

Capacity Building for Decentralisation and Local Self-Governance, phase II, Mongolia, 2001–2004

**Staffan Engblom
Nicklas Svensson
Peter Westermarck**

**Department for Infrastructure
and Economic Cooperation**

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Staffan Engblom
Nicklas Svensson
Peter Westermark

Sida Evaluation 2008:08

**Department for Infrastructure
and Economic Cooperation**

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Authors: Staffan Engblom, Nicklas Svensson, Peter Westermarck.

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SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

Address: SE-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden. Office: Valhallavägen 199, Stockholm

Telephone: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Telefax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64

E-mail: sida@sida.se. Homepage: <http://www.sida.se>

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
DDSP	Democracy and Support Project, UNDP
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IPM	Institute of Public Management (in Stockholm)
KTS	Contract Financed Technical Cooperation
LSG	Local Self Governance
LT	Local Trainer
MALA	Mongolian Association of Local Authorities
MT	Master Trainer
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PSMFL	Public Sector Management and Finance Law
SALA	Swedish Association of Local Authorities
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
ToR	Terms of Reference
UB	Ulan Bataar
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organisation

Executive Summary

Conclusions

In this report local self-governance (LSG) is understood in about the same way as the wide concept “Decentralisation” that indicates transfer of power, resources, knowledge, participation, decision-making and authority to elected local, participatory levels and based on principles of participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency.

The Overall Objectives of the Project have been very relevant and fully in line with the Constitution of Mongolia and other laws and regulations. This is the general comment by the Mission and by all people met with. This was a relevant project.

The specific “wide” Training Component (incl Research and Micro Projects) has also been very relevant and successful. The Mongolian partners already had very good experiences of the contents, approach and methods used during phase I. Training contents, training materials, process and methods during phase II have been relevant, appropriate and of international top standard.

LSG II has greatly promoted the idea of local self-governance among all involved stakeholders. Stakeholders and individual participants have been many in LSG II – probably around 10.000. LSG II has really strengthened the advocates of local self-governance in Mongolia and this is according to the Mission a sound base for long-term “ideological” sustainability in terms of local self-governance being a concept and a tool to secure, ensure and promote human rights and combat poverty at local levels, based on a “bottom-up” approach.

All people the Mission met with during some 40 meetings in Mongolia confirmed these findings on relevance and on the issue of the impressive quantitative outputs.

The Mission would like to conclude and summarise that the project has had a reasonable impact in favour of increased understanding of democracy and human rights. This was most visibly seen at local levels and in terms of good understanding of the “bottom-up approach”.

The Mission would like to state that the Project has played a role to explain poverty aspects and also that there is a sound rights-based approach to the issue in the different training materials seen (“Fighting Poverty”). The Project has obviously played a role and had an impact to increase awareness on Poverty.

When the Mission went through all the statistics we understood that there has been a good and reasonable gender balance among the trainees. In fact some courses have been dominated by women – in quantitative terms. Most MTs met with were in fact female and they had important positions in all Aimags visited.

Swedish consultants were all male. Both the Project (according to some interviewees) and the Mission had some difficulties to explain this fact. However, in spite of this, the Project has according to the Mission strengthened the position of women with the field of LSG.

The total cost per trained participant was 3.700 SEK which is very reasonable and very commendable, especially when considering the size of the Country and the fact that work has been carried out in all 21 Aimags. The Mission would like to consider the training as very cost-effective and relevant in all international and Swedish comparisons and is a definite advantage of the “cascade approach”.

The Swedish development co-operation with Mongolia is characterised by a high and relevant degree of control and command exercised by the Mongolian co-operation partners over the development activities.

Lessons Learnt

The Mission understands and considers that the overall Project has changed the overall balance in favour of decentralisation and has greatly strengthened its advocates and enthusiasts. In this sense the Project has had a good impact. However, the struggle has to continue, especially in terms of sustainability of this Project, but even more so of the whole LSG and Decentralisation Process as such. Proposals and recommendations on the sustainability issue are raised below.

The Mission shares the opinion that the overall situation and the overall climate for development of LSG and Decentralisation are not fully conducive at present. Reference is made to the UNDP statement of 2006 in section 2.4 (by the end). However, the Mission does not fully share this rather pessimistic view. There are many positive developments and the process is only, read only, 15 years old and is taking place against the background of 70 years of Soviet-style oppression and extreme centralism. LSG and Decentralisation are pre-conditions for better socio-economic developments and better human development indicators.

It is obvious that there are unclear and counter-productive divisions of roles between different administrative layers in the Country and between Khurals/local politicians and state bodies (read Governors and Governors Offices). The very good and foresighted initial approach on LSG and decentralisation, however *not* clarified in detail in Chapter Four of the Constitution (“Administrative and Territorial Units and their Governing Bodies”) or neither sufficiently backed-up by clarifying Parliamentary National Laws and by corresponding administrative rules and regulations. There are a number of confusions and un-clear matters that at present hinder a proper development of LSG and real decentralisation. The greatest problem is obviously the “Public Sector Management and Finance Law”, PSFML, – and the political will at central level.

PSFML, is widely discussed in the Country. This Law of 2003 has its centrally located advocates but the criticism at local level is out-spoken and very loud. Budgets and funding is of course an extremely important aspect when it comes to decentralisation, in a meaningful manner, seen from the point of view of the local Khurals and the local population. A lot of lobbying is now on-going by many parties to change, or amend, this Law and, to the Mission, it seems like the local opponents to Law, in favour of a proper decentralisation, are gaining ground.

The efforts related to MALA should have been re-organised very early during phase II. The Mission missed the flexibility of the Project in this context. Even if a Project is nicely planned (but in this case without LFA as a decisive and exposing instrument) there should be flexibility when problems occur. Another possibility may be that the MALA component was not demand-driven, but supply-driven.

This becomes even more evident when you look into the specific objectives for the MALA component (under 3.3). Objectives, outputs and activities are, according to the Mission and people interviewed, fairly vague in terms of Institution-building (also of an NGO in this case).

MALA, or another NGO, has to take on a more decisive and much strengthened institutional role to promote and explain the rationale for LSG and Decentralisation.

The Soum-level is most important as that is the level that most directly affects the well-being of the population. The proposed new project should move from awareness-raising to implementation with emphasis on Soums.

There are several good approaches, laws, legal provisions, rules and regulations established to combat corruption. What is missing is guided enforcement and it is also obvious that an un-controlled decentralisation process may lead to increased local corruption provided the ideal conditions do not exist such as:

- Public financial management systems working also at local levels
- Strong and independent mass-media
- Strong and independent Civil Society
- Fairly high education level and awareness on corruption problems
- Local politicians and civil servants who can stand against local pressure from different local networks

The cascade approach to training is a good cost-effective model but turned out to be fatal for sustainability as MALA or other institutions (Cabinet Office, Aimags), could not institutionalise the investment in training and could not carry on with some kind of continued training and continued activities to keep the heavy investment in training alive. Complementary activities would have been to establish small training centres in each of the five Regions.

Requests for Sustainability

A serious issue frequently discussed and put forward to the Mission when in Mongolia was the unclear roles of politicians and civil servants at all levels. As developed in “National Integrity System and its Indicator” (UNDP 2003) in fact most politicians are still civil servants and the other way around. Appointment of civil servants on the basis of political selection criteria leaves no opportunity to control and monitor whether their performance conforms to the policy and decisions made by higher officials. These public servants have no distinctions from political appointees. This leads to blurring the border between the functions and responsibility of political appointees and professional public servants – and between politicians and civil servants.

However – it is now clear that an amendment to the Election Law will try to prohibit and stop this mixture of roles and will practically come into effect during next election 2008. It is important to study the practical implications of this amendment of the Law.

The decision making process on law and policy-making is not fully open and consultations with the citizens and the public are according to our sources not conducted effectively. Citizen’s participation is still limited and would need further development. A core issue here is of course development of the Civil Society/NGOs as a “training mechanism” for increased participation and popular activity. The LSG II was supposed to assist in the development of these processes.

According to critics of the present developments met with and according to international donors operating in the Country, all/most laws on administrative local units and their administrative management have ambiguous definitions and double meaning in establishing the authority and responsibilities of Khurals at all three local levels. This is not supportive as regards the further development of the Khurals and their administrations as supposed in the Constitution. The legal requirements for proper development of the principles of LSG is poor and ambiguous and there is insufficient policy and organisational support.

Laws are unclear and ambiguous and the division of work between all local entities Aimags, Soums, Baghs (corresponding units in Ulaanbataar) and the slowly emerging Regions are not clear. This makes any decentralisation very difficult and is by some people met with seen as a deliberate sabotage of the needy process.

A “Temporary Standing Committee” has been established in the Parliament to promote and develop local self-governance. This Committee is headed by Mr Dondog and the Committee has managed to get a great number (=17) of legal changes in favour of local self-government accepted by the State Great Khural. It would be good if this temporary Committee is turned into a permanent one.

Regional Networking for LSG Development is on-going in two of the (up-coming) Regions visited by the Mission. This is very positive and constructive and based on initiatives by devoted individuals, in order to co-operate on implementation of minor training activities (for new politicians – and within the field of Democracy and Human Rights). MTs are here working in close co-operation with neighbouring Aimags to save time and funds.

The main concern in relation to sustainability of LSG II is connected with MALA. When you now look back into the specific Overall Objective for the MALA-component little was directly said about further strengthening of MALA as an institution in terms of manpower, organisation, strategy formulation, short-term planning, equipment, finances, budget, etc. This was a slight mistake in the sense that emphasis was put on “knowledge and capacity” only and not on clear-cut institution-building and strengthening of MALA as an important fore-runner on decentralisation, training and local self-governance.

MALA, or another NGO, has to take on a more decisive and much strengthened institutional role to promote and explain the rationale for LSG and Decentralisation. This central body should be able to keep track of and co-ordinate MTs and LTs and support their training efforts. This NGO should probably establish training centres at Regional level or develop advanced Regional Networking.

Recommendations

The Mission would like to make the following concluding Recommendations based on our Findings and Experiences in Mongolia:

1. Mongolia should be offered more Swedish assistance to achieve a break-through in the decentralisation process in the near future. It would be a heavy loss of investments not to continue to support LSG and decentralisation in a new revised project as there is a great, well documented and outspoken, demand at all levels in Mongolia for the Swedish – Mongolian co-operation in this field to continue. The demand has been repeatedly raised by the Head of Cabinet Office, Mr Batbold, and by Mr Dondog, Chairperson of the Temporary Committee on Decentralisation in the Great Khural. The new project should make use of the big investments in 66 MT's and 110 LT's and further develop the good training co-operation at regional level, etc, etc.

Sida is recommended to continue the co-operation with Mongolia as regards LSG and Decentralisation provided the Cabinet Office, the Temporary Standing Committee and the Government officially would request such a continuation (also in writing).

The main reasons are heavy investments done and the opinion within many quarters in Mongolia, shared by the Mission, is that the process is close to a break-through.

Sida should move from capacity building to institution-building/capacity development and to process-oriented support to change processes within LSG and Decentralisation.

2. A pre-condition for such continuation would be a clear statement from the Government that it is prepared to change or abandon the PSFML-law in favour of further budget and tax decentralisation and also implement rapid staff strengthening of all local Khural Offices, especially at Soum level (probably transfer resources from Governors Offices to Khural Offices).

3. Such a project should be well planned (as the previous ones) and should start immediately after the elections 2008 and as soon as visible and positive outcomes could be seen of the decided changes in the Electoral Law in order to clarify roles and mandates of politicians and civil servants.

4. The new project should move from awareness raising to implementation with emphasis on Soums. The Soum-level is most important as that is the level that most directly affects the well-being of the population.

5. MALA has to be re-organised, strengthened, re-vitalised and boosted in terms of morale. Or another partner institution (NGO) has to be identified.

MALA, or another NGO, has to take on a more decisive and much strengthened institutional role to promote and explain the rationale for LSG and Decentralisation. This central body should be able to keep track of and co-ordinate MTs and LTs and support their training efforts. This NGO should probably establish training centres at Regional level or develop advanced Regional Networking.

6. More attention should be given to Civil Society, especially at Soum level.

7. The very good relations and previous easiness to co-operate between Sweden and Mongolia is another argument in favour of continued co-operation. The previous co-operation has been effective and efficient. Swedish management style and principles for close co-operation and information-sharing is very well adapted and suitable for the Mongolian context.

8. Planning of a proposed “LSG III” should, at this third stage, preferably be done by a consultant independent from the implementing consultant/agency and would include a couple of pre-preparatory studies/investigations.

9. We recommend that Sweden/Sida/the Embassy in Beijing should be permanently represented on site in Ulan Baatar and through this get a position to become a more active dialogue partner to UNDP and WB as Sweden definitely has a great relative advantage on issues related to LSG, decentralisation, democracy, human rights and combat of poverty and through the long and fruitful history of Mongolian – Swedish Cooperation. Sweden is fully capable and must take a leading role in relation to a recommended third phase.

