FINAL EVALUATION of the project: GREEN GOLD AND ANIMAL HEALTH in Mongolia

Final Report

UNIQUE forestry and land use

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Clients

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

Swiss Cooperation Office in Mongolia

Author

Paul Borsy

Cedric Bussac

Oyuntulkhuur Bandi

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Contact:
Paul Borsy
UNIQUE forestry and land use GmbH
Schnewlinstraße 10
79098 Freiburg, Germany
Tel. +49 (0) 761 20 85 34-0
Email: paul.borsy@unique-landuse.de
www.unique-landuse.de

CONTENT

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AF	Aimag Federation of Pasture User Groups
AH	Animal Health
AHBU	Animal Health and Breeding Unit
AHP	Animal Health Project
AIMAG	Administrative Unit in Mongolia
ALAGaC	Agency for Land Affairs, Geodesy and Cartography
APUG	Association of Pasture User Groups in Soum
AVSF	Agronomes et Veterinaires Sans Frontieres
CBA	Cost Benefit Analysis
CHF	Swiss Franc
CSC	Credit and Savings Cooperatives
ESD	Ecological Site Description
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
GAVS	General Authority for Veterinary Service
GG	Green Gold
GGAHP	Green Gold Animal Health project
GI	Geographic Indication
GoM	Government of Mongolia
HH	Herder Household
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IORRM	Inter Aimag reserve and Rangeland management administration
LBSU	Livestock Breeding Service Units
LDF	Local Development Funds
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MELD	Ministry of Environment and Green Development
MF	Matching Fund
MNT	Mongolian Tugrug (currency)
MOCCU	Mongolian Confederation of Credit Unions
MOFALI	Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry
MTR	Mid Term Review
MULS	Mongolian University for Life Science
NAEC	National Agricultural Extension Centre
NAMAC	National Agency for Agricultural Cooperatives

NAMEM	National Agency for Meteorological and Environmental Monitoring
NFPUG	National Federation of Pasture Users
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PUG	Pasture User Group
RNTS	Responsible Nomad Traceability System
RUA	Rangeland Use Agreement
SC	Steering Committee
SCVL	State Central Veterinary Laboratory
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SLPIII	Sustainable Livelihoods-III Project
SOUM	Mongolian term for Municipality
TC	Technical Cooperation
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
VABA	Veterinary and animal breeding agency
VC	Value Chain
VCA	Value Chain Analysis
WB	World Bank

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2006, SDC has been supporting the livestock sector through two major projects: the Green Gold (GG) and the Animal Health (AH) project which then merged to the Green Gold Animal Health Project (GGAHP). The project is aiming at improving the livelihoods of Mongolian herders and their households by consolidating and upscaling the 1) sustainable rangeland management, 2) the marketing of livestock products and 3) improved animal health.

The objective of the evaluation was to evaluate the current consolidation/ exit phase of GGAHP, while taking into consideration its previous phases. The evaluation was carried out in the period from 19.07. to 20.08. 2021. For the evaluation a **theory based evaluation approach** was applied, using the program's hypothesis of change as a basis. Additionally, the formulated exit and legacy strategy as a main reference in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the current consolidation phase and possible impacts beyond 2021 was used. The evaluation followed the OECD DAC criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and the newly added criterion coherence. Also, the SDC evaluation policy 2018 and the "How-to Note Evaluation" toolkit from SDC 2020 were followed.

The main **limitation** of this evaluation was that it has been conducted remotely. Usually, interviews in person and site-visits offer a broader picture of the situation due to informal talks and direct interaction. Also, due to summer holiday season, not all stakeholders were reachable.

Regarding the **data quality,** data provided by the SDC and GGAHP team was considered as fully adequate to conduct the evaluation. Also, the monitoring system offered high quality data in form of reports and excel. Reports were delivered in time, some monitoring data only during implementation. One constraint was, that the endline survey has not been carried out, due to the ongoing COVID situation. Therefore, not all data was available for the level of impact indicators. We used output indicators to assess the effectiveness of the project. Some monitoring data on rangeland is already embedded in the partner system and available online, although in Mongolian language only.

Findings

Regarding the criterion **relevance**, it was concluded that the intervention's objectives are well aligned with the (global, regional and country-specific) policies and priorities of the SDC country strategy and of the beneficiaries. In the design and implementation, the relevant political and institutional environment was taken into account and the framework conditions were improved through support to adequate laws and policies.

The project is well aligned with the development needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders involved on individual, group and organization level. The project is not specifically geared to the needs and capacities of particularly disadvantaged and vulnerable beneficiaries and stakeholders. Differentiation by gender was made throughout the project design and implementation.

We consider the intervention's design as appropriate and realistic in terms of technical, organisational and financial aspects. The impact indicators do reflect a holistic approach to sustainable development with regard to social, environmental and economic dimensions. Resuming, we conclude that **the project is highly relevant**.

Regarding the criterion **coherence**, the **external coherence with international partners** seems not to be in line with the intentions outlined in the GGAHP project documents, at least not from the point of view of donors. Donors claimed during interviews that coordination and communication with GGAHP was rather poor and would need improvement. GGAHP team also confirmed that donor coordination is weak although SDC initiated donor coordination through the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry (MOFALI).

In terms of **external coherence with national partners**, the intervention complements and supports the partner's own efforts and is following the principle of subsidiarity.

In terms of **internal coherence**, the SDC development cooperation is designed and implemented in a complementary manner, based on the division of tasks of the SDC programs. As per the design and the implementation, SDC is meaningfully interlinked within national interventions and synergies are leveraged.

In general, we concluded that there is a **high internal coherence**. In terms of external coherence, the design and implementation with national partner systems is highly coherent. With regard to coherence with international partners, the design is fully coherent, while the implementation was lagging behind.

Regarding the criterion **effectiveness**, we conclude that ten impact and outcome indicators, all (five) outcome indicators were fully achieved. Since data is missing on impact indicators, we can assume that five impact indicators have been achieved at least partially. When the final survey will be done and full data will be available, it is possible to fully achieve all indicators.

We can therefore conclude that the **project achieved or will achieve its intended objectives,** outputs and outcomes. The ambitious project is **highly effective** and achieved most of the intended outcomes, indicators and results with a high level of quality.

Regarding the criterion **efficiency t**he project delivered the results cost-effectively with a small team and with a small budget compared to other donor projects. The efficiency of the project was recognized by interview partners at Government, donor and partner level. The human resources were distributed cost efficiently. Cost contributions of partners, executing agencies, beneficiaries and donors were achieved and gradually increased, which leveraged SDC funding and resulted in increased efficiency. The intervention’s inputs have been used economically in relation to the outputs delivered.

There is no indication that the project results could have been achieved with less funding or more cost – effective. **The project was both in terms of production efficiency and allocation efficiency very efficient.**

The project achieved **important impacts**. There is a positive **environmental impact on rangelands health**, where PUGs apply rotational grazing and other recommended practices, such as monitoring of pasture quality, agreements on seasonal grazing boundaries, rangeland management planning, winter shelter, forage and hay preparation, clean water access and animal health improvement. However, this cannot be confirmed at national level where from roughly 94 million ha, still roughly 30 million ha is considered as heavily degraded, roughly 20 million ha as improved and some 44 million ha is considered as properly used and healthy (Agency for Land Affairs, Geodesy and Cartography - ALAGaC report 2021). These figures show what can be done realistically based on the GGAHP approach and it also shows what still needs to be done. Degradation linked to overstocking remains a major challenge nationwide. Through the Pasture User Group (PUG) system and Rangeland Use Agreements (RUAs), as well as active

participation of herders in decision making on Local Development Funds (LDF) funds, a **behavioural change** from passive users of the land to active custodians has been achieved. The PUG system and RUAs as well as herder´s participation in LDF funding is expected to serve as a model to achieve broad-based impact. The new **livestock tax** can have a positive impact on rangeland, if properly applied and regulated.

There is no evidence that **income** at herder level has increased, although positive achievements were made with regard to new value chains, higher prices, access to markets and access to loans. A positive impact with regard to **gender equity**, recognition of their rights and gender equality can be assumed due to participation in RUAs (signature), presence in **leadership positions** in PUGs, Association of Pasture User Groups in Soum (APUGs), cooperatives and Credit and Savings Cooperatives (CSC). Increased income of women can be assumed through the small investment projects, but the impact is not well documented. Positive impact on other vulnerable groups has not been observed or documented. GGAHP and SDC support with regard to conducive **policy environment** (new laws) will most likely have a positive impact in the long run on rangeland health, stocking rate and animal health. We can conclude that GGAHP has already produced **significant positive intended results at the overarching level**. It is also expected to do so in the future without the current project intervention. No negative impact was observed or commented, however more regulated land rights **could have a negative impact on herders' mobility** during exceptional events (droughts, dzuds, rodent infestations) due to PUG "boundaries" and RUAs. On the other side herders are better prepared for extreme climate due to improved livestock fodder availability in some PUGs.

In terms of **sustainability,** we consider the introduced herding practices as highly sustainable as well as the rangeland monitoring system, which is already embedded in the Government structure. The **LDF mechanism** with the participation of herders, which has been introduced with the project support is also considered as sustainable. Although the new animal tax was voted, its implementation hasn't started yet, so the assessment of sustainability cannot yet be done. The evaluation team also considers the **Animal Health and traceability system** as sustainable since it was handed over to the Government and is implemented with own Government resources. The **Responsible Nomad Traceability System** (RNTS) is not yet sustainable as per our judgement, since costs are considered as high and it still needs to be adopted by the international private sector. The **RUA** are also sustainable in the sense that it is expected that clear land use rights will remain. Some of the PUGs can be considered as sustainable, while others still would need donor support. The same applies to **marketing cooperatives and CSCs**: Some are sustainable, some will require further donor support and some will disappear. The National Federation of Pasture Users (NFPUG) has strong capacities and its co funding has increased, but dependence on SDC funding is still high. Donors showed interest in further supporting NFPUG to become more financially independent. In Annex 6.1. an assessment with rating of the sub-criteria was done according to the SDC assessment grid.

Main lessons learned and recommendations include:

- Although better **pasture management** was demonstrated by the project in localized, multiple areas, degradation and overstocking is still a problem nationwide, which would need further action. Increasing productivity and value in order to reduce animal numbers without income loss is the key to successful and sizeable reductions of animal numbers. **Productivity increase was demonstrated, but the team did not find evidence that it led to destocking**. Fodder production is a good and well accepted strategy to more resilience in extreme climate conditions.

Degradation of riverbanks is at an alarming rate and should be attended in management plans and RUAs.

- Although both **rangeland monitoring systems** (National Agency for Meteorological and Environmental Monitoring -NAMEM and ALAGaC) are sustainable, future assistance to the ALAGaC will be needed to secure proper reporting and to secure the use of the results. Continuous support will be needed to strengthen the knowledge and skills of the Soum land officers, PUG members and other participants for the best performance of the photo-monitoring and reporting.
- The **Ecological Site Description** (ESD) approach and its associated State and Transition Model and Recovery Class will need further updates and improvements.
- Important **value chains, such as meat, milk, cashmere sheep wool, skin and hides** were developed by the project. To develop animal fibres value chains, strategic partnerships with international brands should be favoured in the short term, while the industry continues building its capacities. Meat products value chains represent the highest development potential. There should be further efforts to improve export opportunities. The RNTS would need a better link to international brands and private sector adoption. A through Cost benefit analysis is recommended.
- The **Animal Health Traceability System** is operational but will need further capacity building
- **Genetic improvement** is highly desired and has been demonstrated at pilot basis but **would still need further external support**. In example the platinum colour yak breeding was piloted, the Sartuul sheep breed to prepare a raw material for domestic carpet making was re-introduced as a business model through breeding bucks, and high quality breeding animals were supported to improve animal productivity like the Barga" sheep with over 30% more meat production.
- The **PUG system** is functional although not all PUGs will survive. There is a need to **further assist PUGs, APUGs and AFPUGs**, since not all of them can be considered as sustainable. NFPUG should continue its assistance to value chains development.
- GGAHP in cooperation with MoFALI, ALAGaC and Mongolian University for Life Science (MULS) has developed a methodology for the creation of **Soum reserve rangelands for emergency situations** (dzuds, droughts). The creation of such common reserves is an important task remaining.
- **The pasture law is a sensitive topic, and a national consensus is about to emerge**. Core lessons learned of the project are reflected in the draft **rangeland law**: RUA, PUG territorial approach and rangeland monitoring. More lobbying will be required to conclude the law and to strengthen the interests of herders. SDC should support the Government of Mongolia (GoM) in the enforcement of the **Animal Number Taxation Law** and for the elaboration of the necessary regulations in collaboration with NFPUG to ensure sustainable financing of rangeland management. Capacity building at Soum administration level is also further required to implement the law and its potential. Integration of PUG/RUA system into currently revised Land Law is also important to validate project results.
- There is a need to strengthen a **donor coordination mechanism** to extend its reach to lower levels such as inter-agencies and inter-projects implementation teams. MOFALI should take the lead.
- It is further recommended to carry out a post **evaluation**.

2 EVALUATION METHOD

In this chapter we are describing the evaluation method and evaluation design.

2.1 Evaluation design

We applied a **theory-based evaluation approach**, using the programme's hypothesis of change as a basis. Additionally, we used the formulated exit and legacy strategy as a main reference in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the current consolidation phase and possible impacts beyond 2021.

We used several sources of information (**data triangulation**), various methods of data collection (**method triangulation**) and a diverse team consisting of two mail foreign evaluators and one national female evaluator from different professional backgrounds (**evaluator triangulation**).

The evaluation was carried out in the period from 19.07. to 20.08. 2021. Three consultants formed the evaluation team:

- Paul Borsy as the team leader, forester by profession and based in Germany, guiding the evaluation
- Cedric Bussac – Livestock products and value chain expert, based in Georgia and
- Oyuntulkhuur Bandi - Rangeland management and livestock value chain expert based in Mongolia.

The evaluation followed the OECD DAC criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability[1] [2]. OECD adopted new guidelines for evaluations and included a sixth criteria, which is coherence. We agreed with the client to follow the new criteria. We also followed SDC evaluation policy 2018 and the " How-to Note Evaluation" toolkit from SDC 2020.

We applied the following methods of evaluation and data analysis:

I) **Revision of existing documents:** Reports from the Animal Health project, Green Gold (GG) and Green Gold Animal Health Project (GGAHP), previous evaluation reports, and the related management responses, as well as other secondary primary data were the main background documents for this mandate. We also reviewed relevant strategies (SDC and national), policies, laws and regulations.

