro-actively in suggesting steps the government would like to take in addition to those proposed by the project management**. A more direct involvement of the government in coordinating the different initiatives would also be welcome, the more that several ministries have migration as cross-cutting issues in their responsibilities. Inter-ministerial coordination is therefore essential, and the evaluators recommend to the government **to engage more intensively with the project management in all aspects of the responsibility assigned to the implementing agency**. This could preferably be done in designating a government official to become a direct counterpart to the project manager during the second half of the project. In addition, this would be a judicious move to prepare the sustainability of the intervention. Additionally, the project could support the Cabinet Secretariat with methodological advice to ensure coordination of sectoral issues in order to operationalize and implement the key issues within the framework of the development policy planning. *(Recommendation addressed to Cabinet Secretariat and MLSP).*

Targeted interventions (O3)

3. The delivery of services to migrants through the NGO intervention has been successful

and raised interest among the NGO community to further develop this activity. Capacity development has been well perceived by the NGOs, in particular those who never worked in the field of migration, and more training would be most welcome to enhance the capacity of the NGOs involved in the first round and put newcomers in the second round on the right track. Capacity building should also include reference case studies from other countries, training of volunteers and activists on migration issues which were specifically suggested by the NGOs. The evaluators therefore recommend **the capacity building programme of NGOs to be continued during the second half of the project.** *(Recommendation addressed to project management)*

4. The first round of the NGO intervention has covered 144 types of services which we have labelled as a melting pot of activities. This should be avoided, and **priorities should be defined for the next round on basis of the most important issues which the migrants have themselves suggested**, i.e. employment, registration, housing and education. The capacity building programme for the NGOs should also be focused on these priorities rather than being a generic training programme. It should also include the important topic of fund raising (see specific recommendation linked to sustainability below). *(Recommendation addressed to project management)*
5. In relation to the conflict of interest which has been reported under EQ7, the evaluators recommend **reviewing the procedures for the designation of a selection committee for the next round of NGO interventions.** In order to avoid any further conflict, it is recommended to invite external parties to sit on the committee with the project team, in favouring for example staff members of other international organizations supporting civil society. The EU Delegation in Mongolia would be a good candidate as the EU is strongly engaged in this field in the framework of the EU Roadmap for engagement with civil society in Mongolia 2021-2025. *(Recommendation addressed to project management)*
6. Focusing on the NGO part of Outcome 3 might require additional resources to be allocated within this component of the project. Targeted interventions directly linked to Outcomes 1 and 2 as initially suggested in the design of the project have not been implemented and are not defined yet. Pending such definition, the **evaluators recommend diverting part of the funding planned for these interventions to reinforce the capacity building programme for the NGOs and to upscale the delivery of services in selecting more projects than planned.** *(Recommendation addressed to SDC and to project management for a revision of the operational plan).*
7. Besides enhancing the capacity of the NGOs, we also recommend **engaging in capacity building for local government bodies in local soums**, so that they can solve more problems on their own. The first round of projects has seen NGOs cooperate with local administrations to support the migrants. Local administrations have learned from it, and this might have raised their interest to be more pro-active in the future, though within limitations imposed by a lack of human resources. Investing in specific capacity building for local administrations could possibly enhance their work for the benefit of the migrants. *(Recommendation addressed to project management)*

General issues

8. Reporting. All interim progress reports of the project focus on the activities implemented without clearly mentioning what the activities have actually achieved or will achieve upon completion. Activities implemented are relevant, but the question “what will they actually achieve?” cannot be answered without a sound analysis of their benefits and results. The activity-based nature of the reports has already been highlighted by SDC in a previous Project Steering Committee and the evaluators

reiterate the request to **present more results-based reports in the future.**
(*Recommendation addressed to project management*)

9. Monitoring. The project has developed a Results Monitoring Framework, but a more detailed M&E plan is not available. **A comprehensive M&E plan should be prepared by the project team** and cover the following topics:

- Purpose/objectives of M&E
- Approach of M&E
- Scope of M&E activities
- Outcome specific impact logic
- Detailed measurement plan / framework
- Studies and assessment frequency
- Guidelines for reporting
- Guidelines for risk/mitigation analysis
- Strategic Discussion (Critical Reflection Activities)

(*Recommendation addressed to project management*)

6.2 Recommendations focusing on sustainability

10. In line with the above recommendations 1 and 2 suggesting the preparation of a Roadmap and a stronger engagement of the government, greater sustainability of the results after closure of the project will also be achieved in engaging more with the private sector. With employment being the key to successful internal migration and considering that employability has been defined by the project team as an important issue to be considered, it is important to **involve the private sector in the preparation of the after-project time.** The private sector has largely been let out in the preparation of the study “Employment and Migration”, but it is important to have representatives of the private sector contribute to the development of migration policies, as it will be the main target for employment among the potential migrants. It is therefore recommended to **promote a closer dialogue between the government and the Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry in discussions encompassing internal migration policies.** This could for example be achieved in developing a partnership model between public and private sector which could stimulate a working relationship between the private sector and the labour market, hence contributing to define strategic decisions with regard to migration. Such a partnership model has proven to be successful in Bangladesh for the development of policies related to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) which directly influence internal and external migration. The working relationship with the private sector needs to be reinforced to achieve a real buy-in from the private sector and ensure greater sustainability of migration policies. Similar examples of private sector involvement in migration issues can be observed in South-East Asian countries, typically where the ILO implements migration projects under their mandate of tripartite organization, hence always involving government authorities, private sector (employers) and trade unions.
(*Recommendation addressed to project management*)

11. The capacity of NGOs to support migrants which could be strongly enhanced in following above recommendation number 3 needs to be combined with the search for financial resources. One of the biggest challenges facing NGOs is their limited experience in mobilizing funding, both within the country (i.e., local philanthropy, vis-a-vis the

authorities) as well as internationally. The main sources of NGO financing include membership fees, donations, and donor-funded projects and programmes. Mongolian NGOs require support to explore alternative ways to raise funds, through dedicated fundraising campaigns and professional communication towards private sector and philanthropists within the country and abroad. The evaluators therefore recommend the **UMIMM project to support NGOs in their search for financial resources with a focus on funding from international sources** which could be accessed without major difficulty. Among the possible sources, the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) is the leading agency supporting NGOs worldwide. UNDEF provides grants for various projects in eight focus areas, among which “strengthening civil society” represents approximately 70-80% of the grants awarded. Grants typically amount to an average of USD 150,000 to USD 200,000, which sometimes can go up to USD 300,000. Seven such grants have been awarded to Mongolian NGOs in recent years, of which two projects are currently being implemented. Women for Social Progress, which the project selected as “umbrella” NGO has been awarded two such grants in the past. Another source to be explored is the European Union which implements the NGO Operational Facility programme. *(Recommendation addressed to project management)*

11. Funding on migration issues should not only be considered for NGOs. While the SDC funding on migration issues will end upon completion of the project in 2023, other donors and/or organizations might be interested to engage with the government on migration issues despite the dominant interest in climate change issues high on the agenda of all international organizations. Internal migration is in the first place a labour migration issue which typically falls within the mandate of the International Labour Organization (ILO), more experienced than the IOM in this field. The ILO has until now focused on other issues in Mongolia (employment, decent work, social protection, etc.) but might get more involved in migration issues in the framework of the ILO Labour Roadmap for Asia-Pacific for which funding is secured from different bilateral and international donors. We therefore suggest **engaging with the ILO to assess their potential interest to work with the government on both internal and international migration**. *(Recommendation addressed to project management and MLSP).*

Annex 1 Documents consulted

- Terms of Reference for the Mid-Term Review

- SDC Cooperation Strategy for Mongolia 2018-2021
- SDC Annual Report 2020
- SDC Annual Report 2021
- SDC Evaluation Policy
- Guidelines of the SDC's Global Instruments for Development and Cooperation 2021-2024 (August 2020)
- SDC Field trip report SDC Director to Darkhan (June 2021)