10. Recommendations as above are still, according to the evaluation team, valid in November 2007. However, in the new situation, based on the Sida “Country Concentration Process”, we would further like to recommend that Sida should discuss the sustainability issue with UNDP and the World Bank on site in Ulan Bataar. Both institutions are, based on our discussions with them in May 2007, very much in favour of the LSG II Project and the Sida-Mongolian approaches applied in the Project. Their Policies on Decentralisation and Local Self Governance are very similar to those of Sida.

We definitely assume, based on our discussions with UNDP and the World Bank in May 2007, that both Institutions would find it relevant, important and rewarding for all parties to hook on to LSG II.

1. Introduction, Terms of References and Methodology

1.1 Introduction and Background

Sida has supported the project “Capacity Building for Decentralisation and Local Self-Governance II in Mongolia” during 2001–2004.

This project has been an important part of the Mongolian – Swedish Co-operation based on mutual agreements and based on the “Country Strategy for Development Co-operation with Mongolia 2002–2006”.

The project has played a decisive role in the international support for decentralisation and public sector reform – mainly co-ordinated by UNDP – and a crucial aspect of the Swedish Country Strategy. The project has been in line with the Strategy as could be seen in it’s Chapter 5.

The Country Strategy gives very good background information on Mongolia as a developing Country, with extremely severe development, socio-economic, population, environmental, human rights, health and climate problems.

The development of the Country is hampered by it’s recent history under Soviet occupation during 70 years – or two generations of work. The consequences in this regard must not be underestimated – especially when it comes to human rights, decentralisation and local self-governance. The abrupt and difficult transition process triggered collapse of the economy, followed by a fast pace of segregation in the society, increasing un-employment, poverty and corruption.

The very difficult overall socio-economic situation in the Country is summarised in the ranking in the Human Development Report for 2006 as number 116 out of in total 177 countries (Sweden as number 5).

For maps of Mongolia, kindly refer to www.merriam-webster.com. For further general information on the political and extremely difficult socio-economic conditions in the Country the reader is referred to Sida web-page, web-page of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to the web-pages of WHO, UNDP and the World Bank.

In May 2007 Sida contracted Institute of Public Management, IPM, in Stockholm to carry out an evaluation of the support to Capacity Building for Decentralisation and Local Self-Governance II in Mongolia in accordance with attached ToR, annex 1. The evaluation was performed by Staffan Engblom, Nicklas Svensson and Peter Westermarck who stayed in Mongolia 19 May–2 June 2007.

1.2 Terms of References

Terms of Reference, annex 1, is attached. ToR is clearly based on available guidelines for evaluations from Sida, such as the Evaluation Manual of 2004 and other documents from Sida including the previous Evaluation Manual of 1999/2000 and other similar guidelines from the Sida “Department for Policies and Methods”, etc.

Based on oral communications with Sida on different occasions, and confirmed in the Expression of Interest by IPM and in the Contract between Sida and IPM, it was agreed to closely co-operate with the simultaneous Result Analysis, also done by the same IPM staff. The purpose was to increase efficiency and effectiveness of both the simultaneous Studies.

1.3 Evaluation Methodology

The methodology to be utilised for the ex-post project Evaluation is outlined in the ToR, page 3.

“The evaluation shall be based on:

- project documentation available at Sida, SALA-IDA, SIPU International and UNDP/Ulaanbaatar.
- visit to *two* pilot project areas: xxx and xxx.
- visit to *six* extended project areas: xxx etc.
- interviews with related personnel and beneficiaries in the selected areas
- interviews with related personnel at the Cabinet Secretariat, Ulaanbaatar
- interviews with UNDP, Ulaanbaatar
- interviews with SIPU International and with SALA-IDA.”

The Project documentation at Sida HQ and documents received from the implementing Consultants and from international agencies has proven to be very comprehensive and detailed. Kindly refer to Annex 3 and 4 for a List of documents and references utilised. A comprehensive Desk Study has been carried out.

Close to 40 organised meetings with interviews and discussions were implemented during the Mission to Mongolia (and at the Swedish Embassy in Beijing) and added to that a number of informal discussions with different personalities in Mongolia incl Ms Zizi Zolzaya, who participated in our Mission and probably is the one who is among those most familiar with LSG II at present in Mongolia (previous “local project coordinator”). Please refer to Annex 2.

De-briefings, based on power-point presentations, were made in both Ulan Bataar (Cabinet Office) and at the Swedish Embassy in Beijing (two meetings).

Four interviews were carried out at Sida during May/June 2007 (Ms Eva Berger, Ms Åsa Heden) and five at SIPU and SALA/IDA (with Mr Björn Jonzon, Mr Leif Wisén, Dr Berndt Brickell and Mr Gunnar Andersson).

In this report local self-governance (LSG) is understood in about the same way as the wide concept Decentralisation that indicates transfer of power, resources, knowledge, participation, decision-making and authority to elected local, participatory levels and based on principles of participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency.

Probably the most clear and brief discussions on the concept of Decentralisation may be found under www.worldbank.org, where Administrative Decentralisation is discussed under headings such as:

- Different forms of Decentralisation
- Rationale for Decentralisation
- Civil Service
- Information and Monitoring
- Local Technical and Managerial Capacity
- Accountability, Transparency and Corruption in Decentralised Governance

The LFA planning and follow-up approach has been very sparsely utilised within this LSG-project, phase II, and no baseline studies were carried out. This creates some difficulties in terms of evaluation and follow-up but is also, sort of an advantage in the Sida approach on Contract Financed Technical Co-operation (KTS) (Kontraktsfinansierat Tekniskt Stöd, KTS, in Swedish). KTS has room for flexibility in several aspects and is widely considered as a flexible and efficient international co-operation instrument.

Section 2.2 below introduces the present status of LSG and Democratic Development in Mongolia and this is done as a basis for discussions of project results, impact, etc, and proposals for the future.

The ToR emphasises that the Evaluation must look into aspects on *results* (relevance, appropriateness, sustainability, cost-effectiveness), *impact* (democracy, poverty, gender equality, environment), *mapping of still on-going activities* and, finally, *lessons learned*. These aspects are all very important according to ToR and therefore analysed and commented upon in this report.

Based on ToR, and based on developments during the last 5–6 years in relation to the Swedish Policy for Global Development, it is fairly obvious that these aspects above according to ToR, especially those under impact, “boils down” to the two main perspectives in Swedish Development Co-operation at present, namely Poverty Reduction/Combat (Poor People’s Perspective on Development) and the Rights Perspective.

The principles of participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency should accordingly guide process as well as results.

The Rights Perspective incorporates Democracy, Good Governance, Human Rights and Equality between men and women as well as Rights of the Child. The Rights perspective is based on a well established international framework.

Poor People’s Perspective on Development (Perspectives on Poverty, Sida’s PoP, 2002) has as a point of departure a multidimensional poverty concept that includes lack of power, lack of real choices and lack of material resources. This approach, or perspective, is even more sharpening the focus on very poor individuals and on their experiences of poverty. We are dealing with poor women, men and children, with poor people in urban and rural areas, irrespective if they manage based on the formal or informal economic sectors. A really well established international framework on Poor People’s Perspective is still missing.

The guiding principles, again, according to Sida and the Swedish Government are the following:

- Participation
- Non-discrimination
- Accountability
- Transparency

To operate based on these principles necessitates increased understanding of formal and informal power structures in any society. Power aspects have to be analysed and properly understood. Lack of power is a sad aspect of poverty.

Development needs focus on two important aspects: *results* and a *process* to achieve these results and ensure that they become sustainable. Both results and processes have to be characterised by both Perspectives above. This also indicates that the strengthened results orientation (indicated in the ToRs) should guide the whole approach from planning to implementation to this very evaluation of LSG II.

Social aspects of any poverty analysis, such as the one done in this evaluation report, become very important from the point of view of Poor People's Perspective on Development. This very Perspective indicates that poor people become important and active participants in development as their voices, capacity and knowledge has to be counted upon at all levels of society. The micro-level must be the point of departure in poor people's perspective on development and the dynamic direction, or flow, is "bottom-up".

LSG II has to be looked upon based on these perspectives and principles and, already at this stage and without going into details here, it is fairly easy to conclude that the whole LSG II-approach has been a sound one.

It is interesting to observe that Sida has been pushing for inclusion of the "two Perspectives" within the UN-system on several occasions (and most probably also at UNDP in Ulan Bataar). According to our information Sida supported/financed a workshop for the UN family already in May 2003 on Common Country Assessments and Country Strategies = United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). This very workshop resulted in the acceptance of "A Common Understanding of a Human Rights Based Approach to Programming". It is obvious that this approach has been utilised by UNDP on several occasions in Mongolia and definitely in the UNDAF for Mongolia 2007–2011 (see UNDP, Ulaanbaatar, 2006).

2. The General Context

2.1 Present State Administrative Structure and Structure for Local Self-Governance (LSG) in brief

The Mongolian Constitution was adopted in 1992 and its Chapter Four (articles 57–63) outlines the division of the Country into "Administrative and Territorial Units" and it also describes their "Governing Bodies" (Source: Reprint of Constitution of Mongolia, Chapter 4, etc, from Law Library, Parliament of Mongolia).

According to the Constitution the Mongolian People have the right to participate directly in political decisions. This right is implemented through elections at state institutions – at Central Parliament level and at different levels of Local Self-Governance Bodies. The fundamental concepts and principles in the Constitution seem to be widely accepted by all important political forces and by the population at large. This became clear to the Mission – at least in terms of the aspects related to the very important LSG – and was directly or indirectly stated by all people met with.

Other important laws and programs in this context are the "Law on Administrative and Territorial Units and Their Governance" ("LATUG", 1994), the "Public Sector Management and Finance Law" ("PSMFL", 1 January, 2003), the "Law on Consolidated State Budget", "Law on Political Parties", "Election Law", "Anti-Corruption Law", the "National Program to Combat Corruption" and the "Law on Legal Status of Towns and Villages" ("LLSTV", 20 Dec, 1993).

The Country is at present divided into 21 Aimags (plus the Capital, Ulan Bataar). Aimags are subdivided into Soums and Soums into Baghs. Ulan Bataar is divided into Districts and the City Districts into Horoos.

There are at present 330 Soums and 1650 Baghs – and nine Districts and 125 Horoos in the Capital City.

Article 59 in the Constitution states that “Governance of administrative and territorial units of Mongolia shall be organized on the basis of combination of the principles of both self-government and central government”.

Each and every geographical unit/administrative layer as above has its own elected body of politicians – Hural/Khural – elected for a four year period.

The State power on all (3+3 different) levels mentioned above is exercised by their respective Governors.

Governors have the right to veto decisions of respective Aimag, Capital City, Soum, District, Bagh and Horoo Khurals.

If a Khural by a majority vote overrides the veto, the Governor may tender his/her resignation to the Prime Minister or to the Governor of higher instance if he/she considers that he/she is not able to implement the decision concerned.

Other important aspects on Local Self Governance may be summarized as follows based on the Constitution:

- Governors of Aimag, the capital city, Soum and district shall have secretariats/Offices. The Government determines the structure and size of these offices individually or by a uniform standard.
- Local self-governing bodies, besides making independent decisions on matters of socio-economic life of the respective Aimag, the capital City, Soum, District, Bagh and Horoo, shall organize the participation of the population in solving problems of national scale and that of larger territorial divisions.
- Authorities of higher instance shall not take decision on matters coming under the jurisdiction of local self-governing bodies. If, law and decisions of respective superior state organs do not specifically deal with definite local matters, local self-governing bodies can decide upon them independently in conformity with the Constitution.
- If the State Great Hural and Government deem it necessary they may delegate some matters within their competence to the Aimag and capital City Hurals Governors for their solution.
- Hurals of Aimag, the capital City, Soum, District, Bagh and Horoo shall adopt resolutions and Governors shall issue ordinances within their competence.
- Resolutions of the Hurals and Ordinances of the Governors shall be in conformity with law, Presidential decrees and decisions of the Government and other superior bodies, and shall be binding within their respective territories.

It should also be clarified that a new administrative layer – five Regions incl Ulan Bataar – are under development but so far with limited influence and at present fully dependent on other layers. The main purpose here is Regional Development in order to try to stem the un-controlled (according to law and old customs and traditions) influx of people to Ulan Bataar City, where now around 600.000 inhabitants live in Ger/Tent Districts with fairly miserable living conditions (limited water supply, limited sewage provision, lack of heating facilities, etc).

The parliamentary system in Mongolia is in its development stage. Progress is obviously being made. However, capacity to conduct policy analysis on draft legislation and other decisions of the Parliament/State Great Khural is fairly weak. Legislative drafting and law-making processes are not open and transparent according to several sources including UNDP. Participation of citizens in these processes is still low. Minority rights in the State Great Khural are limited and the oversight of executive government and the budget is weak.