II) **Evaluation design matrix:** An evaluation design matrix was developed by our team, where we indicated the main questions for each evaluation dimension and highlighted the methodology we will apply. The design matrix was sent to SDC prior to the evaluation work and can be found in Annex 6.5.

III) **Semi structured interviews guideline**: We developed an interview guideline for interviewees at local and national level. The guideline was presented to GGAHP team before evaluation started.

IV) **Selection of stakeholders**: A draft list of potential stakeholders was produced by our team and shared with the GGAHP team. The list of stakeholders took into account

[1] Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and principles for use. OECD&DAC on Development Evaluation, 2019
[2] SDC evaluation policy 2018

representatives from public and private sector, donors, NGOs and Government representatives and Soum, Aimag and central level. The preliminary list was then adapted with the team during the evaluation.

V) **Criteria matrix:** In order to make sure that we have a good balance between experienced and less experienced PUGs, cooperatives and a good representation of stakeholder we elaborated a criteria matrix. The criteria matrix took into account different ecological zones, different level of autonomy, balance between Aimags and Soums where GGAHP has been working for a long time and those ones with recent intervention only, capacity and resilience to dzud as well as gender balance. The criteria matrix was discussed with GGAHP project team and a final selection of PUGs, APUGs, cooperatives, was done by the evaluation team.

VI) **Work programme:** We developed a draft work program in our technical offer and refined it after the kick-off meeting. Our intention was to start with interview before the kick-off with SDC and GGAHP teams and the summer holidays. However, we were not able to follow the initially planned work programme due to various factors.

VII) **Semi structured remote interviews:** Due to COVID it was not possible to travel to Mongolia. This limited the time and quality of interviews. Interviews were done remotely with Skype, Teams, Zoom and Whatsapp technology. The GGAHP team helped in contacting stakeholders, arranging meetings and translating. In many cases we did interviews in parallel in two teams due to the time constraints. The interview guideline can be found in Annex 6.3 and the list of interviewees with interview dates in Annex 6.2.

VIII) **Individual, group interviews and workshops**: A lot of interviews were done as group interviews. This was mainly due to time constraints and vacation period, where not all stakeholders were available and flexible in time. Doing group interviews with PUGs and cooperatives limited the quality since there was little time per group and mainly leaders talked, while we did not have a chance to talk to other group members. Individual interviews were more useful since we could go into depth, and were able to discuss controversial issues as well.

IX) **Scoring:** After most of the interviews (being it group or individual) we asked interviewees to rank the success of the project according to 13 criteria in terms of their perception of improvements. The results can be observed in Annex 6.4. The results are not scientific and not representative. It is rather a spontaneous impression by stakeholders. Neither all interviewees answered nor did those who answered refer to all questions.

X) **Debriefing workshop**: At the end of the interview phase, we conducted two debriefing workshops: One with the GGAHP team and the other one with the SDC team. The workshops were useful to clarify open questions and validate preliminary results. A power point was prepared for this purpose.

XI) **Assessment grid**: After the finalization of data assessment, interviews and workshops, we used the SDC assessment grid and scored the project according to the format established by SDC. The result can be seen in Annex 6.1.

Additional to the main OECD DAC criteria, we attended **specific questions** raised by the client with regard to sustainability:

1. success factors and elements that are already sustainable,
2. other elements that are not yet sustainable and need continuous/ongoing support by Swiss actors and
3. elements which need other donors, such as NGOs or the Mongolian Government as well as
4. elements that should be stopped.

These questions were discussed with all interviewees to get a good understanding of the perception. Details are shown in chapter 3.6.

We assessed whether the benefits of the programme are likely to continue after the end of the programme. We looked at budget allocations within the partner system (Local Development Funds - LDF, national and local government, cooperatives), policy as well as structural changes within the partner organization over the last years and the degree of commitment expressed by our interview partners. We tried to find out whether transformative changes have been triggered and whether positive impacts on individual and institutional capacities have been achieved, especially at Pasture User Group (PUGs), Association of Pasture User Groups (AFPUG) and cooperatives level, value chains and credit and savings cooperatives (CSC) (see chapter 3.6).

After collecting secondary and primary data we conducted the data triangulation analysis.

Limitations of this evaluation

Some limitations were encountered during this evaluation:

- Since the evaluation was done remotely, the interaction with the target groups was rather indirect. Interviews have been conducted remotely, which do not allow a direct interaction with men and women outside the formal protocol of online interviews. Nonverbal communication and body language are more difficult or impossible to see or perceive, understand and interpret.
- Site visits were not possible which usually allow some informal talks, questions along the observed situation and improvements, observations on the living conditions of the target groups and working conditions of the partner system.
- Group interviews were conducted with leaders only. It was not possible to talk to other group members.
- Having mainly talked to leaders only, it is likely that there was a positive bias in the selection of interviewees, although selection criteria were established previous to the interviews to ensure the best representativity level possible.
- Evaluation was done during summer holidays which made it difficult to access the government stakeholders. Finally, it was possible with the help of the GGAHP team, but the interview phase extended and overlapped with the analysis phase and did not match with the original plan.
- Time difference did not allow to have interviews and workshops in the morning hours of Mongolia.
- Translation is a filter and can dilute understanding, perception and interpretation.

2.2 Data source and data quality

The main source of information was provided by the SDC and GGAHP team. Selective reports were sent to our team in time. Before conducting the first interviews, we had time to review the reports. The main documentation consisted of:

- Planning document, log frame, annual reports and working plans, field reports. internal project reports, strategies, capitalization products, capacity development plan, extension approach, law proposals and project budget allocation;
- Evaluation reports of the previous phases;
- Updated monitoring matrix with data sheets and excel data sets;
- Relevant expert reports;
- Reports from national authorities, policy documents, laws and draft laws and regulations;
- National data on overarching development results and verification of overarching indicators such as rangeland condition, rangeland degradation data, livestock data, rangeland health, income and poverty data, LDF allocations and information on value chain data;
- Capitalization products as videos;
- Leaflets and posters developed by the project.

Additional to the documents sent, we have also received a link to the slideshare data bank: http://www.slideshare.net/GreengoldMongolia. Other sources of information were the primary data assessment through interviews. We interviewed 14 PUGs, 14 APUGs and 13 Cooperatives with leaders, 34 stakeholders with representatives from Government, Academy, private sector and donors (WB, UNDP, ADB, AVSF, FAO). Many of the interview partners were women at PUG, APUG and cooperative level. This may indicate the result of the gender balanced work done by GGAHP.

We consider the selected reports sent to the team as fully adequate to conduct the evaluation. We appreciate that a selection has been made by the team, which makes it easier to review the most important documents instead of first having to work through a long list of reports. Access to other information was always granted on request. Financial information was also available and disclosed.

The **quality of the data** obtained from the aforementioned sources was very high. The content of the documents and interviews was relevant and necessary to answer the key questions of the evaluation. The contents are valid because both the documentation and the interviewees from different organizations coincide in most of the assessments, although they differ in some aspects, which is understandable.

The quality of the results monitoring system is high in the sense that it provides the necessary and sufficient information to be able to assess the effectiveness of the project. However, we faced the problem that the baseline was done, but a final survey was not carried out due to COVID restrictions. This implied, that not all data was available (see chapter 3.3).

Access to Excel monitoring files and monitoring data sheets was provided during the evaluation, but not at the beginning. Earlier access would have been better.

It is important to notice that some of the information is already embedded in the partner structure. Documentation can be found like in the web page from the National Federation of Pasture Users (NFPUG) http://en.greenmongolia.mn/contact-us, Agency for Land Affairs, Geodesy and Cartography (ALAGC) web page https://egazar.gov.mn/ and National Agency for Meteorological and Environmental Monitoring (NAMEM) web page https://irimhe.namem.gov.mn/ with data on rangeland health.

There were some limitations since some documents were available in Mongolian language only.

3 FINDINGS

In the following we present the results of our evaluation according to OECD DAC criteria.

3.1 Relevance

Plausibility of the intervention design

The GG project (2004-2016) was initiated as a follow up to a humanitarian aid project of SDC in Mongolia after the heavy dzuds [3]of 1999 and 2001. The current phase merged two projects, the Green Gold (GG) and the Animal Health Project (AHP) which both ended 2016. The project design is based on the experiences of both projects and builds problem analysis, lessons learned through evaluation and project experiences and a clear and formulated impact hypothesis, reflected in the "project document", November 2016. The overall project goal is to contribute to improved livelihood of herder households through sustainable rangeland management, better marketing and a conducive legal and policy environment (project document 2016 p. 3).

The impact hypothesis assumes that sustainable rangeland management is achieved and maintained through collective implementation by organized herders (through pasture user groups) and backed by local authorities (through rangeland use agreements). Thanks to improved marketing through linkages between cooperatives and processors and better quality of animal products through improved animal health, income of herder households is increased and contributes to improved livelihood. Sustainable rangeland management and improved animal health are increasingly rooted in the legal provisions and in the Government action plan enabling conducive policy in the livestock sector. The project has therefore defined **three main outcomes:**

1. Sustainable rangeland management is ensured through pasture user groups (PUG) and rangeland use agreements (RUA)
2. Income of herders' households is increased through collective market access and improved quality of livestock products thanks to improved veterinary services
3. Conducive policy environment for effective animal health system and sustainable rangeland are supported

The **intervention design is plausible and precise** and expressed through outcome and output indicators. The intervention design is based on social, environmental and economic dimensions having 1) poverty of herders, 2) gender issues, 3) degraded rangelands, 4) lack of access to markets, 5) poor animal health and 6) instability of the Government defined as transversal themes (project document 2016 p. 4 ff). The project design is appropriate and realistic in terms of technical, organisational and financial aspects. Adequate financial and human resources have been allocated. The design has identified the intervention level at macro-, meso- and micro level

[3] A dzud is a disaster in steppe, semi-desert and desert regions in Mongolia and Central Asia in which large numbers of livestock die, primarily due to starvation being unable to graze due to particular severe climatic conditions. In winter it may happen, e.g., due to impenetrable ice crust. In summer it may happen due to drought. Various kinds of zud are recognized, depending on the particular type of climatic conditions.

(project document 2016 p. 24 ff). Beneficiaries and geographic coverage have also clearly been identified (p. 21 ff).

Neither in the design nor in the reports special attention was given to the capacities of particularly disadvantaged and vulnerable beneficiaries and stakeholders. A differentiation was clearly made with respect to gender. Gender issues were attended in the design and monitoring system and gender aggregated data can be found in the project documents and indicators.

Alignment with policies and priorities

The project was aligned with **Mongolia's Green Development Policy** (2015), Strategic objective #2: *"Sustain ecosystem's carrying capacity by enhancing environmental protection and restoration activities, and reducing environmental pollution and degradation*", specifically measures:

- "3.1.4. Increase the processing of raw materials such as leather, wool and cashmere to 60 percent by 2020, and to 80 percent by 2030, through the promotion of sustainable agriculture development, and the development of industrial processing cluster that is export-oriented and based on green technology" and
- "3.1.6. Improve agricultural product supply chains and networks and provide support for the introduction of environmentally friendly storage and packaging technologies for agricultural products".

Actions undertaken by the project were consistent with **Government Action Plan** for 2016-2020, specifically:

- "2.30 Establish a system to register livestock, improve the quality and standards of livestock raw materials, and clarify their origin",
- "2.33 quality of livestock rather than qualtity, improve productivity, protect genetic resources, conduct scientifically based breeding …. Strengthen livestock breeding units",
- "2.36 improve pasture use and protection, ensure rangeland monitoring and recover, reduce degradation, overgrazing and desertification, increase herders' involvement in rodent control by using environmentally friendly and advanced methods"

Objectives of the project were in line with the provisions of **State Policy on Food and Agriculture**, which included the objectives

- "3.1.1 to create a legal environment for intensive livestock breeding, herder groups, cooperatives and households to possess sufficient land for livestock production, to establish otor areas, and to operate rangeland use committees in Soums",
- "3.1.11 establish and develop legal, financial and economic conditions for collective farms engaged in rangeland animal husbandry in the form of herder groups, cooperatives and other community-based organizations",
- "3.2.4 establish and develop a market system for processing and selling agricultural products in consideration of regional specifics",
- "3.2.20 to redefine the types of veterinary, breeding work and services that must be provided to livestock, and establish an implementation unit in each Soum"

The project was also aligned with the **National Program on Livestock, the Government Policy on Herders** and other relevant decisions and recommendations issued by the government during the project lifetime.

During the lifespan of the project, the **Draft Rangeland Law** was newly developed with the collaboration of various stakeholders and with SDC/GGAHP support, but not approved yet. The current policy is to integrate it with the Law on Land which is under revision. Both laws are

supposed to be submitted to the Parliament in 2021. The **Animal Number Taxation Law** was taken up by the new Parliament in autumn 2020 to reinstate rangeland use payment by herders, with strong political buy-in.

In summary, the Final Evaluation Team **considers that the relevance of the project objective and activities has adequately held up to the priorities of the Government of Mongolia**.

Alignment with the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders

The following alignments are based on the project design document and the annual reports of the GGAHP: The project aimed to **address the key challenges facing animal husbandry in Mongolia, specifically targeting rangeland and animal health**. In this regard, collaboration and support was continued over years with the following key stakeholders: Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry (MOFALI) and relevant agencies in rangeland and animal health such as the NAMEM, Agency for Land Affairs, Geodesy and Cartography (ALAGaC), and Veterinary and Animal Breeding agency (VABA).

The project has put a tremendous effort towards **establishing Pasture User Groups (PUG),** primary, secondary and higher-level self-governing herder organizations with the purpose to collectively manage rangelands and market livestock products. PUGs jointly form an umbrella organization at local and national level.

The key functions of two agencies on **rangeland monitoring and assessment** was supported by the project. Rangeland health monitoring database at NAMEM and annual grazing impact of photo monitoring at ALAGaC were created as well as the establishment of RUA and its registration at the National Land Management Database. Skill and knowledge of Soum and Aimag level officials and agency specialists were strengthened in monitoring methods and database operations. The capacities of NAMEM and ALAGaC were developed to manage the monitoring system and to inform policy makers on the trend of rangeland health throughout the country.

The demand in animal health sector has been met in terms of establishing a powerful digital system (Mongolian Animal Health Information System -MAHIS). Since adoption of new Animal Health law, GGAHP has been supporting GAVS to train herders, Soum and Aimag based veterinarians in the new working requirements. **State veterinary surveillance system has been developed** at the State Central Veterinary Laboratory. In the consolidation phase, GGAHP has provided technical assistance to create its network at the Aimag and Soum levels.