- Mongolia Vision 2030
- Mongolia Vision 2050 "Long-Term Development Policy"
- Action Plan of the Government of Mongolia 2020-2024
- Towards Mongolia's Long-Term Development Policy Vision 2050 (IBRD/World Bank 2020)
- Constitution of Mongolia (unofficial translation)

- Cooperation agreement Government of Mongolia - IOM
- SDC-IOM agreement with project document (signed in September 2019)
- UMIMM Fact Sheet

- Project monitoring report summary from October 2019 to September 2020
- Interim Report September 2019 – August 2020
- SDC Management response to Annual Report September 2019 – August 2020
- Interim Report September 2019 – February 2021 + Annexes
- Interim Report September 2020 – August 2021
- Interim Financial Report September 2019 – August 2021
- Results Monitoring Framework

- Technical reports delivered by the project
- Presentation materials

- Minutes of Programme Steering Committee meetings (October 2019, April 2020, December 2020, June 2021)

- Internal Migration Study (IOM, 2018)
- Urban Migrant Vulnerability Assessment (IOM, 2018)
- Mongolia: Migration and Employment Study – Survey report (draft 2021)
- Research study on Assessing the Effectiveness of Migration Restrictions in Ulaanbaatar City and Migrants' Vulnerability (IOM/IRIM 2021)

Annex 3 Evaluations questions

Relevance

- How consistent are the expected effects with the needs of the target groups?
- To what extent are the project objectives responding to national needs and priorities?
- To what extent is the development intervention technically adequate?
- To what extent does the project address the policy, sector or region promoting inclusion of the most excluded?

Coherence

- Internal coherence: to what extent is the intervention compatible/coordinated with other SDC and IOM cooperation?
- External coherence: to what extent is the intervention compatible with interventions of other actors (bilateral and multilateral donors, private sector, NGOs, etc.) in Mongolia and thematic field (complementarity and synergies)?

Effectiveness

- How did the intervention contribute to the results? To what extent the changes can be attributed to the development intervention and not to external factors?
- To what extent were the intended results of the intervention achieved (or likely to be achieved) at the levels of output, outcome and the overall goals of the intervention?
- Which major factors have influenced the achievement or non-achievement of the expected results?
- To what extent were the specific project products responding to the needs of the target population, considering the socio-cultural, ecological and economic aspects?
- What changes occurred in terms of living standards or of the specific needs for the target groups addressed by the project?

Efficiency

- To what extent was the intervention implemented cost-effectively and in a timely manner?
- Are there any lessons learnt which should be highlighted?
- Was there a difference between planned inputs and the input actually needed? What is the reason for this difference?
- Was the development intervention implemented on the basis of a results-oriented approach?
- Is the monitoring system in place to track the impact of the development intervention suitable in terms of its objective?
- Did the targeting of the intervention mean that resources were allocated efficiently?
- What have been the investments (time, finance, capacity, reflection) of the project for reaching out to the excluded groups? Were they sufficient?

Impact

- Which positive, lasting effects and behavioural changes can be identified or flagged as likely to be anticipated? Which unexpected and unintended positive and negative (side) effects have occurred?
- How effective was the COVID-19 response and what were lessons learnt?
- To what extent do the actual impacts caused by the development intervention match the anticipated impacts?

Sustainability

-
- What evidence is there that the achieved effects will continue after the completion of the project? Which major factors might enhance the effects achieved or prevent them from continuing?
 - Can the partner institutions and involved stakeholders (target group) continue the activity independently (existence of financial resources) and adjust their strategies to changing conditions? Which project's element should be taken over/taken up by or with other stakeholders?
 - Which socio-cultural, institutional, ecological, financial or technical measures could be implemented to increase the chances of the development intervention having a sustainable impact?
 - Are intervention on COVID-19 taken up by the government, municipality and can they be rolled out in case of future emergencies?
 - Are the changes at people's level or at the institutional or policy levels sustainable?

Cross-cutting themes

- How adequately were issues of gender and good governance addressed across the project's interventions? How did it contribute to the achieved results?