2.2 Public Sector and Democratic Reform Processes in Mongolia

2.2.1 Rapid Transition

Mongolia is under-going rapid transition and democratization processes based on a declared willingness to make reforms. The processes are visible and fairly well-known among educated strata in the Country and among politicians at many levels.

However, you can not conceptualise, describe and identify a single Public Sector Reform Program/ Process in the Country. There are many tracks and a lot of work that is on-going but you get to understand that there is a general wind blowing in favour of changes, reforms and decentralisation. Many international donors such as UNDP and WB are active in this field, nowadays most probably with UNDP as the main engine. Sweden and Sida has played a very active and successful role in the field of capacity building for decentralisation and local self-governance in order to speed up local participation as a base for local development.

The national development framework for the reform processes is outlined in the Development Concept of Mongolia (1996), the draft National Development Strategy until 2020, the Economic Growth Support and Poverty Reduction Strategy and the presently on-going Government Medium-term Action Plan 2004–2008.

In line with the Parliamentary Resolution of April 2005 there is a request to strengthen the capacity of the Central and Local Government to deliver on the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs), including the specific Mongolian 9th one, to “Strengthen Human Rights and foster Democratic Governance”. It is very important to grasp that Mongolia has adopted this “additional” and very important Goal.

Without going into details the Mission found that the Temporary Standing Committee on Decentralisation in the Parliament/Great Khural has been drafting 20 “legal acts” on further decentralisation. Out of these 17 had been approved by Parliament.

The Election Law has recently been amended by Parliament and will as of next election 2008 contribute to clarify the different roles of elected politicians and employed civil servants. Civil servants will be forbidden to take part in the elections and become members of the Khurals and this is a big step forward in order to clarify roles, strengthen local democracy and combat corruption.

The “Public Sector Management and Finance Law”, PSFML, is widely discussed in the Country. This Law of 2003 has its centrally located advocates but the criticism at local level is out-spoken and very loud. Budgets and funding is of course an extremely important aspect when it comes to decentralisation, in a meaningful manner, seen from the point of view of the local Khurals and the local population. A lot of lobbying is now on-going by many parties to change, or amend, this Law and, to the Mission, it seems like the local opponents to Law, in favour of a proper decentralisation, are gaining ground. This important issue will be further discussed and commented upon under Chapter 4.

It is obvious that there are very unclear and counter-productive divisions of roles between different administrative layers in the Country and between Khurals/local politicians and state bodies (read Governors and Governors Offices). The very good and foresighted initial approach on LSG and decentralisation, however not clarified in detail in Chapter Four of the Constitution (“Administrative and Territorial Units and their Governing Bodies”) has not been sufficiently backed-up by clarifying Parliamentary National Laws and by corresponding administrative rules and regulations. There are a number of confusions and un-clear matters that at present hinder a proper development of LSG and real decentralisation. The greatest problem is obviously PSFML- and the political will at central level.

According to persons met with, and also according to UNDP and its foreign and national experts, the 1999–2000 amendments to the Constitution have proven to have had a negative impact on parliamen-

tary development and separation of powers, have reduced presidential powers to demand adherence to the Constitution by state and government bodies and have increased the influence of party politics on the overall Government. This is indicated by political developments of recent years and also confirmed by local and foreign experts.

The administrative strength of all/most Khural Offices, connected to the popular assemblies, is still fairly weak. The number of staff varies, between just a few (2–4) up to a maximum of 8 staff in some bigger Aimags. It becomes visually impossible for these fairly weak administrative support bodies to somehow match the strength of the Governors Offices with around 40 staff. However, ideally, you may hope and wish that voluntary resources (individuals, NGOs) could assist the Khurals but this is very difficult to achieve and realise in great extent under the very tough present socio-economic conditions in Mongolia. But also in this context there has been some positive developments in the sense that some strengthening of the Khural Offices has taken place during the last 8–10 years. They have also got some increased financial strength and the Khural Offices of bigger Aimags have a running budget of around 500.000 SEK. But compared to the Governors Offices, and not to talk about central budget appropriations, this is a very limited figure.

The overall strengths of the on-going public sector reform, democratization, decentralisation and anti-corruption processes in Mongolia are a bit difficult to grasp during a brief visit in the Country. It became obvious to the Mission that quite some efforts are being done by many official quarters in Mongolia and not least by some of all the 3.500 NGOs in the Country. All officials we met with are “pro-reform” and seem to support available official program and policy reform documents. There is also an understanding of the great importance of “bottom-up” approaches in line with the Mongolian-Swedish LSG II. The support to the principles of LSG II became very evident to the Mission and also confirmed by international organisations met with. Most officials met with seem to understand the needs of local mobilisation of staff and people in general to promote reform and to be able to develop Mongolia in terms of important Human Development Indicators. Local participation is considered as a must.

Following the adoption of anti-corruption legislation, an anti-corruption agency was established early 2007 and should gradually begin operations during the course of this year. The agency is responsible for corruption prevention and public education in this context, investigation of corruption cases as well as the collection, review and disclosure of financial statements from high-ranked public officials.

2.2.2 Socio-economic Situation in brief

It is important to everyone, Mongolians and international organisation and donors, working to support reform processes mentioned above, to somehow try to understand the situation and developments during this decade.

Without such an understanding of the status of reform developments, and of the social and economic situation, it will also become virtually impossible to discuss results and impact of LSG II and of other Mongolian-International efforts.

Comments and findings below are based on some 40 meetings in Mongolia during the month of May and on a comprehensive desk study.

Mongolia is a developing Country and is ranked as number 114 in the Human Development Report, with a Human Development Index of 0,679. The Human Poverty Index – 1 value for Mongolia, or 18,5%, ranks as number 44 among 103 developing countries presented. According to FAO, Mongolia is now the most food insecure country in Asia together with Cambodia. More than a third of the population is undernourished with nearly 40% of the Mongolians unable to guarantee enough food for themselves and their families on a daily basis.

Around 55% of urban house holds lack central heating, shower and toilet facilities and some 40% of the population has difficulties to secure a safe water supply. Some 50% of the population lives in traditional “tent” housing (“gers”) and the other in more modern apartments. The basic living conditions are thus very different and unequal with the population split into two strata. This is of course even more cumbersome when considering the harsh climate with extremely cold and windy weather conditions.

As clarified in different sources, and by people met with, some 27% (biggest cities), 34% (Aimag Centres in general) and 43% in Soum Centres live below the poverty line. It is obvious that differences as these will encourage people (read pastoral people) to move to the urban Centres. In Ulan Bataar around 600.000 people live in the “Ger/tent districts” with very poor sanitation and high un-employment. Internal urban migration is a tremendous problem and a vicious circle in Mongolia.

Educational and Health Services has deteriorated and a lot of pupils have to attend schools with three shifts and the right to health services is scarce with very poor quality in the country-side (soums). Key Health Outcomes are going down according to the World Bank.

The rural to urban migration creates a variety of problems such as over-loaded social protection, with limited resources to start with, reduced accessibility and an ever-increasing number of beneficiaries of such services.

2.2.3 Effects of “previous times”

There is since “previous Soviet times” (and also before this era) a fairly long-established mentality of the Mongolians to “adhere to the state” and believe that central government must provide all services to the general public. This may also create favourable conditions for public officials to put themselves well above the ordinary citizens and thereby enjoy special advantages and reputation.

The same “wait and sit” attitude may also create minimal participation of the citizens in the legislation process, disregard of the results of surveys and research and thus create difficulties in establishing efficient policies. In turn it may lead to negative impact on enforcement and implementation of laws as well as major problems in the application of approved legislation within the government and parliamentary mandate. Ambiguity of law provisions, inconsistency of such provisions, absence of details and detailed implementation rules may make laws open to interpretation and make conditions conducive to low law abidance, inequitable use of legislation by courts/civil servants and create ripe corruption. Only very active citizens and politicians at the local level may hinder and counteract such developments and are definitely arguments for development of local self-governance in all respects, including developed capacity to carry out studies and research.

During our stay in Mongolia it also became obvious that extensive involvement of civil servants and high officials in general in different law-making processes puts these officials in conflict of interests as they strive to preserve the current authority and status of their respective organisations and own positions and to build on traditional practices as under the Soviet era in putting forward the importance of old experiences – as opposed to support clear division of roles and mandates within the framework of reforms in many sectors.

Civil and political rights and the rule of law are important in all developing countries and in all countries under transition. They safeguard and ensure any reform and development processes in the sense that freedom of speech and a critical approach is the base for change and development. Survey results show that in the first ten years of Mongolia’s democratic development political rights and freedoms have been relatively well protected while protection of civil rights have come down in recent years. A survey conducted by UNDP in 2005 concludes that some 27 percent of the interviewed have experienced physical harassment and physical in-security. Another study by the National Human Rights Commission in 2002 also explains that detention for an un-limited period of time is a serious threat to civil rights.

As will be further developed later on in this report the LSG II-project has devoted a lot of attention to training of politicians at central and, especially, at local levels.

2.2.4 Developments and problems in the electoral processes

Mongolia has run four main elections since the adoption of the new Constitution in 2002.

These elections have taken place 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004 and have covered both central and local levels and have also included presidential elections. Elections have been well organised, peaceful and have led to several changes of central government majority and majority at local levels. The electoral participation has initially been high but with a dominant trend to decrease since second half of the 1990ies. The voter participation in local government elections have been fairly low – and has gone down from 72% 1996 to around 61% in the year 2004. This is worrying and will be discussed later on.

The majority system of elections and the corresponding political system have led to the establishment of two major political parties, Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) and the Democratic Party (DP) as the main Parties even if there are a number of parties in the Country such as Motherland Party, Civil Will Party and many others. As a whole, although a multiparty system is established and is developing as a fundamental institution of democracy, the role of political parties in consolidating, developing and protecting democracy can according to several sources and interviewees be judged as fairly weak. There are many factors contributing to such relative passiveness such as level of internal democracy in many parties, participation of members, status of women, fairness in competition of influence within parties, accountability and transparency – all factors well interconnected.

A serious issue frequently discussed and put forward to the Mission when in Mongolia was the unclear roles of politicians and civil servants at all levels. As developed in "National Integrity System and its Indicator" (UNDP 2003) in fact most politicians are still civil servants and the other way around. Appointment of civil servants on the basis of political selection criteria leaves no opportunity to control and monitor whether their performance conforms to the policy and decisions made by higher officials. These public servants have no distinctions from political appointees. This leads to blurring the border between the functions and responsibility of political appointees and professional public servants – and between politicians and civil servants.

However – it is now clear that an amendment to the Election Law will try to prohibit and stop this mixture of roles and will practically come into effect during next election 2008. It is important to study the practical implications of this amendment of the Law as this is very important for the credibility of the democratic processes and also for the anti-corruption struggle. This situation may have contributed to the fairly low participation in local elections on 61% (UNDP: Democratic Governance Indicators: Assessing the State of Governance in Mongolia, p 21).

In general the elections are free, however with some incidences of breaching the main principles. Although there has been a couple of transfers of state power through general elections there is, as in many countries, a clear tendency of favouritism and nepotism based on traditional social relations. This is not uncommon but has to be combated also in Mongolia.

2.2.5 Lack of resources hindering reforms

It is obvious that the Mongolian Government lacks resources to speed up the reform processes and also to solve all major problems facing the Country. Mongolia's external debt is huge and nearly about the same size as the annual GDP. The GDP and the state budget revenues have increased during the last few years and also during 2006 when it grew by 8,4% in real terms (World Bank, East Asia Update, April 2007). But the state budget expenditure has increased along with this.

According to the findings of the Mission, the effects and impact of actions taken by the Government to solve existing problems is fairly weak. The level of poverty has not decreased during the last 10 years and is between 30–40% depending on location and measured by the lowest living standard measure-

ment (UNDP: Democratic Governance Indicators: Assessing the State of Governance in Mongolia, p 25). Poverty is a widespread phenomenon.

UNDP and a study by the East Asia Barometer (2005/2006) have investigated government effectiveness and accountability. The Mongolians support the democratic system but they give lesser support to democracy as a process. They fail to show trust in the political institutions and latest figures are further decreasing.

Based on a five-score scale 36 percent of the respondents believed that local Khurals as elected assemblies had little or no effectiveness, which of course is very serious for LSG. About the same rate of fairly negative attitude goes for the police, the local governors, and their offices, and for the work of courts.

A legal environment for public service is being formed. In reality incidences of lack of enforcement or violation of provisions of the Public Service Law continue to exist. There is wide-spread application, as previously mentioned, of the principle of political affiliation in appointing and firing government officials from official positions.

As previously mentioned there is a special Law on Anti-Corruption as well as a separate plan of action, the National Program to Combat Corruption. According to a number of sources including people met with corruption is widespread in the Country as of today and actions to combat the disease have not been successful. The main reasons for the corruption are the standard prevailing ones: bureaucracy, red tape, limited resources, insufficient popular participation, insufficient transparency, weak law enforcement, fairly weak and dependant mass media, blurred appointment processes and widespread conflict of interests at many levels and due to many aspects.