GGAHP pays special attention to **promote women** in the management and leadership positions of APUGs, AFeds and cooperatives. This is in line with national and global efforts as well as SDC country strategy. Remarkable results have been achieved (see Chapter 3.5. - Impact).

Conclusion

We can conclude that the intervention's objectives is **well aligned with the (global, regional and country-specific) policies and priorities of the SDC and of the beneficiaries**. In the design and implementation the relevant political and institutional environment was taken into account and the framework conditions were improved through support to adequate laws and policies.

The project is **well aligned with the development needs and capacities of the beneficiaries** and stakeholders involved on individual, group and organization level. The project is not specifically

geared to the needs and capacities of particularly disadvantaged and vulnerable beneficiaries and stakeholders. Differentiation by gender was made throughout the project design and implementation.

We consider the **intervention's design appropriate and realistic in terms of technical, organisational and financial aspects** (see also Chapter 3.3. and 3.4.). It is sufficiently precise and plausible. In the design the impact indicators do reflect a holistic approach to sustainable development with regard to social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainability.

Resuming we conclude that the project is highly relevant.

3.2 Coherence

In the following we describe internal and external coherence.

Internal coherence

The SDC country strategy 2018-2021 is defining the **overall goal** of the Swiss Cooperation Strategy 2018-2021 as to contribute to the empowerment of Mongolian citizens and institutions towards an equitable, green and prosperous society, leaving no one behind. SDC wants to achieve this goal through interventions in three complementary domains: (1) Agriculture and Food Security; (2) Basic Education and Vocational Training; and (3) Governance.

The domain goal in agriculture is to "*contribute to green development and better livelihoods for vulnerable rural and peri-urban small-scale farmers and herders in a sustainable manner".* The expected outcomes are: (1) An improved regulatory framework and institutions for sustainable management in agriculture; and (2) Increased income for vulnerable herders and small-scale farmers through improved productivity, quality and market access (SDC strategy).

Gender and Governance are defined as transversal cross cutting themes and will be mainstreamed throughout the three domains according to the strategy. Both themes are also part of the overall monitoring and reporting system. Governance is a domain in itself and is also treated as a transversal theme according to the strategy. Every domain has an outcome dedicated to improving the institutional framework of the sector. Principles such as accountability, transparency, participation and efficiency will be applied in all SDC activities states the document (p. 15).

Due to the vacation period, it was not possible to validate the strategy through an interview with the Director of Cooperation of (Swiss) Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA, SDC and Swiss Cooperation Office and Consular Agency in Mongolia. However, the alignment with SDC strategy was confirmed during the debriefing workshop with SDC staff.

External coherence

The project design document (PRODOC 2016) analyses in p. 17, that the GGAHP is based on upon the positive results of the GG and AH projects. SDC decided to consolidate, upscale, replicate, institutionalize and phase out its support in the livestock sector to allow the results of both projects to be sustained and the investment secured. Sustainable rangeland management, strengthened herder organisations, improved linkages between cooperatives and processors and improved animal health systems will be the focus of this consolidation phase. The two projects (GG and AHP) are linked together as they both promote quality above quantity and they

encompass the three basic elements of the livestock sector in Mongolia, which are: sustainable rangeland management, better marketing and healthy animals.

The design document further states that these results obtained in both projects need to be further scaled up and i**nstitutionalized** to achieve sustainable results. SDC is seen an actor among the major donors, supporting the livestock sector in Mongolia, especially on rangeland management and animal health. The role of SDC has been defined to advocate for a sustainable rangeland management and the uptake of best practices in marketing and animal health systems, building upon its network and experiences (PRODOC design document 2016).

National institutions coherence

According to the 2017 legacy exit strategy, the project is focusing on:

1. **Upscale** PUG and RUA approach nationwide through NFPUG, AIMAG, Soum and PUGs;
2. **Integration** of Ecological potential based (Ecological site Description - ESD) and participatory (PUG based) rangeland health and grazing impact monitoring system fully into relevant local institutions in Mongolia (ALAGaC and NAMEM) and Mongolian University for Life Science (MULS) and National Agricultural extension Centre (NAEC);
3. **Platforms for coordination** between three main Ministries (Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry - MoFALI, Ministry of Environment and Green Development - MELD, MTC/ALAGaC) through NFPUG, MoFALI Inter Aimag reserve and Rangeland management administration – IORRM;
4. Strong and sustainable PUG based on primary and secondary marketing cooperatives through NFPUG, Soum and Aimag Federations;
5. Effective quality **traceability system** of livestock raw materials through NFPUG and Soum and Aimag federations and Processing companies and their associations, MULS, State central veterinary laboratory – SCVL, MoFALI/Veterinary and animal breeding agency - VABA) and Mongolian veterinary association;
6. Strong sustainable **Savings and Credit cooperatives** developed out of Herders Matching Fund through NFPUG, Soum and Aimag federations and Union of Savings and Credit cooperative and its Training Centre;
7. Constructive and evidence-based **lobbying to adopt Rangeland Protection law** through NFPUG, MoFALI/Otor rangeland administration and
8. Effective implementation and enforcement of **Animal health law** for increased export of Mongolian livestock products through MOFALI/VABA.

International institutions coherence

In the final capitalization action plan for 2020 (GGAHP internal Excel table from 2019) various international actors are named as potential cooperation partners for each of the eight legacies. Those are: ADB, UNDP (ENSURE project), WB, IFAD, FAO KHAS bank, EU and JICA.

During interviews with representatives from WB, UNDP, AVSF, FAO and ADB, it was claimed that cooperation with the GG and AHP or GGAHP has not been very fluent, although some isolated cooperation and even co financing took place (see chapter 3.4). For example, WB project cooperated with regard to shared costs and livestock control posts in Bulgan Aimag, UNDP is building on the PUG system supported by GGAHP and supported 140 monitoring points within

the NAMEM monitoring system. On the other hand, all donor representatives stressed the fact, that GGAHP had developed a very good basis, where other projects can build on, namely the PUG system, NFPUG to some extent, the monitoring system of rangeland health and technical aspects with regard to rangeland degradation classification and restoration opportunities, value chains (VC) and cooperatives.

The 2019 annual report (p.51) states that the project initiated by WTO and implemented by FAO following GGAHP - General Authority for Veterinary Service (GAVS) animal health traceability project, overlaps in many activities. However due to lack of commitment and cooperation it still creates confusion among stakeholders specially among Aimag and Soum stakeholders and herders.

All donor representatives claimed that the **cooperation and communication with GGAHP is poor and should be improved.** It was also claimed that there is no donor cooperation through MOFALI or other national ministries. According to interviews with donors, it seems that MOFALI is trying to allocate different donors in different zones in the country.

In one of the interviews with donors, it was also stated that MOFALI did try to establish donor coordination, but later this initiative was abandoned due to changes on leadership and Government. One of the reasons for not following consistent donor coordination by MOFALI, was identified as being the high rotation of staff.

In a meeting with the SDC team, it was reported however, that a lot of efforts were done by the GGAHP and SDC to coordinate among donors. SDC tried to support the GCF funded UNDP project in order to avoid duplication, but without success (according to SDC). A donor coordination platform was initiated by SDC in 2019, later it was abandoned due to COVID, but revitalized in 2021 It is now called Food and Agriculture Development Partner Group (FADPG) and meetings are held every two months. There are terms and meeting protocols, and it is considered by SDC as a successful donor coordination in the agriculture sector. It is chaired by MOFALI, co-chaired by FAO and Ministry of Environment. However, donor coordination from MOFALI is also considered as poor by SDC staff.

Conclusions

The **external coherence with international partners** therefore seems not to be in line with the intentions outlined in the GGAHP project documents, at least not from the point of view of donors. GGAHP team also confirmed that donor coordination is weak. In terms of intervention's implementation with other donor projects, the project has rather poorly coordinated with other donors' activities, according to donors' perception, although the GGAHP PRODOC and legacy strategy planned for close cooperation and implementation and there is evidence of efforts from GGAHP and SDC. It seems this was not achieved in reality.

In terms of **external coherence with national partners**, the intervention complements and supports the partner's own efforts and is following the principle of subsidiarity. A good example is the established monitoring system in NAMEM and ALAGaC. The design and implementation is strongly designed to use existing national systems and structures of partners and common monitoring systems are used.

In terms of **internal coherence**, the SDC development cooperation is designed and implemented in a complementary manner, based on the division of tasks of the SDC programs. As per the design and the implementation, the Swiss Development Cooperation is meaningfully interlinked

within the interventions and synergies are leveraged. The intervention is fully consistent with international and national norms and standards to which SDC development cooperation is committed (e.g. human rights, gender equality, land rights, poverty reduction) (SDC Cooperation Strategy Mongolia 2018 -2021).

International common systems for monitoring and evaluation are applied in the sense of using OECD DAC criteria and carrying out evaluations according to international standards.

In general, we can conclude that there is a **high internal coherence**. In terms of external coherence, the design and implementation with national partner systems is highly coherent. With regard to coherence with international partners, the design is fully coherent, while the implementation was lacking behind in terms of coherence.

3.3 Effectiveness

The logic to reach the overall objective with regard to approach/strategy, objectives, outcomes, output and their indicators

The **objective** of the project has been defined as:
Project Goal: Livelihood of herder households is improved through sustainable rangeland management, better marketing and a conducive legal and policy environment.
There are three outcomes defined:

Outcome 1: **Sustainable rangeland management** is ensured through up-scaled pasture user groups and rangeland use agreements

Outcome 2: **Income of HH is increased** through collective market access and improved quality of livestock products (veterinary services)

Outcome 3: **Conducive policy** environment for effective animal health system and sustainable rangeland are supported

The project has defined **five indicators at impact level**. For each outcome, one to two **outcome indicators** have been defined. In the logical framework of the GGAHP project there are impact and outcome indicators. The impact indicators measure expected impact at economic, political, social, human and security level. Additionally, an impact indicator has been defined, measuring the development of a legacy strategy with an exit plan for all three outcomes.
The outcome indicators 1.1, 1.2, are rather output indicators from our point of view, since they measure the direct input of the project intervention (number of PUGs and number of RUAs). However, if PUGs and RUAs are established by the beneficiaries themselves, it can be considered as an outcome.
The outcome indicator 2.1 (income generated by cooperatives) can be seen as an outcome, since the project intervention is on the level of supporting the cooperatives through capacity development, but not supporting the sales of livestock materials directly.
Outcome indicator 2.2 (livestock products with online veterinary certificate) can also be seen as an outcome, since the veterinary services are using the capacity building measures of the project to achieve an online service from birth to end.

Outcome indicator 3.1 is also an outcome indicator, since the project can only support the elaboration of improved laws, while the final development and approval is already an outcome beyond the direct project intervention.
For each outcome, two to five outputs and output indicators have been defined in the project design document. Later, after an extension of the project has been approved, some outputs and output indicators were added to measure the exit strategy of the project.

A **baseline survey** was done in 2017. However, the final survey was not possible due to COVID. This is why outcome (impact) **indicators do not have an end-value at the time of the evaluation**. Thus, we used output indicators to assess the level of achievement.

Most of the indicators at outcome and output level fulfil the **SMART criteria**: They are specific, measurable, achievable, attributable, relevant and timely.
In the case of **impact indicator I-1 (on household income)** the attributable criteria is not that clear. Average income of herders is not necessarily attributable to the project, since prize fluctuation, weather and climate conditions, economic crisis and unfavourable framework conditions may have more impact on the average HH level than the influence of project activities. In this sense, we also consider the baseline survey, done in 2017 not as adequate, since the **control group is not clearly defined**, apparently has higher income, smaller size of grazing areas and is living closer to towns, which allows better market access. It would have been better to differentiate between type of households, define where the income is coming from (income from herder activities and exclude off farm income), and compare beneficiaries from the GGAHP with other herders in a similar situation without project intervention. The way income is measured here, could result in lower average HH income due to dzud or COVID, while the impact of the project could have been positive, but would then not be visible or measurable.

In the case of **impact indicator I- 2 (**on average public investment and I -4 on average public investment in roads and bridges), the possible increase of public investment is not directly attributable to the project, since economic framework conditions could influence the public investments more than the project.
Impact indicator I-5 (on resilience to dzud): The indicator does describe how the resilience is measured. But this has been later specified in the monitoring data sheet. It now refers to investments in forage preparation (hay and fodder), which is measurable and attributable. However, we would not consider it as an outcome indicator, but rather an output indicator, since the project invested directly in hay and fodder promotion and silage preparation Here, it would have been better to measure the investments made by herders only without co-investments of the project, in example through a survey. Local cultivation and fodder purchase could have been distinguished. The current data base did not allow to differentiate between project intervention (output) and investments by the beneficiaries directly (outcome).
In terms of the **logic of the framework** and the question if the indicators measure the overall project goal, we would have preferred defining the project goal without using the word “through”, since this is already part of the project strategy and not the objective. We understand that “improved livelihood of herders” is the objective, while sustainable rangeland management, better marketing and a conducive legal and policy environment are rather means

to achieve the goal. The multidimensional poverty index is a good way to measure the livelihood of the herders, considering the aforementioned remarks.

Despite these limitations, we can conclude that the **formulated objectives, impact and outcomes and output and their indicators are well formulated in a logic to reach the overall objective.** The intervention strategy has been formulated clearly and is leading towards achievement of the objective.

Achievement of the (intended) objectives

In order to evaluate whether the objective have been achieved, we consider the impact indicators and outcome indicators. We do not consider the additional indicators formulated for the project extension in our evaluation. The following table gives an overview about indicators and the level of achievement:

Table 1: Indicators and level of achievements

Indicator	Level of achievement	Reasoning
Income of 80'000 herder households (320'000 people) organised into PUGs is increased. B: (2017): MNT 9.5 million p/a; T4 (2020): +> 20% (MNT)	Data not available since multidimensional poverty assessment could not be carried out due to COVID **Partially achieved**	Improved income can be expected through **higher prices for some products** (yak down and cashmere, meat and milk Value chain), government and cooperatives dividend and CSC credits. Increased income was not confirmed during interviews.
Increased public investment in rangeland management and PUG system. B (2017): MNT 16 million; T4 (2020): +20%	873 Mio MNT in 2020 in total for all Aimags, which is 79.0 million MNT higher than in the previous year 97,7 million MNTs per Aimag in average, but uneven distribution (some 0) **Partially achieved**	Project reports describe an **increased participation of herders in LDF allocation process** via PUGs and APUGs.
Perception of herders and local authorities on conflicts on rangeland management reduced. B (2017):49%, T4 (2020): reduced considerably	Data not available since multidimensional poverty assessment could not be carried out due to COVID. **Partially achieved**	Reports indicate that **RUA system helps reducing intra-group conflicts and conflicts with other land users** (agriculturalists, mines). Confirmed in interviews. Less effective during droughts or dzuds.
Access to basic services improved (bridges, roads) B 2017: MNT 21 million p/a for a province	443,9 million MNT in 2020 for 9 Aimags. 49,32 million MNT in average per Aimag in 2020. But uneven distribution (some 0). **Partially achieved**	Some unquantifiable and partial proofs of investments found in project reports. **Excel table provided by the GGAHP team with more details.** Not mentioned spontaneously during interviews.

Increased resilience of HH to dzud (investment in winter preparedness) B 2017: 89% of total herders	Data not available since multidimensional poverty assessment could not be carried out due to COVID. **Partially achieved**	During interviews, herders commented about hay and fodder production. It was not clear if this was their own investment or co- investment by the project. Output Indicator 1.1 in the annual report confirms 873 million MNT co financing by public funding and herders in rangeland investments (annual report 2020) and backed by Excel tables.
1.1. Number of Soums with PUG's; B (2016):130; T4 (2020):180	184 in 220 **Fully achieved**	Annual report 2020
1.2 Signed RUA's are updated regularly without project support; B (2017): 330; T4 (2020): at least 50% of all signed RUAs3; T4 (2020): 1102	1254 **Fully achieved**	Annual report 2020
2.1 Income generated by cooperatives B (2017): MNT 3.2 billion T4 (2020): +30%	Result 2020: MNT 8.6 billion **Fully achieved**	Annual report 2020
2.2 Number of the project Soums supplying livestock products with online veterinary certificate to trace animal health status. B (2017):0; T4 (2020): 184	Result 2020: 184 **Fully achieved**	Annual report 2020
3.1 Improved laws on rangeland and animal health B: 0 T2: **2** (2020) Animal Health and Rangeland Laws	Result: 2 Animal Health Law and tax law. Rangeland law has not been achieved. **Fully achieved**	Annual report 2020

Additional information was given by the GGAHP internal monitoring system. We want to highlight two aspects:

Income

Cooperatives (CSC and marketing cooperatives) paid a total of 241.036.034 MNT of **dividends to herders** in the year 2020 which is slightly higher than 2019 but almost the double compared to 2018. In 2018, CSC cooperatives did not yet pay dividends. There is detailed data available on LDF funds as excel files and a report was provided on government subsidies for milk production. Information is also shown in chapter 3.4. Based on this information, we can assume that together with better access to value chains and good prizes for products, the income of herders may have improved.

Gender

Gender equality has been attended by the project. Capacity building was targeting female herders specifically and several indicators (1.2.3; 2.2.2 and 3.1.2) measure female rights and power. During interviews, we could observe women leaders of PUGs, APUGs and cooperatives well positioned and self-confident.

Output indicators

According to the annual report 2020 for output 1, four indicators have been achieved fully, while four have been achieved partially.

For output 2, seven indicators have been achieved fully while only one was achieved partially only.

For output 3, one indicator was achieved fully and two were achieved only partially.

We did not take into account the new indicators established for the extension phase, as the data is not yet available.

The project has achieved most of its output indicators and it is possible that all indicators will be achieved by the end of the project.

Conclusion

According to the above table, we can conclude that **out of ten impact and outcome indicators, all (five) outcome indicators were fully achieved**. Since data is missing on impact indicators, we can assume that five impact indicators have been achieved at least partially. When the final survey will be done and full data will be available, it is possible to fully achieve all indicators.

We can therefore conclude that the **project achieved or will achieve its intended objectives**, outputs and outcomes. It has contributed to the achievement of objectives at the level of the intended beneficiaries, namely 82.000 herders from 156 Soums and 18 Aimags organized in 1575 PUGs. Additionally, 83 herder cooperatives were formed and 44 saving and credits cooperatives.

Adjustments were made in the project planning mainly due to COVID restrictions as the main external factor. A **project extension** was achieved, and additional outputs were formulated as an exit strategy. The results were achieved **later than planned**, since COVID stalled many activities. Field work was only possible to a limited extent.

Vulnerable groups have not been addressed specifically in the project design or during project implementation. It is only mentioned with regard to the support to the animal tax law, where equity, poor and vulnerable herders are addressed specifically.

Transversal themes defined in the project design and in the SDC strategy (gender and governance) have been achieved as described above.

Quality of the achievements

The evaluation team found a high quality of implementation. The intervention was based on scientific research with regard to rangeland degradation, restoration and ESD and appropriate monitoring systems.

Unintended results

Neither during interviews, nor in reports unintended negative results were reported. There was one critical remark, that the established PUG system might undermine the power and the administration of the Bagh Government and which could cause conflicts in future. This opinion however was not widely shared.

Another unintended result mentioned was, that buyers of yak and camel complained, that the prize has been "pushed" by the project. This is beneficiary to the herders but negative for the buyers and traders who compete with other international market prizes. Mongolian processors are poorly equipped to compete with China or Western Luxury brands.

Conclusion

We conclude that the ambitious project is **highly effective and achieved most of the intended outcomes, indicators and results with a high level of quality.** No unintended negative results were reported, observed or documented.

3.4 Efficiency

In the following chapter we describe to which extent the project has used its resources efficiently to achieve the intended results and outputs.

Production efficiency: Intervention's inputs used economically in relation to the outputs delivered

SDC GGAHP has provided the consultant with a full overview of the costs spent for each outcome and output in the 2020 annual report, Annex 2. Funding allocation is also available in the PRODOC document 2016. The status of the execution is reflected in the GGAHP annual report 2020. Credit allocation for the full GGAHP phase has been provided and is summarized in table 2. An additional budget of CHF 1.800.000 related to the Animal Health Law, and an extension of CHF 900.000 for 2021 was approved by SDC, as reflected in the same table.

The budget allocation is as follows:

Table 2: Budget allocation for the consolidation phase 2017 -2020 (extended to 2021) after the second and last additional credit Nr. 7F.09484.01

Item	Budget approved in CHF (million MNT) [4]
Original credit from 01/01/2017 to 31/12/2020	5,976,000 (18,574)
Additional credit approved in 2017	1,800,000 (5,588)
Additional credit approved in 2020	900,000 (2,795)
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	**8,676,000 (26,948)**

[4] Exchange rate used from November 2021: 1CHF= 2871,50 MNT

According to information provided by GGAHP (GGAHP outcome in brief - Leaflet) the total SDC contribution was 30.000.000 USD (27,8 million CHF or 78.000 million MNT), herders contributed with 5.000.000 USD (4,6 million CHF or 13.100 million MNT) and state and local budget with 15.000.000 USD (13,9 million CHF or 39.300 million MNT). This reflects a high co- investment by partners. However, it is not reported how calculation was done of counterpart contribution was done.

Additional budget information was given by the GGAHP team in terms of small action projects from 2013–2020 fund allocation in an Excel sheet, dividends paid by cooperatives (see effectiveness chapter), LDF budget allocation (see also effectiveness chapter) and information on milk subsidy programme by the Government. Some key information is highlighted in the following:

Co-financing through Government and herders

The project, from the start, introduced **co-financing** instead of paying the full amount of investments. The **matching funds** (total asset of 3,7 billion MNT according to GGAHP leaflet and member contribution of 640 million MNT) were used to setup CSC cooperatives which are now paying dividend of a total 25 million MNT to herders. 6.9 billion MNT loans were received by 55.900 herders in total (same source).

A rangeland risk fund was established with 270 million MNT of which 65 million MNT was GGAHP contribution, 38,2 million MNT was local government contribution, and 165,2 million MNT was herders' contribution (data from GGAHP outcome in brief - Leaflet).

Cooperatives (CSC and marketing cooperatives) **paid dividends** (see sub chapter income above) Increased dividends reflect increased number of beneficiaries, rather than increased dividends paid per herder household according to numbers presented in GGAHP reports.

The annual report 2020 states that **local contributions to investments in rangeland improvement have gradually increased**. GGAHP has reduced a portion of co investment **from 70/30 to 30/70**. In 2020, herders and local government have invested 873 million MNT in rangeland management projects. This is 79 million MNT more than previous year. More and more herders are willing to pay voluntary grazing fee. In 2020, herders from 19 Soums of 6 Aimags have paid a grazing fee worth 278,6 million MNT.

In 2020, herders and local government in GGAHP target Soums have **invested 873 million MNT which is 79,0 million MNT higher than in the previous year**. GGAHP small action investment projects have been used as initial investment to encourage a co-financing of rangeland improvement projects. GGAHP investment has gradually stopped and now in 50% of target Soums, herders and local government still maintain co-financing arrangements of the project. (Annual report 2020).

GGAHP initiated **match making events** which have advanced into long-term cooperation between domestic processing plants and cooperatives. This is now maintained by Mongolian Wool and Cashmere Association and AFPUGs annually and has become a regular event. These cooperatives supply 70% of all combed yak wool, 50% of combed baby camel wool and 80% of Sartuul sheep wool and 250 tons of cashmere annually. In addition, cooperatives supply everyday staple products to herders. Income generated by the sales of raw materials summed up to a total gross income of 8,8 billion MNT (Annual GGAHP report 2020).

GGAHP in cooperation with MULS researchers has developed **cost-benefit model for lamb feeding program**. According to the estimation, selling lambs increased herders' annual income by MNT 7,5-11,4 million on average and reduced grazing pressure before winter and spring season. (Average annual income by herders in 2015 baseline was 10,5 million MNT). Therefore, the **feedlot project** has both economic and ecological benefits. In November, meat processing plants bought all lambs of the feedlot at 10-15% higher price per kg of live weight in cash on the spot.

Government of Mongolia has issued the **regulation on milk subsidy to dairy farmers** for the milk supplied to the processing companies at winter season from 1st of November till 1st of April. This new subsidy program was effective from 1st of November 2020. This provides an opportunity for the provision of the subsidy to the dairy farmers. Herders/farmers are getting MNT 500 subsidy per liter of milk supplied to the processing companies in winter/spring. The subsidy is mainly used to purchase hay/fodder for their livestock. As a total, these herders/farmers received around MNT 4,1 billion subsidy in 2020 (GGAHP report 2020).

In 2020, LDF have invested 879,6 million MNT for hay and fodder production, 1.724,3 million MNT in animal health services and 443,9 million MNT for better access to pastures through roads and bridges. Herders do participate in the decision making on the LDF fund allocation.

These examples show, that GGAHP investments were leveraged through Government funding, in this case Government subsidies and that the project was able to identify and mobilize sources for co- investments.

Increased efficiency through complementary funding through donors.

AFPUGs has been cooperating with IFAD “Rangeland management and market access” project. MNPUGs provide training to herders and local stakeholders on the establishment of PUGs and improving local legal environment through adoption of Soum and Aimag Rangeland regulation, IFAD project supports investment in rangeland infrastructure to assist with the enforcement of RUAs. With the support of IFAD, 140 PUGs in 18 Soums of six Aimags developed collective grazing plans in cooperation with local authorities and experts (GGAHP annual report 2020).

World Bank has co-invested in the support of LDF in the SLP III project. LDFs are now supporting investments in the sustainable livestock management (Interview information from UNDP and SDC).

ADB is building on the PUG system supported by SDC and supporting PUGs, cooperatives, infrastructure projects (well, bridge, equipment, dipping facilities) and veterinary system. This is complementary to the SDC funding. (ASDIP project: https: //www.greenclimate.fund/ project/fp154).

UNDP reported that some 140 monitoring points were supported by their programme complementary to the GGAHP/ SDC funding for the NAMEM monitoring programme.

FAO also intends to strengthen the photo monitoring programme with equipment and with more precise data assessment (twice a year) including participatory rangeland monitoring according to an interview conducted.

According to an interview with World Bank representatives, World Bank supported animal health control check posts as co-financing with the SDC AHP.

Despite, that donor coordination is claimed to be weak by some interviewed donors (see coherence chapter), there was complementary funding done by donor organizations, which increased the efficiency of the GGAHP. This refers to current and future investments.

Conclusions

We can conclude the GGAHP has **been highly efficient**. The project delivered the results cost-effectively with a small team and with a small budget compared to other donor projects. The efficiency of the project was recognized by interview partners at Government, donor and partner level. The human resources were distributed cost efficiently. **Cost contributions of partners, executing agencies, beneficiaries and donors were achieved and gradually increased, which leveraged SDC funding and resulted in increased efficiency**. The intervention's inputs have been used economically in relation to the outputs delivered. Efficiency was also confirmed in the previous evaluation report 2015. Other donors have bigger budgets, but are not perceived as efficient, according to interviews conducted with stakeholders. The outputs were delivered in time, but there were delays due to COVID restrictions. A cost neutral project extension was therefore approved by SDC.

There is no indication that the project results could have been achieved with less funding or more cost – effective. We consider the project both in terms of production efficiency and allocation efficiency as very efficient.

3.5 Impacts (higher-level development results)

In this chapter we assess whether the project has contributed to higher level development results at the level of beneficiaries (income, livelihood), gender, governance, environment, or other contributions related to the SDC country strategy. In the country strategy, gender and governance are defined as transversal cross cutting themes to be achieved, while other expected outputs and domains are in line with the GGAHP goals (see coherence chapter 3.2.).

Gender

GG AHP paid special attention to promote women in the management and leadership positions of APUGs, AFeds and cooperatives. The Capacity building program strengthened the inclusion of women in activities (42% of women taking part to online trainings) and their involvement in household decision making process (RUAs signed by both husband and wife). The project 2020 report indicated that there are 262 women working in the management positions of cooperatives, 48 are elected as chairwomen and CEOs, and 214 elected as members of Steering Committees. Overall number of women in management positions has increased by 53 in 2020 compared to 2019 (GGAHP annual report 2020). Interviews at the Soum (PUGs and APUGs) level confirmed women acting as outspoken leaders.

GGAHP has allocated a special fund to support **small investment projects proposed by women** herders and female headed households. Between 2017-2020, 160,0 million MNT was spent to support project to process dairy products, prepare forage, to buy equipment to reduce manual work such as sewing, to provide services to tour operators in the Soum, prepare traditional dishes or work as a local guide and others. To which extent this has led to higher level impact, for example increased income of women or other social impact has not been documented.