A special survey was carried out during 2004 to monitor the implementation of the National Program to Combat Corruption. 90% of the respondents believed/considered that corruption was wide-spread in the Country. The difficult situation is confirmed by the World Bank, by Transparency International, by a special study by USAID and dito by UNDP.

There are several good approaches, laws, legal provisions, rules and regulations established to combat corruption. What is missing is guided enforcement and it is also obvious that an un-controlled decentralisation process may lead to increased local corruption provided the ideal conditions do not exist such as:

- Public financial management systems working also at local levels
- Strong and independent mass-media
- Strong and independent Civil Society
- Fairly high education level and awareness on corruption problems
- Local politicians and civil servants who can stand against local pressure from different local networks

The in-ability of the Government of Mongolia to develop, ensure and maintain an effective system of government responsibility and accountability is a major challenge to be tackled. Without a concerted positive development here the whole nation-building may be in danger in the long run.

2.3 Gender Aspects

There is a high percentage of women in the public service taken as a whole. This is confirmed by UNDP and by our Mission in May 2007. We met a great number of very devoted and foresighted women at middle/upper management levels. But gender balance is not ensured at upper/top management levels. This is obviously a hinder for government effectiveness.

The state policy of trying to ensure equality between men and women could be traced back to the very first modern Constitution of Mongolia of 1924.

At present the continuation of this equality issue is reflected in the Constitution of 1992, Article 16, in several other Laws and in the action Program on Gender Equality and in the Program to Fight Violence.

Mongolian political parties are now legally bound to nominate at least 30% females of the total numbers of candidates in the elections at all levels. This measure is aimed at increasing the participation and representation of woman at decision-making levels.

After the election in 2004, 5 seats out of 76 are females in the Parliament. In a survey of 2006 this rated Mongolia as no 115 out of 188 countries. In 1990 women held 23% of the seats. Participation of woman in political life and in the government varies according to the organisation's level. Women's participation is low at higher levels and high at medium and lower levels. Women still have limited opportunities to be promoted to decision-making position. Women's participation is most active through NGOs and political parties. Representation is good at lower Khural levels (Soums, Baghs). Ordinary, un-trained women, rarely get involved in politics of their own initiative and are not especially interested in politics – and Mongolia is not in any sense unique in this sense.

2.4 Decentralisation efforts in Mongolia

As previously elaborated under section 2.1 the Mongolian people has the right to participate directly in political decisions. This right is taken place through election to state institutions. Functions of officials of LSG Bodies, such as the Khurals, are governed by the Constitution. It is stated that a governor shall implement the decisions of the Khural (and of higher ranked government institutions).

However, the decision making process on law and policy-making is not fully open and consultations with the citizens and the public are according to our sources not conducted effectively. Citizen's participation is still limited and would need further development. A core issue here is of course development of the Civil Society/NGOs as a "training mechanism" for increased participation and popular activity. The LSG II was supposed to assist in the development of these processes.

Legal requirements for responsiveness and accountability of Khural members and officials at all levels have not been clarified and made easy to grasp. There is no mechanism for enforcement of such a top-down or responsive approach from Khurals.

According to the Constitution decentralisation is a constitutional right that is to be implemented through taxation, financial management and the administrative structure of the Country (see 2.1). The decentralisation framework includes the structural reform of national administrative institutions, development of local self-governance and local administrations plus support to NGOs and their participation in public service planning and delivery.

"Public Sector Management and Finance Law" (PSMFL) was passed in 2002 and implemented as of 2003. As a basis for the new PSFML, and as a part of its enforcement, a system of a central consolidated state fund/budget was established together with international accounting principles. This 2003 shift to the consolidated state fund forced all state organisations, including all local ones, to use their budget through the central fund. This could only, according to most people met with, be considered as a measure to centralise decision-making and thereby directly contradicting the official decentralisation efforts.

According to critics of the present developments met with and according to international donors operating in the Country, all/most laws on administrative local units and their administrative management have ambiguous definitions and double meaning in establishing the authority and responsibilities

of Khurals at all three local levels. This is not supportive as regards the further development of the Khurals and their administrations as supposed in the Constitution. The legal requirements for a proper development of the principles of LSG is poor and ambiguous and there is insufficient policy and organisational support.

Laws are unclear and ambiguous and the division of work between all local entities Aimags, Soums, Baghs (corresponding units in Ulaanbataar) and the slowly emerging Regions are not clear. (see also Mr Luja, his draft Master Report). This makes any decentralisation very difficult and is by some people met with seen as a deliberate sabotage of the needy process.

The Law on “Administration and Regulation of Regional Development” provides for a temporary National Committee led by the Prime Minister and consisting of many other high-ranked officials. The Mission did not meet with this Committee but met with the driving member/chairman of a Parliamentary Committee with similar official purposes. This Parliamentary Committee has achieved quite some amendments to Laws and Regulations but even so there were, in general, big question-marks as regards the overall decentralisation efforts.

The decision-making processes in all local Khurals are much dependant on the problematic reality that around 60–70% of all members of Khurals are also employees of executive and budgetary (central) organisations/agencies. Why should they push for decentralisation and loose power ?

The limitations of the number of meetings in the Khurals to only 2 per year (!) and the general restrictions, and lack of staff and funding, of the work of all Khurals have resulted in poor results and a pessimistic approach at local levels.

UNDP states the following in a assessment of Democratic Governance in Mongolia of 2006:

“The Policy of decentralisation as pronounced by the State Great Khural/Parliament and by the Cabinet is a declaration on paper but in reality it is a policy and actions aimed to centralise and recentralise power. This leads to limiting the initiatives from local organisations to develop independently, weakening citizen’s participation and instead consolidating the tendency of reintroducing a vertically run governance policy.

Elections to local Khurals of Aimags, Soums, the Capital City and Districts have been too politicised lately, and as a result, these Khurals have become the institutions for political appointments rather than self-governing institutions, leading to their estrangement from the interests and needs of citizens” (UNDP: Democratic Governance Indicators: Assessing the State of Governance in Mongolia, p 39).

However, the Mission does not fully share this pessimistic view. There are some positive developments and the process is only, read only, 15 years old and is taking place against the background of 70 years of Soviet-style oppression and extreme centralism.

2.5 Support by UNDP and other International Partners

UNDP participated in and “shared” LSG, phase 1, together with the Government and Sida but did not participate in phase 2 of the Project that was totally financed by Sida. But the moral and ideological support from UNDP was clearly visible also during phase 2 as “...improving responsible and democratic governance”, has been, and still is, one of UNDP:s main priorities in Mongolia.

UNDP has in a recent UNDAF (2006) framework document on the co-operation in Mongolia stated as follows:

“Serious efforts are on in Mongolia to consolidate democratic processes and encourage active people’s participation in public decision making. In addition to improving responsible and democratic govern-

ance the country needs to deepen democracy of every level of society. Five areas require immediate attention.

- The first relates to enhancing people's participation by improving electoral processes and enhancing the capacity of civil society organisations to play a more active and meaningful role in the fulfilment of MDGs.
- The second relates to strengthening decentralisation, empowering local communities and local governments through a proper evolution of authority, funds and personnel and holistic public administration reforms.
- The third aspect has to do with promoting greater transparency and accountability of public institutions requiring people's improved access to information, zero tolerance for corruption and depoliticising and revamping country's civil service.
- The fourth has to do with strengthening the rule of law to instil greater confidence in both the state and public governance.
- Finally, steps are needed to improve people's access to justice and legal services."

These aspects are clearly well inter-related and inter-linked. It is difficult to tackle one without tackling the others in a joint effort. The LSG II has tackled several of these issues, however with a clear emphasis on the second aspect/point above. The same could be said on LSG I.

2.6 Previous Mongolian – Swedish Co-operation related to LSG (Phase I)

The first phase of the LSG project was implemented during June 1997–December 1999. This project-phase was in fact a component of the UNDP-managed project "Decentralisation and Democracy Support Project" (DDSP), started in 1997.

The UNDP project DDSP of 1997 aimed at strengthening citizen's participation in democratic society and the capacity of local government to respond to the needs of the population. The project was funded by UNDP, Sida, UNESCO/DANIDA and ADB. Except for the UNDP-Sida "Capacity Building for Local Self-Governance" (LSG I), the overall project covered Democratic Governance and Human Rights at the Bagh level and ADB supported a project on Institutional Strengthening and Financial Administration of local government. All these sub-components were mainly implemented in six (6) pilot Aimags only.

UNDP carried out two different evaluations of DDSP in 1998–1999. Positive effects and results of the Capacity Building sub-component of DDSP (= LSG I) implemented and financed by Sida were according to Sida Evaluation Report 2000/1 (Öström/Lundquist, December 1999) stated by these two evaluations carried out by UNDP.

LSG 1 started mid-1997 with the signing of an agreement between the Mongolian Government/MoF and SALA and SIPU International based on financing from Sida. The project included these four sub-components:

1. Short-term capacity building through training of Aimag Khural Members in the six pilote Aimags.
2. Long-term capacity building for local self governing bodies in Mongolia through twinning collaboration with local government in Sweden
3. Strengthen the capacity of local administration support associations and foundations
4. Strengthening the capacity of national policy research institutions

The main focus of the project was in practice on the first component, training. This training component was later on widened to include soum Khural members, staff from governor's offices, local NGOs and political parties. It was also geographically widened to include people from all Aimags in the Country and the Capital City.

Positive evaluations by UNDP and by the special Sida Evaluation of 1999 through Öström/Lundquist, and strong requests from the Mongolian Cabinet Office, International donors and others, requested Sida to consider a second phase of the LSG project, LSG phase II. This was approved.

According to the Sida Evaluation, page 2, "the main lesson learned from this project is the mutually reinforcing factors of the process and content of the training. Learning about local democracy has been promoted through basic democratic methods".

Academy of Management in Ulan Bataar was conducting Human Resource Training and Development successfully during phase 1. Academy of Management is a State-owned training institution. But in phase 2 the different stakeholders including Sida, on principle grounds, preferred to work with a more autonomous partner and an NGO – Mongolian Association of Local Authorities, MALA. Consequently Academy of Management was left out and a decision was taken to strengthen MALA and make MALA one of the main components in phase II.

Based on positive evaluations and on a Project Document of 2 August 2001, Sida decided in September the same year to finance a second phase of LSG I, LSG II.

3. Evaluated Project LSG II and its main Sub-Components

3.1 The Project – LSG II

This is an ex-post Evaluation 2,5 years after finalisation of the Project. For the sake of the reader a brief out-line and summary of the Project has been done in this chapter, based on the project document and other information.

The project proposal on "Improvement on Local Self-Governance in Mongolia II" was submitted to Sida, and to Ms B Shatar at the Cabinet Office in Mongolia, early August 2001.

A Contract between the Deputy Head of Cabinet Office, Ms Shatar, and SIPU International AB was signed on 10 September 2001 and later on formally approved by Sida as a "Contract-Financed Technical Co-operation" project. (Decision/Beslut: Sida insatsstöd, Diariernr: 2001-00430, Mongoliet Kapacitetssupplemen för Decentralisering och Lokalt Självstyre, II.)

Phase II was basically a continuation of phase I, but covered all 21 Aimags and not only the initial 6 pilot ones.

The overall aim of the project derived from and was developed from the overall aim applied during the first phase of the project. The aim for the project period 2001–2004 was thus as follows according to the PD:

- "The policies and practices of the Government of Mongolia enable territorial units to take increasingly greater control over their own development, decision making and resource mobilisation, resulting in a significant and positive impact on people-centred sustainable development in Mongolia
- Self-governing bodies, Khurals, of all aimags and Ulaanbaatar city are more capable of making

rational, independent decisions on matters of economic and social life of their respective territorial units

- Central Government and MALA representatives have developed increased knowledge and capacity to support the process of decentralisation for greater local control of development and resource mobilisation
- The project has contributed to increased mutual understanding, improved communication and co-operation between central and local governmental levels
 - The mainstreaming of gender issues in local government development is further developed

The overall purpose of the project is to support such developments.”

Some specific aspects of the project approach are also discussed and stated.

The first aspect is about equality between the two partners based on mutual respect and joint participation to ensure sustainability. It also stated in this context that local democracy and local self-governance, by definition, must build upon a “bottom-up approach” with active citizens.

A second aspect is about integration of the project sub-components. This project was initially supposed to consist of three components:

- Training and Development Programme
- Support to MALA
- Applied Research and Development Programme

Later on, during 2003, five minor “regional development programmes” were added as a fourth sub-component (at a cost of less than 0,6 million SEK).

The Mission has of course stuck to and work based on the ToR for the Evaluation, the PD and Final Report that in principle keeps the division into four (4) sub-components. We have made the Evaluation Assignment and this Report based on four sub-components for reasons of history and clarity. However, in reality we consider the Project to consist of two (2) main components, Training and Development Programme *and* MALA.