However, success stories from 2020 GGAHP report, highlight women led initiatives aiming at improved social, economic and environmental benefits for the communities.

Land use rights

The project facilitated the recognition of **land users' rights for 1.254 herder groups** (PUGs). RUAs allows the acknowledgement of herder´s traditional user rights by local and regional governments and can help to protect their traditional pastures from other users such as miners and agriculturists according to interviews conducted. During interviews, local and regional representatives of PUGs and public services acknowledged the importance of RUAs on multiple occasions. However, according to the 2017 socio-economic survey of herders' households, only 39% of herders had heard about RUA. The same survey expressed "doubts if they (herders) have sufficient perceptions and understandings about the importance of RUA (…) the herders, who heard about RUA but did not sign it, have negative opinions about the RUAs". We consider secure land use rights through RUAs as an important impact.

Participation in decision making on LDF funds

Herders organised as PUGs, also increased their participation in the local decision-making process via the LDF: in 2020, LDF spending for different rangeland and livestock management programs reached almost 2 Mio USD (water supply, winter preparation, animal health services and roads and bridges), which could indicate the influence of herders in local level decision making. This right of participation can be considered as an impact in terms of governance. The new tax law is designed in a way that decision on the use of the funds will be taken locally. If this will be implemented accordingly with participation of herders, this could have a positive impact on local governance and on proper pasture management.

Contribution to higher-level (intended) development changes

Environment

Three successive national rangeland monitoring reports from 2014 to 2021 introduce the findings of the two rangeland monitoring systems (NAMEM, ALAGaC more recently). Reports show a stable to slight increasing proportion of rangeland at reference state (40%) while the proportion of rangelands at an irreversible or long and costly to recover state have increased from 7% in 2014 to 30% in 2021. The partial recovery of 22% of the rangeland can be attributed to improved management associated with favourable weather conditions according to the 2021 report. From a total of roughly 94 million ha rangeland, still roughly 30 million ha is considered as heavily degraded, roughly 20 million ha as improved and some 44 million ha is considered as properly used and healthy (ALAGaC report 2021). Half of the nation's rangelands are currently managed by PUGs (49 million ha) and regulated by RUAs. According to GGHAP 2021 report, the ALAGaC database analysis showed that out of the 20 million ha of improved rangeland, 5 million hectares (10% of the PUGs managed rangelands) recovered from degradation as a result of improved rotational grazing and stocking density management in the past eight years in GGAHP target Soums. **These five million ha recovered by collective users action represent an unprecedented achievement and a breakthrough for Mongolia and can be** considered as an important impact in terms of environmental/ rangeland restoration. It constitutes a demonstration that proper collective management practices can lead to recovery in the short

term for moderately degraded rangelands. At national level, the condition of Mongolian rangelands has been stable over the past six years but the proportion of long or irreversible degradation increased at a worrying speed according to the monitoring reports.

Policy environment

Support to a conducive policy environment for effective animal health system and sustainable rangeland is the third outcome of the GGAHP project. With support from GGAHP, **the law on Animal Health** and its complete set of regulations was voted and its implementation started three years ago. This achievement was recognized and seen positively by most stakeholders (donors, public bodies) at the national level during interviews.

The **livestock head tax** was voted in late 2020. Tax collection, initially planned to start in July 2021, has been postponed, while 18 Soums started collecting voluntary grazing fees in 2020 (2020 GGHAP report). The preparatory works for a **rangeland law**, did not lead to any policy changes as of today. The GGAHP contributed to the two laws and we can expect a positive impact on rangeland in the long run.

Herders Income and market access

The 2015 socio-economic survey identified income increase for herders' members of PUGs during the previous project implementation periods (GG I-IV), reducing the revenue gap between peri-urban and rural populations.

In ten years, the price of yak wool has increased from MNT 500 to per kg to MNT 12.000-20.000 and price of baby camel wool has increased from MNT 4.500 to MNT 8.000-12.000 (Annual report 2020, p.37). By facilitating yak down and baby camel value chains primary stages (combing, sorting…), the **project contributed to the recognition of yak down and baby camel wool** as a high quality-luxury fibre, leading to improved market prices and market opportunities for herders.

The project also facilitated the distribution of 4,1 billion MNT of **government subsidies for milk through a pilot value chain**. According to information provided by the GGAHP team, as of December 2020, 44 CSCs serving 30.000 herders have accumulated equity worth of 6,1 billion MNT (2,3 million USD). CSC has facilitated financial flexibility of members has and improved easier access to low interest loans (result of interviews).

Interviews with PUG did not confirm a positive trend in income on herder's level.

Due to the lack of data for the period 2016 to 2021 (no final survey), the evaluation team was not able to assess the possible project impact on herder household's income.

Risk mitigation strategy

Herders have started planting hay, fodder and producing silage as well as assigning otor reserves (see previous chapters). This will result most likely result in increased resilience during extreme weather conditions such as dzuds and droughts.

Contribution to higher-level (unintended) development changes

Rangeland management and disasters mitigation

In the absence of an efficient coordination mechanism for herders' movements inter Soums or inter Aimags, it is worthwhile mentioning that more regulated land use rights, associated to poor inter Soums and inter Aimags coordination mechanisms can hinder herders' mobility during exceptional events (droughts, dzuds, rodent infestations) which can have in return a negative impact on rangeland conditions[5] and herders livelihood.

Conclusions

RUAs and participation of herders in LDF fund allocations contributed to the recognition of land users and facilitated a **behaviour change** from passive users of the land to active custodians of the land, recognised and protected by their government. We consider this as an important social development change with regard to governance and as important structural and institutional changes for organisations, systems and regulations. The PUG system and RUAs as well as herder´s participation in decision of LDF funding allocation is expected to serve as a model to achieve broad-based impact.

Although with a limited impact at national level, the GGHAP had a crucial positive **environmental impact on rangelands health**, where PUGs apply rotational grazing and other recommended practices such monitoring of pasture quality, agreements on seasonal grazing boundaries, rangeland management planning, winter shelter, forage and hay preparation, clean water access and animal health improvement.

There is no evidence that **income** at herder level has increased. Nevertheless, the increase in animal fibres prices (yak and camel), and other pilot value chains (lamb, milk) have led to a marginal income increase for limited groups, herder's income still being constituted at more than 90% by the sales of cashmere fibres. Together with better access to loans it can be expected that a positive impact has been achieved.

A positive impact with regard to **gender equity**, recognition of their rights and gender equality can be assumed due to women's participation in RUAs (signature) presence in **leadership positions** in PUGs, APUGs, cooperatives and CSC. Increased income of women can be assumed through the small investment projects, but the impact is not well documented.

Positive impact on other vulnerable groups has not been observed or documented.

GGHAP and SDC lobbying, technical assistance and advocacy efforts have led to an improvement of the Mongolian **policy environment**. It is expected that the laws will have a positive impact on rangeland health, stocking rate and animal health in the long run and finally will also contribute to improved livelihood of the herders. High levels of SDC direct lobbying during the AH project

[5] Fernandez-Gimenez, M.E., et al., Cross-boundary and cross-level dynamics increase vulnerability to severe winter disasters (dzud) in Mongolia. Global Environ. Change (2012), http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2012.07.001

led to some tensions and critics from some interviewees for too much interference and precipitation in the preparatory works. The present SDC representatives are aware of the situation and have now reduced their level of direct lobbying.

We can conclude that GGAHP has already produced **significant positive intended results at the overarching development level**. It is also expected to do so in the future without project intervention.

More regulated land rights **could have a negative impact on herders' mobility** during exceptional events (droughts, dzuds, rodent infestations) due to PUG "boundaries" and RUAs. On the other side herders are better prepared for extreme climate due to improved livestock fodder availability in some PUGs.

In terms of impact, we can conclude that the project has achieved important impacts to higher-level development changes.

3.6 Sustainability

In the following chapter we will highlight sustainability aspects of the project and attend the specific questions of the client:

1. success factors and elements that are already sustainable,
2. other elements that are not yet sustainable and need continuous/ongoing support by Swiss actors and
3. elements which need other donors, such as NGOs or the Mongolian Government as well as
4. elements that should be stopped.

Improved semi nomadic herding practices

Traditional semi nomadic herding principles revived by the project were broadly recognized by all interviewed stakeholders, such as the respect of rangeland rotational and resting practices. Nevertheless, such practices are less respected in case of harsh natural events. Long distance movements coordination is still weak due to fragmentation among different Ministries and agencies in charge of rangeland management aspects.

The project also contributed to initiate herders' **shift from an accumulative to a quality and market driven strategy through pilot value chains (milk and meat)**.

In 2017, 89% of herders targeted by the project were preparing hay and fodder for winter while in 2020, investment in winter preparation activities (cultivation, harvest) from LDF reached 283,641 CHF (23,789 CHF per Aimag, Monitoring datasheet GGAHP project 2017-21). The **increased preparation of fodder for winter**, particularly active in the western Aimags, lead to several success stories documented in project reports. Herders are interested in and well aware of such necessary works for **reducing livestock winter mortality and improving quality of their animals and rangeland**. This was confirmed during our interviews.

Nevertheless, most Mongolian rangelands continue to be used above their carrying capacities (see data in part 3.5 Impacts). However, destocking **leads to reduced income** if undertook via current value chains. This implies that **further support is still required to achieve reasonable sustainable stocking rates and improve the value chains at the same time**.

Collective recognition of better management practices as well as individual shift in farming practices constitute strong pillars for future development projects. We consider that these management practices are sustainable and will be further supported and promoted by the Government, donors and NGOs. They represent one of the strongest legacies of the GGAHP project. Nevertheless, these legacies are frequently jeopardized by the lack of broader scale coordination.

PUG pyramidal system

According to GGAHP 2020 report, the project investment has gradually stopped and now, in 50% of target Soums, herders and local government still maintain co-financing arrangements (p.14). Rangeland Management working groups have been established in all Soum and Aimags. In 2020:

- 7 AF (40%) and 54 APUGs (30%) were strongly dependant on the project
- 8 AFs (44%) and 42 APUGs (25%) were less dependent from GGAHP support
- 3 AFs (16%) and 73 APUGs (43%) were least dependent from GGAHP support
- In 7 old Aimags, 80% of PUGS have matured, 93% matured in 4 mid stage Aimags and 73% in 7 new Aimags.

It was confirmed during interviews that some of the PUGs are considered of being sustainable while some are still very weak especially with regard to their financial performance and ability. This implies that weak PUGs would still need further support to be sustainable. Some donors expressed interested in further working with PUGs while others rather want to build on other types of organizations. APUGs and AFPUGs however are considered as more dependant from SDC support than PUGs. This means that PUGs will have better chances to last than their Soum and regional umbrella organisations.

According to project reports and **NFPUG** presentation, the national **umbrella organisation has solid technical capacities** in diverse areas of expertise. It is now recognised as an important stakeholder by several interviewed donors, with strong know-how inherited from the GGAHP team. Its financial dependence on SDC funding was reduced and represents currently 50% of operating expenses and salaries (communication with NFPUG). Funding from its base is extremely weak, representing less than 1% of its annual budget. **There is a risk to see the links between the NFPUG and its base weakening over the years, unless the pyramidal system is secured and durable.**

There is no single planned future project aiming at reaching the same geographical coverage as the GGAHP (18 Soums, more than 50% of the total rangeland). Instead, ADB, UNDP, FAO, the WB and probably the EU (it was not possible to meet with EU representatives) will be the main donors engaging into rangeland management and market access activities. According to our interviews with ADB, UNDP, FAO and the World Bank, already established PUG will be used as a basis for their new projects. ADB showed the most commitment to providing assistance to PUGs and APUGs while reinforcing their rangeland management practices and to facilitate the recognition of herders' customary rights by local governments. Recognising the relevance of the PUG system and improved capacities of PUG members, the WB will reinforce PUGs whenever possible. The UNDP and FAO were more reluctant at building their future projects on the PUG system, the FAO choosing instead to base its rangeland management component on the Bagh administrative unit.

The NFPUG has/will have opportunities to maintain sufficient level of funding, including through its partnerships with AVSF and ADB. Nevertheless, the **risk exists that NFPUG may become a grant-oriented organisation without enough core funding to provide continuous assistance and reinforcement to its base**. There is a risk that donor strategies/project will not leave space for NFPUG to continue providing core support to its network of AF/A/PUGs while needs are still present. This risk affects AF/APUGs located out of project areas of AVSF (Bayankhongor, Khentii) and the coming ASDIP project funded by ADB (Bayan Ulgii, Hovd and Uvs). In other words, **there is currently no secured funding to sustain the activities of 70% of AFPUG and 53% of APUGs** unless the NFPUG is able to secure additional funding.

Land use rights

The RUA registration methodology was handed over to ALAGaC. According to the 2020 report, ALAGaC is committed to ensuring sustainability of PUG RUA enforcement and registration after closure of GGAHP: Job descriptions of Soum land managers will include their responsibility for RUAs registration and M&E. Several interviews revealed the need for a prolonged assistance at the field level. ADB plans further support to RUAs and Soum land officers in its Aimags of intervention. For other Aimags, the ALAGaC has provisions for retraining and training new staff. Existing RUAs signed by Soum governors and herders have been agreed for a duration of 10 to 15 years. The system has strong chances to last, but will need recognition through a law, be it a separate one or special provisions included in the existing land law. This will still require advocacy and lobbying actions that can be implemented by the NFPUG with a financial support from SDC.

Participation in decision making on LDF funds

As mentioned in the impact chapter the LDF funding procedures and participation of herders in the decision making as well as the allocation of public funds to the LDF can be considered as sustainable.

Animal Health and traceability system

As a result of the Animal Health law, the MAHIS system has been implemented nationwide since 2019. Its implementation was judged in our interviews as relatively good for livestock and meat, more complicated for milk an animal fibres, skins and hides. Weaknesses were pointed out during interviews at the primary data entry level, confirming the need for continued assistance to Soum private veterinarians and more than 1.000 veterinary units equipped with lab analysis facilities. Despite a coherent approach aiming at reinforcing the capacities of the three pillars of the animal health system (9.000 producers, 3.500 private veterinarians and 662 civil servants according to an Excel table provided by GGAHP), the Soum veterinary units are still at an early stage, except for a few pilot Soums according to the assessment made though our interviews. Further assistance will be needed from the government. GAVS is aware of such needs and already secured further assistance from ADB and WB.

Rangelands monitoring systems

GGAHP has supported the establishment of two important databases. Rangeland health monitoring data base and rangeland health reference database at NAMEM and the annual grazing impact photo monitoring database at ALAGaC. The two rangeland monitoring systems were handed over to their respective agencies, and a standard carrying capacity calculation methodology was agreed by NAMEM and ALAGaC, providing a basis for sustainability. While the NAMEM system is older and requires less resources to implement, the ALAGaC system is still young and requires more resources. Both systems seem to be sustainable since they are embedded and funded in the Government system. During interviews however it was pointed out, that donor support for ALAGaC is required for quality driven training programs delivery, renewal of monitoring equipment, increase in the number of plots and integration of remote sensing technology. The NFPUG will be associated with the preparation of NAMEM reports. Both agencies report preparation, and their distribution facilitation would require further donor support.

Saving and Credits Cooperatives

The transformation of 44 matching Funds into CSCs improves the sustainability of access to micro-loans with competitive interest rates for herders. Matching Funds and Saving and Credits Cooperatives were acclaimed by a majority on interviewees at Soum and Aimag levels: 30 000 herders had access to a micro-loan in 2020 according to GGAHP reports. The GGAHP project made considerable efforts to establish and train CSCs staff. Nevertheless, according to the Mongolian Confederation of Credit Unions (MOCCU), the organisation in charge of implementing the CSCs capacity building program, the main remaining threat to sustainability is the **lack of qualified CSCs staff** in some cases, and the need for CSCs to cover future training costs themselves.

Marketing cooperatives and certifications

Most of the 44 marketing cooperatives supported by the project were created between 2017 and 2020. Except for livestock sales, GGAHP monitoring data shows a **stagnation or decline in volume for other raw materials commercialised by the coops** (2017 to 2020 period for yak down, camel and baby camel, hides and skins, sheep wool). Regarding certification systems, work on the Responsible Nomad Traceability System (RNTS) started in 2017 and was introduced very recently via pilot value chains. APUGs will continue managing and developing RNTS, yet it still lacks the personnel capacity. Three Geographical Indications (GI) for animal fibres were registered, but no plans for using them were described in reports and during interviews. Although the 2020 report mentions that the application process had been launched, the GIs were not to found in the EU geographical Indications register (eAmbrosia), indicating that they are not yet recognised by the EU. The RNTS code of practices was used to adopt a new national standard.

The reduction on volumes of products marketed by the cooperative **indicates that most of GGAHP supported cooperatives are still fragile and in need of further support**. Government (subsidies) and other donors' interest in supporting the cooperative system is high, thus creating opportunities for GGAHP affiliated cooperatives to receive further support.

The Responsible Nomad Traceability System offers great potential for cooperatives development, using a complex IT system to link premium prices with improved and sustainable herding practices. This potential is high for animal fibres value chains. **The RNTS sustainability is weak and the NFPUG will need further financial assistance and international recognition** to find its place among other existing certifications for animal fibres (Mongolian Noble Fibres, SFA). The three registered Geographical Indications (GI) would need further assistance for realising their potential. GIs, if not put into use by a product-oriented marketing strategy, have no value. Compared to GIs, the marketing potential of the RNTS, encompassing origin and sustainable aspects is stronger and better adapted to the needs of international stakeholders.

Table 2: Sustainability assessment

Success factors and elements that are already sustainable		
Elements		**Sustainability level / conditions**
Improved semi nomadic herding practices		High – less during exceptional natural events
Rangelands monitoring systems		High if the GoM dedicates adequate resources for maintenance. Support needed in reporting system.
Elements that are not yet sustainable and need continuous/ongoing support by Swiss actors		
Elements		**level of potential sustainability**
Users Rights		Depends on RUAs inclusion into the new law
RNTS		Cost benefit analysis needed, support from private sector (international brands)
Elements which need other donors, such as NGOs or the Mongolian Government		
Elements	**Actors**	**level of coherence GGHAP / Donors strategies**
Pyramidal PUG system	ADB, AVSF	high
	UNDP, FAO	low
Animal Health and traceability system	WB, ADB	high
Saving and Credits Cooperatives	Not identified	
Marketing cooperatives	FAO, WB, ADB, AVSF	high
Elements that should be stopped		
Geographical Indications		Duplication with RNTS

Conclusions

According to the table above, we consider the introduced herding practices as highly sustainable, although degradation is still a problem nationwide and overstocking remains. This would require further donor support with regard to strengthening the herding practices and linking it with the new animal taxes and their respective regulations.

We consider the rangeland monitoring system as sustainable, but it would require some donor support with regard to equipment, training and regular reporting.

The RUA user rights are also sustainable and should be embedded into the new land law and/ or rangeland law. The same applies to the LDF, which can be considered as sustainable.

The RNTS is not yet sustainable. It is not clear for the evaluation team if there are high chances to be sustainable. A link to international brands is advisable. RNTS and GI seem to be parallel structures.

Some of the PUGs can be considered as sustainable, while others still would need donor support. Some, but not all donors are willing to build on the existing PUGs. Some PUGs will disappear. The same applies to marketing cooperatives and CSCs: Some are sustainable, some will require further donor support, and some will disappear. We consider this as a natural process of competition and market-oriented selection process.

NFPUG has strong capacities but dependence on SDC funding is still high. Donors showed interest in further supporting NFPUG to become more financially independent. A closer link to the base is advisable.

4 LESSONS LEARNED

In the following we present some lessons learned which are considered important by the evaluation team. Some of them were taken from 2019 and 2020 GGHAP project reports and were confirmed during the present evaluation.

Better Pasture management lead to improved rangeland condition while improved productivity does not lead to destocking within the current value chains opportunities

Better pasture management leading to improved rangelands were demonstrated by the project in localised but multiple areas. The **attitude of herders is gradually evolving** as they are increasingly taking responsibility for ensuring sustainable management of rangelands. Nevertheless, the carrying capacities are exceeded by several folds nationally. **Herders hesitate to reduce their animal numbers as long as they cannot make sure it will not decrease their income**. Conversely, **destocking success stories do not describe stable or improved income for herders**. In that sense, increasing productivity and value in order to reduce animal numbers without income loss is the key to successful and sizeable reductions of animal numbers. The new tax law may also support destocking if adequately designed, used and implemented.

Rangeland monitoring is leading to the recognition of degradation by both science and herders

The main outcome of the GGAHP after 16 years of focused work on rangeland is a generalised and shared awareness between herders and scientists of degradation, recovery classes, desertification, monitoring tools and restoration opportunities nationwide. Rangeland Management Working Groups established at the Soum, Aimag and national level have been playing an important coordination role to ensure coherence with the current institutional framework where rangeland monitoring and management issues are fragmented among different Ministries and agencies.

During implementation GGAHP, it was found out that **degradation of riverbanks happens at an alarming rate**. Increasing livestock number and stocking density are the main reasons of **depletion of forest shrubs along the riverbanks**, decline in the composition of plant diversity and river basin ecosystem services. GGAHP has facilitated cooperation between Soum APUGs with State River Basin Administration and **discussed inclusion of sustainable use of Riverbanks in the RUAs.**

The PUG system can facilitates coordination, extension and advocacy

Over the years, GGAHP has assisted PUGs to create a pool of local experts in various topics of sustainable rangeland and herd management, market access, animal health and advocacy. One of the GGAHP exit and legacy strategy was to build the capacity of collective organization of herders, PUGs, APUGs and Aimag Federation of PUGs. This has been achieved, but the **sustainability of the system will depend on Soum and Aimag governor's recognition of the pyramidal PUG system**, it´s operation and the NFPUG capacities of maintaining touch with its base. Aimag Federations are well accepted as decision making partner for Aimag governments. However, Soum APUGs are accepted at a lesser degree.

Digital learning and IT based solutions can be used for improving the livestock sector

Over the years, collective organization of PUGs and APUGs have started to be used as a **platform to share and communicate knowledge and extension services to herders**. GGAHP has further supported the institutionalization of PUG centred extension services with the support from MULS and NAEC. The use of several databases, their interconnection and automated data analysis offers possibilities for a much-needed improved **coordination and information sharing among the livestock sector institutions.** IT solutions offer affordable and effective means of communication. An online communication system based on groups reflecting the pyramidal PUG system can contribute to securing NFPUG representativity, in a future where APUGs and AFPUG sustainability is not yet fully guaranteed.

A young generation of scientists in key positions had emerged

GGAHP gave importance to preparing a new generation of rangeland researchers. **Within GGAHP, about 50 young researchers have made their MA and PhD degrees i**n national and international institutes on various topics of rangeland management in the context of dry and semi dry climatic conditions of Mongolia and effects on climate change on rangeland health and on the livelihood of nomadic herder households. **They are working at key positions of local partners** such as ALAGaC, AFPUGs, MULS and NAMEM and are playing an important role in sustaining best practices and continued development.

Value chains development and certifications are still at an early stage, driven by a competitive private sector with often conflicting interests

The development of certification and traceability systems for **increased value addition** through export of nomadic rangeland sourced raw materials would allow the recognition and valuation of its advantages and unique features. Traced and certified animal fibres value chains can answer the need of Western brands and consumers for products of origin with high ecological and social values. This represent a **lucrative market** where high premiums can be paid back to the producers, but currently the relations between producers and processors are motivated by profit only while giving less attention to traditional nomad values. The current domestic production capacities (financial, organizational, technical and international outreach) are not yet enough developed to put Mongolian finished products brands at the front of the international stage.

The pasture law is a sensitive topic, and a national consensus is about to emerge

GGAHP team had actively participated along with the MoFALI, MNPUGs, MULS, ALAMGC and NAMEM to integrate five different versions of the **Rangeland Law** initiated by various stakeholders in the past 25 years. **Three core lessons learned and best practices of GGAHP are reflected in the law**. 1) **Rangeland use agreement** to become the legal tool in case of nomadic rangeland management to ensure traditional user rights of herders, 2) **PUGs** territorial (membership is based on all 4 seasonal grazing lands) and inclusive approach, not to leave anyone behind and make sure all herder households are entitled to their rangelands, 3) **Rangeland health monitoring** tool is used as the main tool to enforce and measure the Rangeland use agreement. The law may never be voted, and the consensus now is that the 3 points, among others, could be included into the land law. **More lobbying will be needed from local stakeholders** (NFPUG, herders, local / regional administrations).

Donors coordination starts happening at high level but operational coordination between projects is still weak

Overlapping of donor projects needs to have special attention to make sure that they are complementary and add value to previous achievements to make efficient and effective use of limited financial resources. There is tendency that project formulation is done not inclusive of other donor projects in the sector and also without genuine involvement of local stakeholders and policy makers. The new donor coordination body (FADPG) remains at a high level, and the use of English does not facilitate inclusion of more modest players.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

In the following we present some recommendations, based on the previous analysis and lessons learned.

Operational Rangeland Monitoring systems will need further support

Although both systems (NAMEM and ALAGaC) are sustainable, future assistance to the **ALAGaC will be needed to secure proper reporting and to secure the use of the results.** (Government and donors should further support). Especially, continuous support will be needed to strengthen the knowledge and skills of the Soum land officers, PUG members and other participants for the best performance of the photo-monitoring and reporting.

The **Ecological Site Description and its State and Transition Model have to be constantly improved based on findings from actual monitoring**. Both, summer and winter pasture monitoring offer important information for decisions on rangeland management. This could be supported by a donor project. NFPUG could also have a role to play in stimulating and coordinating revisions.

Broad scale pasture management and coordination mechanisms are needed to adapt to severe natural events

PUGs allow collective management at the local level for families sharing the same annual grazing pattern on a common rangeland. The system is effective during “regular” conditions. We learnt

that the PUG system falls short of organising movements (otors) between Soums or Aimags during exceptional conditions. There is a need for **better emergency planning** and coordination to cope with such extreme events (weather, rodents…). In particular:

- Better management of state reserves
- Increase reserve pastures at the PUG level.
- Improve intra and inter Aimags cooperation and coordination
- Improve information to herders on where to make exceptional otors
- Explore possibilities of an inter-PUGs mechanisms, like agreements on hosting capacities…

This would require the Government to look into this coordination mechanism.

Genetic improvement still needs further external support.

The implementation of the Law on Livestock Genetic Resources has been lagging behind. The main reason was that there was no specialized implementation agency (like GAVS for animal law implementation) and poor capacities at Aimag and Soum level offices. According to the enforcement plan of the Law, MoFALI is to create **Livestock Breeding Service** units in all Soums and as of December 2020, half of 360 Soums have **Livestock Breeding Service Units (LBSUs). This units can answer one of the most common need expressed by herders who recognise the need for improved productivity** through breeding in order to reduce stocking rate. The basis of a breeding program should be **herd management plans** [6]at individual herder, PUG and Soum levels. The herd management software developed by MULS researchers and GGHAP was tested in 20 Soums with advanced PUGs, APUGs and cooperatives. The dissemination and improvement of herd management planning with software assistance is now within the responsibility of the MoFALI and would probably need further donors' assistance.

The Animal Health Traceability System is operational but will need constant capacity building

The Animal identification system and animal health traceability system (MAHIS) has been taken over by the GAVS and since it has been expanded into an integrated veterinary service and provides services to many other organizations including central police office and private sector stakeholders on the origin, health status and safety of animal derived products. In order to operate the system sustainably, **there is a need to further train herders, local veterinary units and consumers alike.**

NFPUG should continue providing assistance to PUGs / APUGs / AFPUGs and cooperatives

There is a need to further assist PUGs, APUGs and AFPUGs, since not all of them can be considered as sustainable. This assistance should not be conditional on grants received from other donors to guarantee its implementation:

[6] Herd management plan = planning herd structure (livestock type, age, sex, breed, productivity) over time

- Support PUGs / APUGs which are not yet autonomous in updating pasture management plans and RUAs. Organisation of the national Rangeland Forum, in collaboration with Soum rangeland managers and Soum governor office.
- Lower intensity support to mature / mid-stage PUGs (strategical, motivational, tailored support)
- Representation and advocacy at the national level on the behalf of the 80.000 herders' households.
- The NFPUG being a government accredited organisation for delivering certain types of **extension services** would also require some support to comply with this service in future.

NFPUG should continue its assistance to value chains development in a self-funded manner. The focus should be on **providing assistance to marketing coops for strategy/ business plan development and follow-up and for facilitating relations with domestic/ international processors**, including the Responsible Nomad certification process. As planned by NFPUG, this business facilitation activity should be remunerated (provision of services) by both the clients and suppliers. The RNTS should be (conditionally) endorsed by leading foreign brands before further investment into international recognition of RNTS are made.

NFPUG would require further donor support in that sense.