Research Component and the Regional Development Programmes/”Microprojects” were both in practice very closely related to and more or less integrated in Training – in the crucial Action Learning Approach of the Training component. Action Learning was the third specific aspect of the Project and encompassed small project assignments as part of the Training but also the slightly more comprehensive Research and “Microprojects” sub-components. This understanding of the “Microprojects” is also made clear in the Mongolian official requests on the issue (in to Sida 2003-10-14, Ms Shatar Diariennr: 2001-00430). To avoid any miss-understanding in this context – these enlarged “training assignments, were very positive and much appreciated additions to the usual and standard minor project-oriented assignments in any such Training Programme.

The fourth aspect was the “cascade design” of the Training Component that started with the Swedish Team training of Master Trainers (MTs, finally 66 in total), the MT:s training of Local Trainers (LTs, finally 110 in total) and the LT:s training of some 3000 Khural members/politicians, local government officials, community leaders, NGO representatives, etc. This design will be discusses later on under “sustainability”.

The fifth aspect is about Gender and Core Values. Gender was much developed in the second phase compared to phase one. Core values were summarised as follows in the PD:

“All our efforts have an overall purpose to support baghs, soums and aimags to improve their capacity to govern themselves and to deliver the services that the citizens need. The core values reflect different aspects of this. They are in brief: community orientation, committed leadership, participation by everyone, process orientation, learning from each other, management by facts, gender and development, caring for the environment and using resources wisely.”

The total cost for the whole Project was estimated at around 12,3 million but the real cost ended up at around 13,5 million after the Regional Development Projects/“Microprojects” were added during 2003.

3.2 Training and Development Programme

The objectives of the training and development programme were to ensure that:

- A large number of khural members and officials have been trained on local self-governance issues within all aimags and Ulaanbaatar city,
- the above target group has developed an improved ability to represent the citizens and ability to prioritise their interests and desires in a sustainable economic, environmental and social development
- the target group has developed an improved ability to work independently and autonomously
- the target group has developed an improved ability in policy making on aimag and soum development issues and ability to identify and use different sources of resources and revenue mobilisation
- all aimags will have Khural Chairpersons and Governors with enhanced knowledge of principles of local democracy and systems of good governance with citizens in focus;
- all aimags in Mongolia will have Khural Chairpersons and Governors with an improved capacity to collaborate with each other;
- central government officials and politicians in the capital of Ulaanbaatar will have a better knowledge of local self governance in general and of Sweden and the Swedish experiences in particular;

Furthermore to ensure that:

- All aimags and Ulaanbaatar city have at least one Master Trainer capable of training trainers and organising training within their own jurisdiction;
- every aimag has a small group of local trainers;
- the training materials produced during the first project period 1997—1999 are revised and up-dated;
- an advanced training package has been developed for nation wide field implementation;
- examples of short term local training activities based on the actual needs in an aimag have been produced;
- training activities in all aimags have been visited by a member of the Swedish consultant team during the project period (2001—2004);

The total cost for the Training were estimated to 9,4 million SEK or approximately 75% of the total budget and by far the biggest Component due to heavy Swedish consultancy inputs.

The main out-put was supposed to be the training of some 3000 Khural members and officials plus training/re-training of 38 MTs and dito of 140 LTs.

3.3 Mongolian Association of Local Authorities (MALA)

MALA was/is an NGO and is a membership organisation supposed to be a driving force for development of local authorities in a similar way as SALA/SKL in Sweden. MALA was selected as being an independent NGO, supposed to be more or less independent from different State Authorities. An organisation supposed to be a forerunner for decentralisation and LSG can, by definition, not be part of the State Administration. Therefore Academy of Management was faced out as previously mentioned.

The objectives for this component were to:

- Support the Mongolian Association in its efforts to establish MALA as a sustainable organisation based on active participation by its members, the aimags and soums.
- MALA should have the democratic base and financial strength to be recognised as an independent spokesperson for the local authorities vis-à-vis the government. MALA should have an on-going dialogue with its members through its magazine the MALA Journal.
- MALA should also be able to support and organise co-operation between its members, regionally and nationally and be an active force in promoting improvements in performance and efficiency in local government.

The detailed plans for Swedish support would be developed in close co-operation with the Mongolian Association. It would contain the following main ingredients and out-puts:

- Continuous support and mentor ship for the MALA co-ordinator and branches as a basis for municipal co-operation
- support and advice concerning MALA's annual action plan with concrete objectives and priorities
- special advice on planning and implementing activities for safe-guarding of municipal interests (lobbying etc)
- hands-on consulting and training of "bare-foot" journalists for producing and editing material for the MALA Journal
- financial support to printing of 8 issues of the MALA Journal
- study visit in Sweden by MALA officials with focus on lobbying and negotiating skills and regional organisation.

It was further concluded that a sustainable MALA is a crucial factor for successful and continuous development of skills and competence in local government. The training component is a platform for making MALA well known as well as acquiring in-put from the member organisations for MALA's activity plans and priorities.

The proposed budget for the MALA component was 1,4 million SEK or close to 10% of the total project.

3.4 Applied Research and Development Programme

The objective of this component was according to the PD:

- To train the Mongolian master trainers and trainers to train local politicians and public servants in all aimags in structural evaluation and applied research methods in order to develop their ability to plan, follow up and evaluate political decisions in a systematic way and to develop methods. These methods will closely be integrated into the training material and training programmes of this project.

- to strengthen the research organisation, The Local Governance Development Foundation and Tsetsee Goun Management College, in its role to implement a joint applied research project and test case of the systematical methods learnt. The theme chosen for this project is *Ethics in Local Politics*. Activities in the research co-operation are planned to be closely linked to the future training activities in general and local officials and politicians will be used as data-collectors during their field assignments.

The out-puts and activities were supposed to be as follows:

- Mongolian trainers and master trainers will be trained in applied research methods
- The training material will contain one part about structural evaluation and applied research methods;
- All Mongolian politicians, Khural members, participating in this project component have been trained in structural evaluation and applied research methods;
- Concrete results and findings from the joint project *Ethics in Local Politics* are published.

The budget for this component was calculated at 0,6 million SEK or 5% of the total.

3.5 Five Regional Development Projects/“Microprojects”

The Regional Development Projects were initiated during 2003 in connection to the Training Component as more comprehensive assignments within the overall Learning Process – based on Action Learning, “learning by doing”.

However, you may also say that they “stood on their own feet” in the sense that they tackled important problems such as “Activating youths in Ulanbaatar Khoros”,

“Improving Citizen’s participation in Bagh Public Khurals” and “Protecting the Local Environment”.

The Regional Development Projects were all nicely developed and planned based on the LFA-approach and the total cost was fairly low with a grand total of 570.000 SEK plus the costs for a connected study tour to Sweden on regional development at 476.000 SEK. Reference is done to the brief application to Sida of 2003-10-14 – “Request for additional support for regional development within the project Capacity Building for Local Self-Governance in Mongolia II, 2001–2004.

3.6 Monitoring and Follow-up Mechanisms as per the Project Document

Little is said about the monitoring and follow-up mechanisms in the PD and the LFA approach is not easily visible in the PD. There is no LFA Matrix and consequently no set of performance indicators.

On the other hand it should already here be stated that the Mission has seldom/never seen such a well documented project in terms of many and good Reports and well prepared Training Materials. This aspect is commendable and outstandingly good and we are not only considering the number of reports but also their contents and layout. Kindly refer to Annexes 3 and 4.

4. Findings and Conclusions

This Chapter is based on our desk-study, but at much greater extent on our impressions during the Mission in Mongolia and on all meetings and interviews carried out in Mongolia and in Stockholm.

4.1 Results/Outputs

The results/outputs of the project in terms of number of trained people is impressive. Most expected and planned quantitative out-puts were more than fulfilled (section 4.7 in Final Report of the Project, SIPI/SALA IDA, 17 Jan. 2005, plus interviews). Details as regards quantitative out-puts are to be found in the Final Report.

During discussions in Mongolia, May 2007, it was agreed that altogether 66 MTs and 110 LTs were trained/re-trained during phase II and that is a slight, but in principle in-significant, difference from figures in the final report. The main explanation is that 30 LTs were trained as “advanced trainers” and finally got certificates as MTs. In other words – they were transferred from category LTs to category MTs.

The contents of different training programs and seminars have been very comprehensive, adequate and relevant and based on latest training/pedagogical methods. The same could be said about the study-tours to Sweden even if some participants probably have visited Sweden too many times to really make visits cost-effective.

Most activities in relation to the very important and crucial MALA-subcomponent have in principle been implemented. Even some “new and extra” activities in relation to twinning have been implemented and even an extra study-tour to Sweden. But all in all, not the whole budget was spent under this sub-component. The whole budgets were spent under all the other sub-components.

In about the same way the Research Component was fully implemented and has functioned as an important component in order to increase capacity and competence on “fact finding and studies” as a base for any decision-making. One very relevant, successful and comprehensive study was made, in two rounds, on “Etics in Local Politics”.

The five regional development projects have been closely connected to Training and have all been an important aspect of the Training component. These projects were all planned and implemented according to plans and all very successful. They have been a practical “school” in project planning and project management.

4.1.1 Relevance of Objectives, Out-puts and Activities and appropriateness of methods used

The Overall Objectives of the Project have been very relevant and fully in line with the Constitution of Mongolia and other laws and regulations. This is the general comment by the Mission and by all people met with. This was a relevant project.

The Training Component has been very relevant and successful as previously indicated. The Mongolian partners already had very good experiences of the contents, approach and methods used during phase I. Training contents, training materials, process and methods have been relevant, appropriate and of international top standard.

All people the Mission met with during some 40 meetings in Mongolia confirmed these findings on relevance and on the issue of the impressive quantitative outputs.

It should be mentioned that the “basic training” (in the cascade approach) covered as many as 3.106 local politicians and officials. The training was conducted in three steps: 5 days of training, 4–6 weeks

of field work and applied studies/research finalised through another 5 days of training. The main contents and themes are to be found in the final report, page 23.

During our discussions in Mongolia it became very evident that, according to people met with, the main differences between the approach in this very Training Programme and experiences from previous ones (“during previous times”) was the participatory approach, the field assignments (incl Research Component and Regional Development Projects/Micro-projects) and the excellent training materials.

MALA would to our understanding be the key organisation in Mongolia to be included in the project. No doubt *MALA* fulfilled vital tasks and exercised fundamental work for the success of the project; i.e. represented local interests and lobbied for realistic conditions for local self-governing organisations, provided technical advisory and information services to members, produced and distributed a highly demanded journal, gave legal and policy advice, assisted in training, etc. The Swedish Consultant has given continuous support in different ways and tried to act as a mentor for *MALA* in the process of planning and implementing its work. Most areas that have been stressed for implementation are all quite relevant to our understanding. Safe-guarding local interests, co-operation with and co-ordination of local branches, hands on consulting for producing *MALA* journal, and other activities are all very relevant and needed in order for *MALA* to strategically support decentralization and LSG development.

All Swedish support activities described above have been put in operation in order to ensure that *MALA* would become a sustainable organisation based on active participation by its members. The problem is that *MALA* has not been able to establish itself as a recognized spokesperson for the local authorities in the sense that *MALA* has not the capacity to realize the work needed. *MALA* has not been able to live up to the requirements from members and other stakeholders. Many good things have been achieved, but this is not enough as long as *MALA* is not strong enough to improve working conditions for local self-governing organisations, Khurals. It may be that ambitions are high but leaving *MALA* with only one employee and scarce resources must lead to great problems to implement its ambitious plans.

MALA must be revitalized or work in close co-operation with other relevant NGOs with its own visions in order to take the leading role to promote LSG. We believe that the project ingredients described in the PD for Swedish support and developed in close co-operation with *MALA* are quite relevant. The plan expressed well the needs of *MALA*, as we see it, to be able to fulfil the requirements facing the organisation.

Our concern is directed towards the future of *MALA* and *MALA*'s potential to hold on to efficient promotion of LSG now that the Swedish support has disappeared since two years back. *MALA* could play an important role if resources and visions are developed and *MALA* strengthened as an institution. Presently the representatives, normally MT's in urban Districts and in rural areas have only limited contacts with *MALA* and have to try to organise training and other development work on their own with no co-ordination or support from *MALA*.

Evidently this is hazardous for a sustainable impact caused by project activities and for future initiatives and the continuation of important development work within local authorities.

However, when you now look back into the specific Overall Objective for the *MALA*-component little was directly said about further strengthening of *MALA* as an institution in terms of manpower, organisation, strategy formulation, short-term planning, equipment, finances, budget, etc. This was a slight mistake in the sense that emphasis was put on “knowledge and capacity” only and not on clear-cut institution-building and strengthening of *MALA* as an important fore-runner on decentralisation, training and local self-governance.

This becomes even more evident when you look into the specific objectives for the MALA component (under 3.3 above). Objectives, outputs and activities are, according to the Mission and people interviewed, fairly vague in terms of Institution-building (also of an NGO in this case).

In the final report you may conclude that Objectives have been slightly blurred and the concrete outputs are “only” 2 study-visits, 2 seminars for MALA-members, 2 seminars related to the MALA-Journal and printing of 8 issues of the Journal.

This somehow reflects the problems with the MALA component that for sure were visible very early during phase II. In fact, already the previous evaluation of 1999/2000 raised serious concerns about the strength of MALA (“...very limited resources and staff situation...”). Little has changed here and MALA has developed at a very slow pace during phase II. A serious indicator is that MALA is not capable of keeping track of the contact details of the altogether 66 trained MTs and 110 LTs (MALA is aware of the whereabouts of 19 MTs only, information from Mr G. Manaljav).

The efforts related to MALA should have been re-organised very early during phase II. The Mission missed the flexibility of the Project in this context. Even if a Project is nicely planned (but in this case without LFA as a decisive and exposing instrument) there should be flexibility when problems occur. Another possibility may be that the MALA component was not demand-driven, but supply-driven.

But even so the Mission would like to conclude that the MALA component was a basically relevant approach in the sense that it is a must to base development of decentralisation and local self-governance on an organisation/NGO/Institution that can stand up for decentralisation, for local democracy and for the poor people.

The research component is considered to be more marginal and complementary to the training, and assessed in the perspective of general development of LSG and not so much based on scientific usefulness. The method used is to spread the knowledge how to systematic gather data to be analysed. MTs have had the main responsibility to collect the data. The respondents were public officials, politicians and citizens in two surveys. Surveys were followed up with interviews by the research group of six persons. The results were presented at the annual conferences. Workshops were organised with the University of Örebro. Five of the Mongolian researchers went to Örebro twice. The evaluation team finds the approach and methods quite appropriate and well appreciated among everyone involved.

To our understanding the best impact of the component refers to the six researchers who learnt Swedish qualitative research methods and the good co-operation between trainers and researchers.

In Mongolia, Russian quantitative methodologies are the most common. The subject chosen for the main research itself turned out to be a sensitive topic, but functioned as a god door-opener for critical discussions as unethical behaviour is perceived as a problem in Mongolia. Experiences and methods were included in Masters Trainers Manual. We agree that the project package of applied research, built on learning by doing is most relevant for competence building in showing the way how to initiate, co-operate and actually carry out a research project. It demonstrates well that reforming and changing public management, renewing the legal framework, etc, must be based on research providing facts.

“*Micro projects*” were added in the second phase for regional development on Bagh level to be led by the Master Trainers. The overall objective was to find mechanisms for the MT’s to lead small projects within democracy, youth and environment. All three areas are quite relevant and closely related to LSG and also in line with the action learning approach. This was a way to teach and test MT’s skills in project management and general management as one part for further training within the training component. We met with youth and democracy/bagh khural development minor projects. All youth projects were more or less closed down while some of the democracy projects are still working. The key stakeholders or target groups were mostly MT’s and ordinary citizens/youth in Districts in Ulanbaatar

or Bagh's in remote areas. Even though the activities involved were quite small and the outcome limited, we believe they were useful for everyone involved. The citizens, politicians and young people became aware of possibilities to start projects within different prioritized areas on local level. There is a big need of places to meet where young people can use computers or where persons in villages can discuss and work for better services in a democratic way.

The problem is that most of the Micro Projects stopped during or after the termination of the project, due to lack of resources or because the MT and project managers have more urgent matters to work with or because the local Khurals chairmen would not let them do so or because they felt alone with no feed-back from MALA or local authorities. When we visited Bagh Public Khurals small offices, we could see improvement on many things like small training events, access to training materials, information sharing and meeting procedures, etc. Many good initiatives have been taken because of the project. We do not see this as a sustainability problem and are not surprised that the minor projects stopped. Resources were allocated for short term projects during a short period up to one year. After that hopefully other similar activities were initiated in other places as a result of the training component.

There is a good handbook on project management developed from the experiences and lessons gained by a group of MT's when implementing and managing projects at local level. The minor projects were well planned using the LFA approach.

4.1.2 Sustainability

Sustainability is basically about the continuation of benefits from a development intervention, such as LSG II, after major development assistance has been completed.

LSG II has greatly promoted the idea of local self-governance among all involved stakeholders. Stakeholders and individual participants have been many in LSG II – probably around 10.000. LSG II has really strengthened the advocates of local self-governance in Mongolia and this is according to the Mission a sound base for long-term “ideological” sustainability in terms of local self-governance being a concept and a tool to secure, ensure and promote human rights and combat poverty at local levels based on a “bottom-up” approach.

The Project has greatly contributed to the present situation where nobody in official positions in the Country dares openly to combat the idea and vision of more developed local self-governance. However, it is another matter that there are deliberate legal and other hindrances raised to slow the process such as within the financial and economic fields (PSMFL, etc).

A “Temporary Standing Committee” has been established in the Parliament to promote and develop local self-governance. This Committee is headed by Mr Dondog and the Committee has managed to get a great number (=17) of legal changes in favour of local self-government accepted by the State Great Khural.

In most matters we believe the components in the project to have been consistent with stakeholder priorities. The project interventions were well supported by local institutions and well integrated with social and cultural conditions.

Many participants in the *Training Programme* have been promoted to high key positions. A number of these are still on the Board of MALA.

Modules of training courses were much in demand and highly accepted and appreciated. Training is still offered but only at a very limited level and mainly short courses or meetings for new politicians elected in 2004. Master trainers have been forced to change the contents of training in most cases but mostly due to lack of resources and limited capacity to provide the overall contents based on one

individual trainer. It has been confirmed that most important stakeholders participated in the planning of the new phase II.

The Mission also observed that many Aimags now work on Strategic Planning as an outcome of the project. This is important as part of the Strategy in several cases is strengthening of local self-governance.

The numbers of staff at the Aimag Khural Offices met with (five Offices) had increased as well as the running budgets. This is very positive and at least partly an indication on more long-term sustainability for local self-governance per se.

After the termination of the project the network of 66 MT's and 110 LT's have been left very much on their own, enjoying only very limited follow-up or guiding support. Their work has, when continued, continued on an ad-hoc basis depending on good initiatives of the individual MT's and sometimes LTs and in terms of short meetings/courses for newly elected politicians. Of the 66 MTs only some 18–19 are accounted for in the sense that their whereabouts and contact details are known to MALA or to the main project owner of LSG II, the Cabinet Office. This is nothing but a disaster for project sustainability and for morale of all the “excluded” MTs.

Eighteen of the MT's are included in the new Good Governance Project with emphasis on leadership. This may somehow be good for sustained effects but is not directly supportive to local self-governance as this project is mainly dealing with leadership in the State Sector/Agencies.

The cascade approach to training is a good cost-effective model but turned out to be fatal for sustainability as MALA or other institutions (Cabinet Office, Aimags), could not institutionalise the investment in training and could not carry on with some kind of continued training and continued activities to keep the heavy investment in training alive (please see also next paragraph, please). Only 18 MT's are active as a result of the new leadership project. It has been shown that the majority of 30 persons primarily trained as LT's and later further trained as advanced trainers and certified as MT's are lost to the project. Nobody keeps track of these MT's or the majority of the 110 LT's. This is of course a great loss which only could be corrected if the same persons quickly are picked up in a new LSG project. The project owners have failed to ensure sustainability in this sense.

The main reasons for this failure are lack of financial, and administrative, sustainability as the Swedish partners took on all financial responsibilities for the project in spite of what was stated in the Project Contract, article 5.3. An additional, closely related, reason was the lack of institutionalisation of the Training Programme. *It would have been advantageous for sustainability to establish 1–5 concrete and physically visible training centres in the Country – probably one in each of the five Regions. The Aimags/Soums in these Regions should have been persuaded to employ at least one permanent staff/MT at these centres as a co-ordinator and also to provide basic running cost as soon as it became obvious that MALA was in difficulties.*

The objective that MALA should have the financial and institutional strength to be an independent spokesperson for local authorities has proved hard to reach. It is also outside the control of MALA as long as local budgets are very much constrained by lack of resources generally, but also by the centralized decision making, which makes it virtually impossible for local Khurals to include proper membership fees and extra contributions in their budgets. This makes MALA dependent on voluntary contributions, international support and state grants for its activities. This is one of many adverse effects of the “Public Sector Management and Finance Law”, PSFML, on decentralisation and local self-governance.

MALA has a very strong and powerful Board but has a weak Secretariat. However, it is positive to notice that the MALA Journal has around 3.000 sub-scribers.

The overall worry and main sustainability problem is that most training and development activities have stopped and that no institutions or mechanisms push for a continuation of activities initiated during the project period in order to save all the investments.

4.1.3 Cost-effectiveness

The totals cost of LSG II ended up at 13,446 million SEK for the project, 2001–2004.

The cost for the most important component, the Training Component incl Research and Micro Projects ended up at 12,2 million SEK (project management, 0,636, plus MALA, 0,576 MSEK, taken out).

The cost for project management during 2,5 years is very reasonable and the MALA component proved to be very insignificant in monetary terms. More resources and even more efforts should, according to the Mission and some people met with, have been put into the main proposed stakeholder in the project, MALA. This organisation is far from a sustainable one and has not developed into an Institution. Alternatively – other solutions should have been looked for.

3.106 politicians, 66 MTs and 110 LTs, in total 3.282 participants, have got at least two weeks of “class-room training” plus training in field-work. The MTs and LTs have all got much more comprehensive training including comprehensive training materials plus a number of study-tours and a number of well organised and nicely planned conferences in Mongolia (annual conferences, etc). MTs have beside this got certain individual assistance and training.

The total cost per trained participant is 3.717 SEK which is very reasonable and very commendable, especially when considering the size of the Country and the fact that work has been carried out in all 21 Aimags. The Mission would like to consider the training as very cost-effective and relevant in all international and Swedish comparisons and is a definite advantage of the “cascade approach”.

A representative of one of the most important stakeholders noted that some of the study-tours might not have been cost-effective in the sense that some participants visited Sweden five times. The representative also regretted the lack of transparency in terms of the overall project budget and shortcomings in terms of local budget administration by MALA.

In terms of cost-sharing the Mongolian side has failed to fulfil its contractual obligations. This has hampered project sustainability.

In summary – the Mission has the definite opinion that the project in the final analysis has been very cost-effective and well managed.

4.2 Impact

Impact will be analysed, basically in two different stages. The first stage will deal with the project as a whole, overall project impact, and some specific impacts per project sub-component.

The second stage will deal with requested analysis of impact on Democracy and Human Rights, Poverty, Gender and Environment.

4.2.1 Overall Project Impact

The needed legal framework and the administrative structures for LSG in Mongolia are all fairly new as they, in reality, started to be established and developed as late as of January 1992.

Only 15 years have passed and that must be considered as a very short and insignificant time period in the context of development of LSG and decentralisation – especially as you would have the modern history of Mongolia in mind.

As hinted at earlier, the process on development of LSG and decentralisation in Mongolia has in principle been a fairly positive step-wise approach characterised by its ups and downs – “two steps forward and one step back”. This is common in all countries as decentralisation is a continued on-going battle. This is the case even if there are very clear arguments and advantages in favour of LSG and decentralisation.

The comprehensive approach in this project has contributed to the fact that the ideas and basic concept of LSG and the needs of decentralisation are widely disseminated and fairly well understood at most administrative levels and in many geographical areas. And it is obvious that the support is more pronounced at local levels such as soums and baghs. No doubt that these positive developments to a large extent, according to all people interviewed and met with, should be connected to this Mongolian-Swedish project during 1990ies and during the period 2001–2004.

The project has also contributed to the developments of the legal framework and regulations for decentralisation and LSG in the sense that the main project owners at all levels, especially the previous deputy head of Cabinet Office, all Aimags and key persons at MALA, have all advocated and tried to push for reasonable developments of the legal frameworks in favour of decentralisation. Certain roles, such as the ones of Khural chairpersons and Governors, have somehow been further clarified and strengthened.

There is also a tendency that the local Khurals as well as some Governors offices are more now keen to listen to local opinions. This is of course most visible at Soum and Bagh levels.

Phase II has contributed to preparation of Strategic Plans and Strategic Economic Plans at most levels (Aimags, Soums) and the role of Khurals here has been strengthened. These planning documents contribute to increase the reputation of LSG as well as transparency and participation in the medium-term perspective.

Many of the trained staff, MTs, have been promoted to key positions and according to our understanding most of them are defending and trying to continue to realise the main principles in the LSG II. All MTs and LTs met with were very positive as regards especially the Training Component (with all connected sub-components).

It should also be mentioned that training per se is now more prioritised in general at most levels and that the great number of trainees within the project (let us say around 10.000) is a big critical mass in favour of the basic and very progressive ideas raised by the project and its local owners. This relates to both contents and learning approach.

Impact of the regional development project has been positive in the sense that the practical knowledge in project development and management has been strengthened.