Unlocking international markets is necessary in order to better value raw materials

Due to high raw material volumes and limited domestic market (70 million heads of livestock for 3,5 million people), **efforts to improve exports must step up**. Diplomatic bilateral talks with countries assessed as potential importers of Mongolian livestock products should be used to initiate and deepen relations. **Focus should be made on animal fibres and livestock and meat products value chains**. Government subsidies should support price definition mechanisms based on raw material quality, not only quantity as it is the case today for the wool supply chain.

This support can be taken up by donors as well as the Government.

Saving and Credits Cooperatives need further assistance

Future assistance to CSCs from donors or Government should be conditional to good governance criteria and the will and capacity of an CSC to dedicate a sizeable portion of their dividends to funding APUG / PUGs for rangeland management activities.

Use of IT solutions for remote interventions and coordination

As Soum and Aimag staff suffers serious shortage of **IT equipment** (and training on it use), travelling expenses could be redirected to equipment purchases if online working sessions continue to be used in adequate cases. An online communication system based on groups reflecting the pyramidal PUG system (PUGs groups, APUGs – AFPUG groups, AFPUG-NFPUG groups and members/NFPUG) can contribute to securing NFPUG representativity. The use of several databases, their interconnection and automated data analysis offers possibilities for a much-needed improved coordination and information sharing among the livestock sector institutions. This intervention could be financed by donors.

Further Advocacy and lobbying are needed in order to continue improving the policy environment

Lobbying and advocacy efforts will now be continued by the NFPUG. Although the project and SDC active lobbying was able to greatly improve the inclusion of herder's rights in government discussions, there is a strong imbalance between the economic interest of mining activities, compared to herding activities. Although at a reduced level, SDC should support the GoM in the enforcement and regulation of the Animal Number Taxation Law in collaboration with NFPUG. Further lobbying with the Ministry of Finance is required to to ensure sustainable financing of rangeland management. Capacity building at Soum administration level is also further required to implement the law and its potential.

Integration of PUG/RUA system into currently revised Land Law is also important to validate project results.

Support programs coordination mechanism

There is a need for a coordination mechanism of support programs at national and lower level through implementation teams such as inter-agencies and inter-projects implementation teams.

Post evaluation

A post evaluation would be pertinent, if there is guarantee that the results will be used by the GoM and other donors.

Many interviewees have shown interest in receiving the evaluation report. A Mongolian version of its executive summary should be prepared and broadly circulated.

6 ANNEX

6.1 Assessment Grid

Assessment Grid for the DAC Criteria

Assessment Grid for project/programme evaluations of the SDC interventions

Version: 30.06.2020

Note: this assessment grid is used for evaluations of SDC financed projects and programmes (hereinafter jointly referred to as an 'intervention'). It is based on the OECD Development Assistance Committee evaluation criteria.[7] In mid-term evaluations, the assessment requires analysing the likelihood of achieving impact and sustainability. All applicable sub-criteria should be scored and a short explanation should be provided.

Please add the corresponding number (0-4) representing your rating of the sub-criteria in the column 'score':
0 = not assessed
1 = highly satisfactory
2 = satisfactory
3 = unsatisfactory
4 = highly unsatisfactory

[7] For information on the 2019 revisions of the evaluation framework see: Better Criteria for Better Evaluations. Revised Evaluation Criteria. Definitions and Principles for Use, OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation, 2019.

Key aspects based on DAC Criteria	Score (put only integers: 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4)	Justification (please provide a short explanation for your score or why a criterion was not assessed
Relevance **Note**: the assessment here captures the relevance of objectives and design *at the time of evaluation*. In the evaluation report, both relevance at the design stage as well as relevance at the time of evaluation should be discussed.		
1. The extent to which the objectives of the intervention respond to the needs and priorities of the target group.	4	The objectives of the intervention are fully responding to the needs priorities of the herder communities, central and local government, respective government agencies in terms of the improved rangel management, animal health and better market access.
2. The extent to which the objectives of the intervention respond to the needs and priorities of indirectly affected stakeholders (not included in target group, e.g. government, civil society, etc.) in the country of the intervention.	3	The objectives of the intervention are adequately responding to the ne of indirectly affected stakeholders, such as MULS and Natio Agricultural Extension Centre in continuing adaption and elaboration ESD/STM concepts and methodology, provide scientific validati Facilitated connection/match making among herder cooperatives processing companies and their associations.
3. The extent to which core design elements of the intervention (such as the theory of change, structure of the project components, choice of services and intervention partners) adequately reflect the needs and priorities of the target group.	4	Core design elements of the intervention are adequately reflecting the ne and priorities of the target group. Donor coordination was week at so extent.
Coherence		
4. Internal coherence: the extent to which the intervention is compatible with other interventions of Swiss development cooperation in the same country and thematic field (consistency, complementarity and synergies).	4	Fully in line with SDC country strategy and Mongolian strategies rangeland sector.
5. External coherence: the extent to which the intervention is compatible with interventions of other actors in the country and thematic field (complementarity and synergies).	3	Fully coherent with partner´s interventions. Only partially coherent w other donor programmes. There is a lack of donor coordination thro MOFALI and cooperation and communication between donors and Sw cooperation is perceived by others as not adequate.

Effectiveness		
6. The extent to which approaches/strategies during implementation are adequate to achieve the intended results.	4	The design and implementation of the measure is adequate to achieve project goals
7. The extent to which the intervention achieved or is expected to achieve its intended objectives (outputs and outcomes).	3	The intervention achieved most of the intended objectives at outcome output level. Since a endline survey could not be done in 2021 du COVID, not all data are complete to verify all indicators at impact leve
8. The extent to which the intervention achieved or is expected to achieve its intended results related to transversal themes.	4	Transversal themes (gender, environment, and governance as well as l rights) have been achieved by the project.
Efficiency		
9. The extent to which the intervention delivers the results (outputs, outcomes) cost-effectively.	4	The results have been delivered cost effectively ba having only a sr project team, delegating most tasks to partner organizations cooperating where possible with other donors.
10. The extent to which the intervention delivers the results (outputs, outcome) in a timely manner (within the intended timeframe or reasonably adjusted timeframe).	3	There was a delay due to COVID restrictions, but adjustments were m and a project extension has been approved.
11. The extent to which management, monitoring and steering mechanisms support efficient implementation.	4	The project steering, management and monitoring has been done in efficient way by a small team of experts with support from external expe
Impact		
12. The extent to which the intervention generated or is expected to generate 'higher-level effects' as defined in the design document of the intervention. **Note**: when assessing this criterion, the primary focus is the intended 'higher-level effects'. In the event that *significant* unintended negative or positive effects can be discerned, they must be specified in the justification column, especially if they influence the score.	3	The project demonstrated positive impacts in several localised places did not succeed to impact rangeland and herders at a broader level.
Sustainability		

13. The extent to which partners are capable and motivated (technical capacity, ownership) to continue activities contributing to achieving the outcomes.	4	High capacities and ownership of NFPUG. PUGs, A/AFPUGs and co show more diverse capacities, from weak to autonomous entities. project contributed to reinforcing capacities of public bodies (ex: NAME ALAGaC)
14. The extent to which partners have the financial resources to continue activities contributing to achieving the outcomes.	3	NFPUG partially financial autonomy, PUGs, APUGs, AFPUGs and co at different levels, from totally dependent to fully autonomous
15. The extent to which contextual factors (e.g. legislation, politics, economic situation, social demands) is conducive to continuing activities leading to outcomes.	4	++ animal health law, law on livestock taxes --Incorporation of PUG concept and RUA system in the land law, or separate rangeland law

Additional information (if needed): Click here to enter text.

Title of the intervention: Green Gold Animal Health Project Mongolia

Assessor(s): Paul Borsy, Cedric Bussac

Date: 19.08.2021

6.3 Guiding questions

Interview Guideline

Stakeholder in Aimags and Soums:

PUGs, Local Government, Cooperatives, Veterinary Services, Private Sector, Private Processors

Strengths

- What is working well in the GGAH project?
- Are there any success stories? Which ones?
- What is your institution/village view on this program?
- Which are the key positive impacts?
- Was improvement in sustainable rangeland management achieved?
- Was income of herder's households improved?
- Was access to veterinary/ animal health services improved?
- Are there benefits in terms of market access?
- Which other things have things improved with the project?
- How do you see the promotion of women in PUGs, APUGs and AFs leadership?
- Are the RUAs functioning and supportive?
- ?
- Did you receive capacity building/ training and was it useful? Which ones do you remember?
- Is the local Development Fund (LDF) working and are the finances adequately used? For which purposes? Is it transparent?
- Is the cooperative working well and supportive? What are strengths and weaknesses?
- Are the promoted contents of training relevant and supportive?
- Do you think that invested resources were adequate in relation to benefits achieved?
- Is your institution supportive to the project strategy?
- How do you see the cooperation between different institution/groups/associations? For example between processors and cooperatives
- Are there any legal or policy issues which have improved through the project?

Weaknesses

- Where do you see weaknesses in the project?

- Which of your expectations were not achieved?
- What did not work well?
- Which partners did not perform according to expectations?
- Do you feel disappointed in a specific working area?
- Are there any interest groups left out?
- Which aspects are not (yet) sustainable?
- Do you see any (unintended) negative impacts?

Opportunities

- Where do you see opportunities for elements of GGAH to improve?
- Where do you see further scaling up options and opportunities? Has the project done something in this respect?
- Is your institution/community ready to continue and upscale with your own forces?
- How do you see sustainability of the project without external resources?
- If there are 2 more years to implement, where should be the focus?
- Are the training materials and modality suitable for a desired impact?
- Where all necessary partners involved? If not which are missing?
- What are the main lessons learnt?
- Which new processes should be launched or running processes redirected in order to sustain the project elements?
- Which elements could continue with further external funding?
- What could be improved in terms of allocation and optimization of both financial and human resources and overall efficiency of the project?
- Which recommendations do you have?
- Was there something which should have been done but was not done? Why?
- How did you see your opportunity to participate and influence in the project? Did the project respond to demand from your side?
- How do you see the project compared to others?
- Did the project react in a flexible way to demand and changing circumstances?

Threats

- Where have been and where are the main risks for implementation?
- Were risks adequately considered and addressed?
- How do you deal with people who do not follow the rangeland use agreements?
- How where conflicts solved or not solved?

- Where do you see possible conflicts upcoming?
- Are you ready to solve conflicts on your own?
- Where do you see contradicting policies, threats, if any?
- Where could be major challenges in terms of changing policies, regulations, laws or decrees?

Rating (done as a final exercise)

What has improved? Please indicate the score. 1= little improvement 5 = a lot of improvement

Topic	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Sustainable Rangeland Management					
Market Access					
Access to Veterinary Services					
Quality of Livestock Products					
Community Organization					
Income					
Jobs					
Conflict resolution					
Relationship to authorities/ relationship to communities					
Autonomy					
Knowledge/ Capacities					
Laws/ Policies					

6.4 Results of ranking done by interveiwees

Ranking was done after the interviews with most of the interviewees. Not in all cases all interviewees answered all the questions. Some did not answer. From the answers we received, the ranking in absolute numbers can be observed in the first table. The ranking in % can be observed in the second table. According to this Community organization, relationship with authorities and knowledge/ capacities were ranked very high. Lower ranks received the aspect of market access, jobs, income and quality of livestock products. None of the aspects were scored badly. The results reflect a high level of satisfaction of the interviewees with the project results. This scoring is not scientific, representative and should be seen only as a short reflection.

Rating (done as a final exercise)

What has improved? Please indicate the score. 1= little improvement 5 = a lot of improvement

	Score in numbers of interviewees who responded					**Total answers**
Topic	1	2	3	4	5	
Sustainable Rangeland		1	2	22	20	**45**
Market Access	4	5	11	19	6	**45**
Access to Veterinary Services		1	3	15	12	**31**
Quality of Livestock Products	1		3	17	9	**30**
Community Organization				11	31	**42**
Income			4	18	15	**37**
Jobs		2	10	9	15	**36**
Conflict resolution	2		7	19	12	**40**
Relationship to authorities/ relationship to communities		1	3	14	30	**48**
Autonomy/			3	17	2	**22**
Knowledge/ Capacities			1	12	20	**33**
Laws/Policies	2		5	19	13	**39**
Gender	1		2	21	16	**40**

	Score in % of interviewees who responded					Total
Topic	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
Sustainable Rangeland	0,0	2,2	4,4	48,9	44,4	100
Market Access	8,9	11,1	24,4	42,2	13,3	100
Access to Veterinary Services	0,0	3,2	9,7	48,4	38,7	100
Quality of Livestock Products	3,3	0,0	10,0	56,7	30,0	100
Community Organization	0,0	0,0	0,0	26,2	73,8	100
Income	0,0	0,0	10,8	48,6	40,5	100
Jobs	0,0	5,6	27,8	25,0	41,7	100
Conflict resolution	5,0	0,0	17,5	47,5	30,0	100
Relationship to authorities/ relationship to communities	0,0	2,1	6,3	29,2	62,5	100
Autonomy/	0,0	0,0	13,6	77,3	9,1	100
Knowledge/ Capacities	0,0	0,0	3,0	36,4	60,6	100
Laws/Policies	5,1	0,0	12,8	48,7	33,3	100
Gender	2,5	0,0	5,0	52,5	40,0	100

6.5 Evaluation design and methodological approach

OECD-DAC criteria and assessment dimensions	Key questions	Methods and data sources
Relevance The project sets out to address a core development problem faced by the target group. The project is in harmony with the relevant strategies.	**Alignment with policies and priorities** • To what extent are GGAH's objectives aligned with the (global, regional and country-specific) policies and priorities of the SDC and of the beneficiaries and stakeholders and other (development) partners? • To what extent do they take account of the relevant political and institutional environment? • Was the programme well formulated and aligned with the Mongolian and SDC goals? • To what extent are the objectives still valid? Were the program objectives aligned with/derived from program definition, the assessments and policies? • How does the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry; the state Agency of Land Affairs, Geodesy and Cartography; the National Agency of Meteorology and Environmental Monitoring and the Veterinary and Animal Breeding Agency, State professional Inspection Agency as main partner organizations perceive the project and SDC with regard to their main goals, strategies and priorities? • What is the state-of-the-art of the policy debate on overarching development goals like climate change adaptation and mitigation, poverty reduction, gender and land degradation? • Are the GGAH objectives suited to the policies of the Mongolian government and priorities of relevant sectors (agriculture / livestock / marketing / banking)? **Alignment with the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders**	• Review of national strategies, policies, plans, strategies, climate change and poverty reduction strategies • SDC and GGAHP goals • Review of the GGAHP and GG programme and logframe • Hypothesis of change • Review of the assessments and the previous evaluation • Key informant semi-structured interviews with • Feedback from interviews with Government representatives • Check coordination with other donors' activities and existing systems and structures of partners and other donors (M&E, learning and accountability).