All in all, the Mission understands and considers that the overall Project has changed the overall balance in favour of decentralisation and has greatly strengthened its advocates and enthusiasts. However, the struggle has to continue.

4.2.2 Democracy and Human Rights

LSG should be considered as part of and a pre-condition for true democracy. It is of out-most importance that people can influence their daily life and thereby contribute to local development.

Participation, Non-discrimination, Accountability and Transparency are all needy tools and pre-conditions for development of democracy and should guide both process and results. They should be utilised as criteria for follow-up and evaluations.

Important aspects of Democracy and Human Rights were well covered in the basic training, in the training of LTs and MTs and especially in the advanced action learning programme on Democratic Governance and Local Self-Governance with a curriculum on 48 hours. This may be seen from the curricula and was also confirmed by several interviewees.

The implementation of the project was, according to our understanding, implemented based on these guiding principles.

There are, as discussed and out-lined under 2.2, a number of contextual hindrances to application of these principles. These are described under section 2.2.

The Mission also noted the following positive developments and impacts, probably related to the project, according to all the meetings organised:

- There is an increased understanding that democracy needs participation
- There is an increased understanding that the “personal union” and messing up of roles and responsibilities between MRP-Civil Service –Khurals hampers accountability
- General tendency now that citizens and elected politicians request transparency and more information
- The Project has developed the understanding of the important role of women in development
- There is an increased understanding that Human Development is a pre-condition for Local Participation in order to develop Decentralisation.
- The Mission observed and understood that activities related to Democracy and Human Rights (especially Rights of the Child and development of NGOs in this field) still was on-going in three out of five Aimags that we visited and that MTs had a decisive role
- Very positive and honest comments on the usefulness of all study-tours to Sweden in terms of increased understanding of democracy in general, the criteria above and the rights-based culture in particular

The Mission would like to conclude and summarise that the project has had a reasonable impact in favour of increased understanding of democracy and human rights. This was most visibly seen at local levels and in terms of good understanding of the “bottom-up approach”.

4.2.3 Poverty

Based on recommendations in the “Blue Handbook”, Poverty Alleviation Committees have been formed in many Aimags and in many Soums. The “Blue Handbook” is widely known, available at all sites the Mission visited and is of course available in Mongolian.

The Mission realised that several Aimags and Baghs have continued to work on Combat and Prevention of Poverty. Issues worked with were:

- Awareness-raising among politicians on Poverty
- Preparations for the cold seasons to save life-stock
- Soft Loans to inhabitants
- Advice on self-help
- Awareness-raising on environment related issues
- Creation of a soft-loan system

The Mission would like to conclude that the Project has played a role to explain poverty aspects and also that there is a sound rights-based approach to the issue in the different training materials seen (“Fighting Poverty”). The Project has obviously played a role and had an impact to increase awareness on Poverty.

4.2.4 Gender Aspects

When the Mission went through all the statistics we understood that there has been a good and reasonable gender balance among the trainees. In fact some courses have been dominated by women – in quantitative terms.

A Special training module on Gender was developed and revised/up-dated. Gender aspects have been one of the “core-values” in all components and in all courses. The signed Contract between the Swedish Consultants/Sida dated 10 September 2001 states in § 8.1 (v) that “all statistical information related to the target group/s shall distinguish between men and women”. This has been fulfilled except for within financial reporting. Budget and financial reporting was not based on principles of gender budgeting and gender financial reporting and this is an obvious weakness and a hinder for the analysis of the project.

Most MTs met with were in fact female and they had important positions in all Aimags visited.

Swedish consultants were all male. Both the Project (according to some interviewees) and the Mission had some difficulties to explain this fact.

However, in spite of this, the Project has according to the Mission strengthened the position of women with the field of LSG.

4.2.5 Environment

Part of the comprehensive training materials, “Local Authorities and Environment Protection” have been devoted to this important subject.

This subject has become even more important due to increased mining in the Country. The issue has therefore been discussed frequently in several of the different training programmes.

One out of three Regional Development Projects/”Microprojects” was devoted to “Increasing environmental awareness in local governments”.

This project, and the hard realities in the Country, will ensure a continuation of efforts.

4.3 Mapping and Evaluation of (still) on-going activities

4.3.1 Training

Related to the training component some training of local (after elections 2004) has continued during 2005 and partly also during 2006. Some civil servants have also been trained but at a lesser extent. The training has normally been fairly short (one day or 1+1 days) and has not covered full training programmes as in the previous Project. Training of local politicians during short courses/meetings is the major on-going activity.

The Mission could not confirm that any full training programme has been carried out after the finalisation of the Project. This was not the case in the five Aimags (some soums and baghs therein) that we visited and based on interviews and discussions we conclude that no such comprehensive courses have been carried out since 2004.

The excellent training materials are still being distributed, by in particular from MALA and by devoted individuals, based on local requests.

Some twinning projects are still on-going, at least partly as an outcome of the LSG II.

Regional Networking for LSG Development is on-going in two of the (up-coming) Regions visited by the Mission. This is very positive and constructive and based on initiatives by devoted individuals, I a in order to co-operate on implementation of minor training activities (for new politicians – and within the

field of Democracy and Human Rights). MTs are here working in close co-operation with neighbouring Aimags to save time and funds.

In principle no training of new LTs is on-going in the Country. However, there is one positive exception as four new LTs are being trained in Dahrhan Uul based on regional efforts. This is commendable and encouraging and a positive example for other Aimags/Regions.

Out of in total 66 MTs only 19 are still somehow operating in the framework of MALA – operating in the sense that their whereabouts and contact details are known and that they officially, as individuals, MTs and often Secretaries in the Khurals constitute local MALA-branches.

18 are active within the still, since 6 years back, on-going Swedish-Mongolian project on Good Governance. In principle the MTs can expect very little support within Training from MALA due to the limited institutional capacity of the organisation.

4.3.2 MALA

MALA is still functioning but at a fairly low level. The Secretariat/Office is weak with limited staff (1staff + 1 person for the Journal). The running budget is very limited but the present fairly tiny and degraded office is still open. However, the office is a possible meeting place for interested people and books/documents/training materials are still kept there.

MALA has a very strong Board in terms of high-ranked individuals, but the Mission got the impression that the Board is not being fully utilised and fully mobilised. This may also relate to the weak administrative capacity of MALA that was said, by important stakeholders, to even have difficulties to call Board meetings in a proper and transparent way.

To speed up development of LSG and decentralisation MALA rapidly has to be either strengthened or replaced in order to try to contribute to save some of the big investments made in this Project.

4.3.3 Research

Research has stopped but the full Research Team is still active but out-side the framework of the previous project. They have in principle established a small consultancy firm based on previous experiences and contacts and some of them are, according to our understanding, working on their masters and doctoral thesis. This is positive.

4.3.4 Minor Projects/Regional Development Projects

Minor projects have in principle stopped. However, some follow-up work is on-going in the field of Human Rights and Democracy and some MTs have contributed to establish still on-going NGOs related to this sector. The Team met with two MTs active on Human Rights, especially Rights of the Child.

5. Discussions on Lessons learnt, Requirements for Sustainability of Local Self Governance/Decentralisation and proposed Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

In this report local self-governance (LSG) is understood in about the same way as the wide concept “Decentralisation” that indicates transfer of power, resources, knowledge, participation, decision-making and authority to elected local, participatory levels and based on principles of participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency.

The Overall Objectives of the Project have been very relevant and fully in line with the Constitution of Mongolia and other laws and regulations. This is the general comment by the Mission and by all people met with. This was a relevant project.

The specific “wide” Training Component (incl Research and Micro Projects) has also been very relevant and successful. The Mongolian partners already had very good experiences of the contents, approach and methods used during phase I. Training contents, training materials, process and methods during phase II have been relevant, appropriate and of international top standard.

LSG II has greatly promoted the idea of local self-governance among all involved stakeholders. Stakeholders and individual participants have been many in LSG II – probably around 10.000. LSG II has really strengthened the advocates of local self-governance in Mongolia and this is according to the Mission a sound base for long-term “ideological” sustainability in terms of local self-governance being a concept and a tool to secure, ensure and promote human rights and combat poverty at local levels, based on a “bottom-up” approach.

All people the Mission met with during some 40 meetings in Mongolia confirmed these findings on relevance and on the issue of the impressive quantitative outputs.

The Mission would like to conclude and summarise that the project has had a reasonable impact in favour of increased understanding of democracy and human rights. This was most visibly seen at local levels and in terms of good understanding of the “bottom-up approach”.

The Mission would like to state that the Project has played a role to explain poverty aspects and also that there is a sound rights-based approach to the issue in the different training materials seen (“Fighting Poverty”). The Project has obviously played a role and had an impact to increase awareness on Poverty.

When the Mission went through all the statistics we understood that there has been a good and reasonable gender balance among the trainees. In fact some courses have been dominated by women – in quantitative terms. Most MTs met with were in fact female and they had important positions in all Aimags visited.

Swedish consultants were all male. Both the Project (according to some interviewees) and the Mission had some difficulties to explain this fact. However, in spite of this, the Project has according to the Mission strengthened the position of women with the field of LSG.

The total cost per trained participant was 3.700 SEK which is very reasonable and very commendable, especially when considering the size of the Country and the fact that work has been carried out in all 21 Aimags. The Mission would like to consider the training as very cost-effective and relevant in all international and Swedish comparisons and is a definite advantage of the “cascade approach”.

The Swedish development co-operation with Mongolia is characterised by a high and relevant degree of control and command exercised by the Mongolian co-operation partners over the development activities.

5.2 Lessons learnt

The Mission understands and considers that the overall Project has changed the overall balance in favour of decentralisation and has greatly strengthened its advocates and enthusiasts. In this sense the Project has had a good impact. However, the struggle has to continue, especially in terms of sustainability of this Project, but even more so of the whole LSG and Decentralisation Process as such. Proposals and recommendations on the sustainability issue are raised below.

The Mission shares the opinion that the overall situation and the overall climate for development of LSG and Decentralisation are not fully conducive at present. Reference is made to the UNDP statement of 2006 in section 2.4 (by the end). However, the Mission does not fully share this rather pessimistic view. There are many positive developments and the process is only, read only, 15 years old and is taking place against the background of 70 years of Soviet-style oppression and extreme centralism. LSG and Decentralisation are pre-conditions for better socio-economic developments and better human development indicators.

It is obvious that there are unclear and counter-productive divisions of roles between different administrative layers in the Country and between Khurals/local politicians and state bodies (read Governors and Governors Offices). The very good and foresighted initial approach on LSG and decentralisation, however *not* clarified in detail in Chapter Four of the Constitution (“Administrative and Territorial Units and their Governing Bodies”) or neither sufficiently backed-up by clarifying Parliamentary National Laws and by corresponding administrative rules and regulations. There are a number of confusions and un-clear matters that at present hinder a proper development of LSG and real decentralisation. The greatest problem is obviously the “Public Sector Management and Finance Law”, PSFML, – and the political will at central level.

PSFML, is widely discussed in the Country. This Law of 2003 has its centrally located advocates but the criticism at local level is out-spoken and very loud. Budgets and funding is of course an extremely important aspect when it comes to decentralisation, in a meaningful manner, seen from the point of view of the local Khurals and the local population. A lot of lobbying is now on-going by many parties to change, or amend, this Law and, to the Mission, it seems like the local opponents to Law, in favour of a proper decentralisation, are gaining ground.

The efforts related to MALA should have been re-organised very early during phase II. The Mission missed the flexibility of the Project in this context. Even if a Project is nicely planned (but in this case without LFA as a decisive and exposing instrument) there should be flexibility when problems occur. Another possibility may be that the MALA component was not demand-driven, but supply-driven.

This becomes even more evident when you look into the specific objectives for the MALA component (under 3.3 above). Objectives, outputs and activities are, according to the Mission and people interviewed, fairly vague in terms of Institution-building (also of an NGO in this case).

MALA, or another NGO, has to take on a more decisive and much strengthened institutional role to promote and explain the rationale for LSG and Decentralisation.

The Soum-level is most important as that is the level that most directly affects the well-being of the population. The proposed new project should move from awareness-raising to implementation with emphasis on Soums.

There are several good approaches, laws, legal provisions, rules and regulations established to combat corruption. What is missing is guided enforcement and it is also obvious that an un-controlled decentralisation process may lead to increased local corruption provided the ideal conditions do not exist such as:

- Public financial management systems working also at local levels
- Strong and independent mass-media
- Strong and independent Civil Society
- Fairly high education level and awareness on corruption problems
- Local politicians and civil servants who can stand against local pressure from different local networks

The cascade approach to training is a good cost-effective model but turned out to be fatal for sustainability as MALA or other institutions (Cabinet Office, Aimags), could not institutionalise the investment in training and could not carry on with some kind of continued training and continued activities to keep the heavy investment in training alive. Complementary activities would have been to establish small training centres in each of the five Regions.