OECD-DAC criteria and assessment dimensions	Key questions	Methods and data sources
	• To what extent are GGAH's objectives aligned with the development needs and capacities of herder households, PUGs, local authorities, cooperatives, veterinarians, key staff from ministries and agencies? • To what extent are GGAH's objectives geared to the needs and capacities of disadvantaged and vulnerable beneficiaries and stakeholder (women in PUGs, APUGs, and AFs; poor and female headed HH)? • What is SDC's comparative advantage or unique role/input to other ongoing programs of donors and government? **Appropriateness of the design** • To what extent is the GGAH project design appropriate and realistic (in terms of technical, organisational and financial aspects)? • To what extent is the intervention's design sufficiently precise and plausible (in terms of the verifiability und traceability of the system of objectives and the underlying assumptions)? • To what extent is the intervention's design based on a holistic approach to sustainable development (interaction of the social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainability)? • Are the selected approaches of the programme and the Log frame (intervention logic) implemented in a way that is relevant for the current local, regional and national challenges and concerns? • How does GGAH's results framework relate to the results framework of overarching development goals? • What are the existing or emerging collaborations between the GGAHP and other donors/initiatives in the above-mentioned fields (IFAD, WWF, GIZ, EU/FAO, World Bank, UNDP)?	

OECD-DAC criteria and assessment dimensions	Key questions	Methods and data sources
	• Have the main goal and the objectives of the GG/ GGAHP been relevant throughout based on the mission and the objectives of the GGAHP? **Adaptability - response to change** • To what extent is the policy environment supportive of the project for achieving its objective? • How did the programme react to unexpected changes and risks? Were these well considered?	
Coherence Internal coherence External coherence	**Internal coherence:** • Within Swiss development cooperation, to what extent is the GGAH project designed and implemented in a complementary manner, based on the division of tasks? • To what extent are the instruments of Swiss development cooperation meaningfully interlinked within GGAH Project? Are synergies leveraged? • To what extent is the GGAH project consistent with international and national norms and standards to which Swiss development cooperation is committed (e.g. human rights)? **External coherence:** • To what extent has the GGAH project complementarities with partners own efforts, other donor activities and existing structures of partners and other donors? • To what extent are common systems (together with partners/other donors/international organisations) used for M&E, learning and accountability?	• Interview with development partners, programs and projects WB, EU/FAI, IFAD, WWF, GIZ, UNDP • Review project design • Review risk assessment, safeguard policy and monitoring system
Effectiveness The project will achieve the objective agreed in the commission, in	**Achievement of the (intended) objectives** • To what extent have the (intended) objectives at outcome level been achieved as originally planned, both quantitatively and qualitatively? **Contribution to achievement of objectives**	• Internal M&E tools • Interviews with PUG, Aimags, Soum Associations, Cooperatives, herders, partner organization's

OECD-DAC criteria and assessment dimensions	Key questions	Methods and data sources
accordance with the indicators. No unintended negative results occurred or if they did, they were responded to.	• To what extent have the intervention's outputs been delivered as originally planned? • Are the indicators SMART? • To what extent is the project design based on plausible hypotheses for achieving the project objective? • To what extent have the delivered outputs and increased capacities been used and equal access (e.g. in terms of physical, non-discriminatory and affordable access) guaranteed? • To what extent has the intervention contributed to the achievement of objectives? • To what extent has the intervention contributed to the achievement of objectives at the level of the intended beneficiaries? • To what extent has the intervention contributed to the achievement of objectives at the level of particularly disadvantaged or vulnerable groups of beneficiaries and stakeholders (women in PUGs, APUGs, and AFs; poor and female headed HH)? • Which internal factors (technical, organisational or financial) were decisive for achievement/non-achievement of the intervention's intended objectives? • Which external factors were decisive for achievement/non-achievement of the intervention's intended objectives (taking into account the anticipated risks)? • To what extent do changes in the framework conditions influence the achievement of objectives? • What other reasons were there for the achievement or non-achievement of the objective? **Quality of implementation** • How is implementation rated in terms of the achievement of objectives? • To what extent is the way in which an RBM system is used appropriate for steering decisions with regard to achieving objectives? **Unintended results**	(Ministries, public and private veterinary services, private processors, Aimag and National Federations of PUGs) • Review of operational plans • Review of the logframe • Interview with SDC staff and GGAH staff on steering structure, monitoring system, financial management • Review previous monitoring reports • Review annual reports, operational plans, capacity assessment as well as indicators and the monitoring matrix

OECD-DAC criteria and assessment dimensions	Key questions	Methods and data sources
	• To what extent can unintended positive/negative direct results (social, economic, environmental and among vulnerable beneficiary groups) be observed/anticipated? • What potential benefits/risks arise from the positive/negative unintended results? What assessment can be made of them?	
Efficiency The use of project resources is appropriate with regard to the achieved results. The opportunity of coordinating with other donors and/or projects has been explored and, if possible, implemented.	**Production efficiency** • How are the GGAH's financial, human and material resources distributed? • In view of the funds available, were the best possible results achieved? • How effectively were the instruments combined to achieve the best possible results? • To what extent were the relationship between objectives and funds, and alternatives considered in designing and implementing the project? • Were the outputs (products, investment goods and services) produced on time and within the planned time frame? • Were local resources used to achieve the results, or were counterpart or private sector contributions included? • What are the achievements in value chain, participation of the private sector, poverty reduction, value adding, collective market access and market value chains, cooperative performance over the years? • Was there collaboration with other donors WB, EU/FAI, IFAD, WWF? **Allocation efficiency** • By what other means and at what cost could the results achieved (higher-level project objective) have been attained? • To what extent – compared with alternative designs for the intervention – could the results have been attained more cost-effectively?	• Check on budget allocation • Interview with SDC staff and GGAH staff on steering structure, monitoring system, financial management • Review previous monitoring reports • Review audits if any • Conduct interviews with policy makers and decision makers • Interview with project steering unit • Interviews with other donors • Assess achievements in the value chain, participation of the private sector, poverty reduction, value adding, collective market access and market value chains, cooperative performance over the

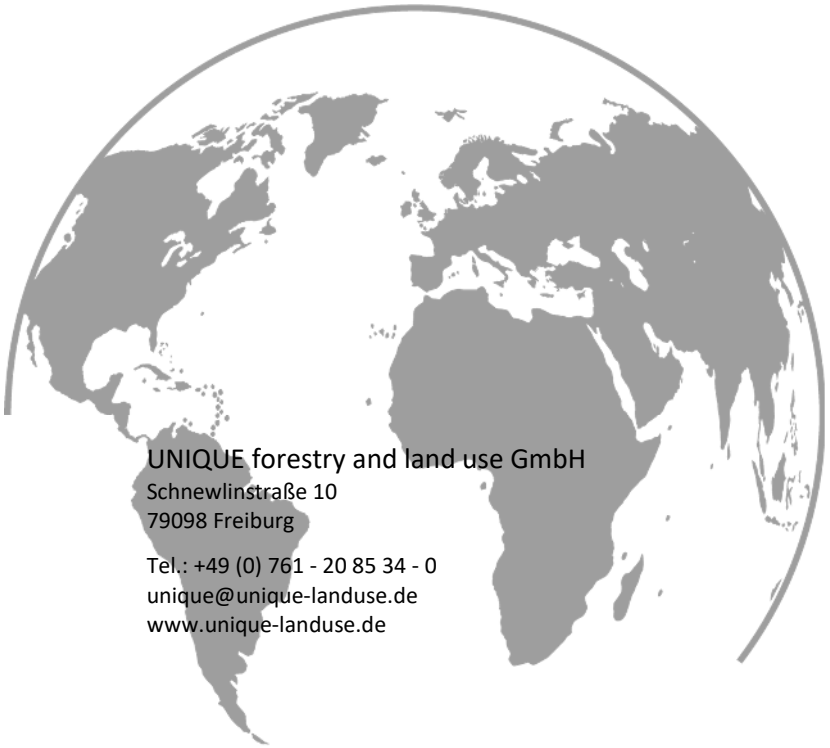
OECD-DAC criteria and assessment dimensions	Key questions	Methods and data sources
	• In designing and/or implementing the programme, were proper checks conducted to investigate whether coordination with other donors and/or projects was possible and would generate added value? • Was the coordination process appropriate? • If no coordination process took place, was a plausible explanation provided on why this was not possible or why it would not have generated added value? • What are the economic, technical, knowledge, social and environmental benefits gained?	years (including credit and saving schemes) • Assess data on degradation and climate impact • Assess Local Development Fund (LDF) performance and additional funding at national and Aimag level
Sustainability (and exit strategy) It is anticipated that the project's positive results will be sustainable The project takes into account possible risk factors that could influence the longer-term sustainability of results	**Capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders** • To what extent do the beneficiaries and stakeholders (individuals, groups and organisations, partners and executing agencies) have the institutional, human and financial resources as well as the willingness (ownership) required to sustain the positive results of the intervention over time (once assistance has drawn to a close)? • Did the project enhance the capacity and performance of the agencies involved? Specifically, what, if any, was the additionally? • To what extent do the beneficiaries and stakeholders (individuals, groups and organisations, partners and executing agencies) have the resilience to overcome future risks that could jeopardise the intervention's results? **Contribution to supporting sustainable capacities** • To what extent has the intervention contributed to the beneficiaries and stakeholders having the institutional, human and financial resources as well as the willingness (ownership) required to sustain the intervention's positive results over time and to limit the impact of any negative results? • To what extent has the intervention contributed to strengthening the resilience of the beneficiaries and stakeholders?	• Interviews with PUG, Aimags, Soum Associations, Cooperatives, herders, partner organization's (Ministries, public and private veterinary services, private processors, Aimag and National Federations of PUGs) • Interview with SDC staff and GGAH • Review government policies and programmes • Interviews with donors on running and future programs • Review risk consideration and mitigation strategies

OECD-DAC criteria and assessment dimensions	Key questions	Methods and data sources
	• To what extent has the intervention contributed to strengthening the resilience of particularly disadvantaged groups (women in PUGs, APUGs, and AFs; poor and female headed HH)? • Which advisory content, approaches, instruments, methods or concepts of the project are mainstreamed in the Mongolian system? • To what extent are they permanently used and/or further developed by the target group and/or implementing partners? **Durability of results over time** • How stable is the context in which the intervention operates? • To what extent is the durability of the intervention's positive results influenced by the context? • To what extent can the positive (and any negative) results of the intervention be deemed durable? • Which success factors and elements are already sustainable? • Which are the elements that are not yet sustainable and need continuous/ongoing support by SDC? In which way? • Which elements need other donors in order to become sustainable? • Which elements are not sustainable and should be stopped?	
Impact It is anticipated that the project will help achieve overarching long-term (political) objectives	**Higher-level (intended) development changes** • To what extent were the higher-level development changes (social, economic and environmental dimensions and the interactions between them) to which the intervention was designed to contribute identified/foreseen?	• Validate impacts documented in reports by comparing them with perception of target groups • Identify success stories

OECD-DAC criteria and assessment dimensions	Key questions	Methods and data sources
The project helps to achieve broad impact.	• To what extent were the higher-level development changes (social, economic, environmental dimensions and the interactions between them) identified/foreseen at the level of the intended beneficiaries? • To what extent could higher-level development changes to which the intervention was designed to contribute be identified/foreseen at the level of particularly disadvantaged/vulnerable groups of beneficiaries and stakeholders (women in PUGs, APUGs, and AFs; poor and female headed HH)? **Contribution to higher-level (intended) development changes** • To what extent does the project contribute to the achievement of the programme objective and other overarching development-related changes: impacts on policies, transformational changes within the institutions and target groups, local development funds, increased capacity at different levels, new laws and regulations, improved rangeland and animal health, increased marketing capacity and income, improved livelihood? • To what extent has the intervention achieved its development objectives at the level of the intended beneficiaries? • To what extent has organizational, institutional and personal capacity development (capacity building of cooperatives, veterinary services, herders, PUGs and private sector service providers) increased? • To what extent has the intervention contributed to higher-level development changes/changes in the lives of women in PUGs, APUGs, and AFs; poor and female headed HH? • To what extent do changes in the framework conditions influence overarching long-term results?	• Assess results on the level of income, poverty, reduced degradation of rangeland in statistics and government data, NDC reports, SDG reports, Climate reports • Documented impacts on changing policies, transformational changes within the institutions and target groups in government documents, • Interview with cooperatives and LDF on functioning local development funds • Interview with the target group on increased capacities at different levels • Govt. animal health reports • Statistic office and GIS data

OECD-DAC criteria and assessment dimensions	Key questions	Methods and data sources
	• To what extent has the intervention achieved structural or institutional changes (e.g. for organisations, systems and regulations)? • To what extent did the intervention serve as a model and/or achieve broad-based impact? • How would the situation have developed without the intervention? • To what extent is the project based on plausible hypotheses related to overarching long-term results? (poverty reduction, climate change mitigation and adaptation, gender equality and mainstreaming participation, good governance impacts --> e.g. improved structures mainstreamed and bottom-up planning) • To what extent is use made of complementarity with other projects/actors of other donors for implementing the project? • To what extent does the project use information from results-based monitoring for steering decisions that contribute to the achievement of overarching long-term results? • To what extent does the project make use of scaling-up mechanisms? • What are other crucial reasons why overarching long-term results are being achieved or not achieved? **Contribution to higher-level (unintended) development changes** • To what extent can higher-level, unintended development changes (social, economic and environmental dimensions and their interactions, taking into account political stability) be identified/foreseen? • To what extent has the intervention brought about foreseeable/identifiable unintended (positive and/or negative) higher-level development results? • To what extent has the intervention contributed to foreseeable/identifiable unintended (positive and/or negative) higher-level development results at the level of particularly	

OECD-DAC criteria and assessment dimensions	Key questions	Methods and data sources
	disadvantaged or vulnerable groups (women in PUGs, APUGs, and AFs; poor and female headed HH)?	



UNIQUE forestry and land use GmbH
Schnewlinstraße 10
79098 Freiburg

Tel.: +49 (0) 761 - 20 85 34 - 0
unique@unique-landuse.de
www.unique-landuse.de