5.3 Requests for Sustainability

A serious issue frequently discussed and put forward to the Mission when in Mongolia was the unclear roles of politicians and civil servants at all levels. As developed in “National Integrity System and its Indicator” (UNDP 2003) in fact most politicians are still civil servants and the other way around. Appointment of civil servants on the basis of political selection criteria leaves no opportunity to control and monitor whether their performance conforms to the policy and decisions made by higher officials. These public servants have no distinctions from political appointees. This leads to blurring the border between the functions and responsibility of political appointees and professional public servants – and between politicians and civil servants.

However – it is now clear that an amendment to the Election Law will try to prohibit and stop this mixture of roles and will practically come into effect during next election 2008. It is important to study the practical implications of this amendment of the Law.

The decision making process on law and policy-making is not fully open and consultations with the citizens and the public are according to our sources not conducted effectively. Citizen’s participation is still limited and would need further development. A core issue here is of course development of the Civil Society/NGOs as a “training mechanism” for increased participation and popular activity. The LSG II was supposed to assist in the development of these processes.

According to critics of the present developments met with and according to international donors operating in the Country, all/most laws on administrative local units and their administrative management have ambiguous definitions and double meaning in establishing the authority and responsibilities of Khurals at all three local levels. This is not supportive as regards the further development of the Khurals and their administrations as supposed in the Constitution. The legal requirements for proper development of the principles of LSG is poor and ambiguous and there is insufficient policy and organisational support.

Laws are unclear and ambiguous and the division of work between all local entities Aimags, Soums, Baghs (corresponding units in Ulaanbataar) and the slowly emerging Regions are not clear. This makes any decentralisation very difficult and is by some people met with seen as a deliberate sabotage of the needy process.

A “Temporary Standing Committee” has been established in the Parliament to promote and develop local self-governance. This Committee is headed by Mr Dondog and the Committee has managed to get a great number (=17) of legal changes in favour of local self-government accepted by the State Great Khural. It would be good if this temporary Committee is turned into a permanent one.

Regional Networking for LSG Development is on-going in two of the (up-coming) Regions visited by the Mission. This is very positive and constructive and based on initiatives by devoted individuals, in order to co-operate on implementation of minor training activities (for new politicians – and within the field of Democracy and Human Rights). MTs are here working in close co-operation with neighbouring Aimags to save time and funds.

The main concern in relation to sustainability of LSG II is connected with MALA. When you now look back into the specific Overall Objective for the MALA-component little was directly said about further strengthening of MALA as an institution in terms of manpower, organisation, strategy formulation, short-term planning, equipment, finances, budget, etc. This was a slight mistake in the sense that emphasis was put on “knowledge and capacity” only and not on clear-cut institution-building and strengthening of MALA as an important fore-runner on decentralisation, training and local self-governance.

MALA, or another NGO, has to take on a more decisive and much strengthened institutional role to promote and explain the rationale for LSG and Decentralisation. This central body should be able to keep track of and co-ordinate MTs and LTs and support their training efforts. This NGO should probably establish training centres at Regional level or develop advanced Regional Networking.

5.4 Recommendations

The Mission would like to make the following concluding Recommendations based on our Findings and Experiences in Mongolia:

1. Mongolia should be offered more Swedish assistance to achieve a break-through in the decentralisation process in the near future. It would be a heavy loss of investments not to continue to support LSG and decentralisation in a new revised project as there is a great, well documented and outspoken, demand at all levels in Mongolia for the Swedish- Mongolian co-operation in this field to continue. The demand has been repeatedly raised by the Head of Cabinet Office, Mr Batbold, and by Mr Dondog, Chairperson of the Temporary Committee on Decentralisation in the Great Khural. The new project should make use of the big investments in 66 MT's and 110 LT's and further develop the good training co-operation at regional level, etc, etc.

Sida is recommended to continue the co-operation with Mongolia as regards LSG and Decentralisation provided the Cabinet Office, the Temporary Standing Committee and the Government officially would request such a continuation (also in writing).

The main reasons are heavy investments done and the opinion within many quarters in Mongolia, shared by the Mission, is that the process is close to a break-through.

Sida should move from capacity building to institution-building/capacity development and to process-oriented support to change processes within LSG and Decentralisation.

2. A pre-condition for such continuation would be a clear statement from the Government that it is prepared to change or abandon the PSFML-law in favour of further budget and tax decentralisation and also implement rapid staff strengthening of all local Khural Offices, especially at Soum level (probably transfer resources from Governors Offices to Khural Offices).

3. Such a project should be well planned (as the previous ones) and should start immediately after the elections 2008 and as soon as visible and positive outcomes could be seen of the decided changes in the Electoral Law in order to clarify roles and mandates of politicians and civil servants.

4. The new project should move from awareness raising to implementation with emphasis on Soums. The Soum-level is most important as that is the level that most directly affects the well-being of the population.

5. MALA has to be re-organised, strengthened, re-vitalised and boosted in terms of morale. Or another partner institution (NGO) has to be identified.

MALA, or another NGO, has to take on a more decisive and much strengthened institutional role to promote and explain the rationale for LSG and Decentralisation. This central body should be able to keep track of and co-ordinate MTs and LTs and support their training efforts. This NGO should probably establish training centres at Regional level or develop advanced Regional Networking.

6. More attention should be given to Civil Society, especially at Soum level.

7. The very good relations and previous easiness to co-operate between Sweden and Mongolia is another argument in favour of continued co-operation. The previous co-operation has been effective and efficient. Swedish management style and principles for close co-operation and information-sharing is very well adapted and suitable for the Mongolian context.

8. Planning of a proposed “LSG III” should, at this third stage, preferably be done by a consultant independent from the implementing consultant/agency and would include a couple of pre-preparatory studies/investigations.

9. We recommend that Sweden/Sida/the Embassy in Beijing should be permanently represented on site in Ulan Baatar and through this get a position to become a more active dialogue partner to UNDP and WB as Sweden definitely has a great relative advantage on issues related to LSG, decentralisation, democracy, human rights and combat of poverty and through the long and fruitful history of Mongolian – Swedish Cooperation. Sweden is fully capable and must take a leading role in relation to a recommended third phase.

10. Recommendations as above are still, according to the evaluation team, valid in November 2007. However, in the new situation, based on the Sida “Country Concentration Process”, we would further like to recommend that Sida should discuss the sustainability issue with UNDP and the World Bank on site in Ulan Bataar. Both institutions are, based on our discussions with them in May 2007, very much in favour of the LSG II Project and the Sida-Mongolian approaches applied in the Project. Their Policies on Decentralisation and Local Self Governance are very similar to those of Sida.

We definitely assume, based on our discussions with UNDP and the World Bank in May 2007, that both Institutions would find it relevant, important and rewarding for all parties to hook on to LSG II.

Annex 1. Terms of Reference for the Evaluation

of Sida's support to Capacity Building for Decentralisation and Local Self-Governance phase 2, Mongolia.

1 Background

In 1991 Sweden (BITS and Sida) started to cooperate with Mongolia within the public administration sector. The cooperation has mainly taken place within the extensive management programme called "Mongolian Management Development Programme (MMDP)" supported by UNDP. The programme has been of strategic importance in Mongolia's efforts towards the creation of a democratic development and introduction of a market economy.

In 1997 Sida decided to finance consultancy services to the project Capacity Building for Local Self Governance 1997–1999. The project was implemented by the Mongolian Government in cooperation with SIPU International and SALA-IDA. Sida's contribution was SEK 6,110,400. The project was evaluated in November 1999 by the Stockholm Group for Development Studies. (See Documentation xxx)

In September 2001 Sida decided to continue the support to the project. The second phase called Capacity Building for Decentralisation and Local Self-Governance II in Mongolia was implemented between September 2001 and December 2004, in a continued cooperation with SIPU International and SALA-IDA. Sida's contribution was SEK 13,450,000.

2 Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

Sida has a general responsibility to monitor and report on how its funds are used. Any major cooperation should, according to Sida's policy, be subject to some kind of evaluation.

The Final Project Report presented by the Government of Mongolia in cooperation with the consultants is showing a successful outcome of the project activities. (See Annex)

These Terms of Reference refer to an ex-post project evaluation to be made about two years after the completion of the Swedish support to the project. The evaluation shall cover all components in the project:

- Support to a Training and Development Programme
- Support to the Mongolian Association of Local Authorities (MALA)
- Support to an Applied Research and Development Programme
- Support to five Regional Development Projects

The components are described in the Project Document and in the Final report (See Annex)

The aim of the whole project period 2001–2004 was expected to be:

- The policies and practices of the Government of Mongolia enable territorial units to take increasingly greater control over their own development, decision making and resource mobilisation, resulting in a significant and positive impact on people-centred sustainable development in Mongolia

- Self-governing bodies, Khurals, of all aimags¹ and Ulaanbaatar City to be more capable of making rational, independent decisions on matters of economic and social life of their respective territorial units
- Central Government and MALA representatives will develop increased knowledge and capacity to support the process of decentralisation for greater local control of development and resource mobilisation
- The project will contribute to increased mutual understanding, improved communication and co-operation between central and local governmental levels
 - The mainstreaming of gender issues in local government development will be further developed.

The project should be characterised by applying action research and action learning methods and a highly participative approach within all components.

3 The Assignment

The evaluation consists of four parts. The *first* shall focus on the results of the project, the *second* shall analyse the impact of the project, the *third* shall map still on-going activities emanating from the project and the *fourth* shall, on the basis of the evaluation of results, impact, mapping and conclusions, discuss lessons learned.

Target group

The target group for the project consists of selected members of the local government (Khural) in the 21 aimags and Ulaan Baatar City. The beneficiaries are the local people in the 22 territorial units.

3.1 Evaluation of the result of the past project

- relevance of the objectives/outputs and activities
- appropriateness of the methods used
- sustainability
- cost-effectiveness

3.2 Evaluation of the impact of the project

- democracy
- poverty
- gender equality
- environment

3.3 Mapping and evaluation of on-going activities

The consultant shall map and evaluate the still on-going activities emanating from the project (such as training, research and minor projects).

3.4 Lessons learned

Based on findings from the evaluations of the achievement of the objectives the consult shall discuss the lessons learned. The Consultant shall in particular look into the requirements for sustainability of the local self governance.

¹ *Aimag is an administrative unit on provincial level. There are 21 aimags in the country.*

4 Methodology, Evaluation Team and Time Schedule

4.1 Methodology

The evaluation shall be based on:

- project documentation available at Sida, SALA-IDA, SIPU International and UNDP/Ulaanbaatar.
- visit to *two* pilot project areas
- visit to *six* extended project areas
- interviews with related personnel and beneficiaries in the selected areas
- interviews with related personnel at the Cabinet Secretariat, Ulaanbaatar
- interviews with UNDP, Ulaanbaatar
- interviews with SIPU International and with SALA-IDA.

4.2 Evaluation Team

The evaluation team will consist of two persons. The team leader shall have considerable experience as a team manager. A local interpreter will be engaged.

The evaluation team shall have competence in and experience of:

- institutional development
- human resource development
- risk assessment and vulnerability in countries in transition
- cost-benefit analysis
- project evaluation

4.3 Time Schedule

The total time for the mission is estimated as follows:

Preparations in Sweden: 2 man-weeks

Work in Mongolia: 6 man-weeks

Reporting: 3 man-weeks.

The figures mentioned is calculated for a mission carried out by two consultants.

5 Reporting

Before leaving Mongolia the Consultant shall present in writing their preliminary findings (and recommendations) to the Cabinet Secretariat (and if possible to the concerned Local Governments). Time must also be given for the Cabinet Secretariat to discuss briefly the reported findings with the Consultant.

The draft report shall be submitted to Sida electronically and in three hardcopies *no later than 15 June, 2007*. Within two weeks after receiving Sida's and the Cabinet Secretariat's comments on the draft report, a final version shall be submitted to Sida electronically and in three hardcopies.

Annex 2. Programme for the Evaluation

In Mongolia 19 May–1 June 2007 and List on People and Organisations met with in Mongolia and Sweden

Evaluation Mission of Sida's support to Capacity Building for Decentralisation and Local Self-Governance phase 2, Mongolia

20 May 07 Sunday

23.25 Arrival in Ulaanbaatar

21 May 07 Monday

9.30 Ms. Zolzaya, discussing about programme and LSG II project

12.00 Mr. Ya. Dolgorjav, Advisor to the President of Mongolia
(Local consultant to LSG II project and Chief editor of all training materials)

15.00 Mr. Manaljav, executive director of MALA

16.30 Mr. Sandagsuren, Youth micro project of Ulaanbaatar region

18.00 Dinner hosted by MALA

22 May 07 Tuesday

10.00 Meeting with Mr. Battuvshin, representative of political opposition

11.30 Meeting with Representative of local authority of Ulaanbaatar city

14.00 Mr. Batbold, Head of Cabinet Secretariat, GoM

15.00 Meeting with Representative of local authority of district of Ulaanbaatar city

16.30 Mr. L. Luvsanjamts, former Head of Research team,
Local Government Development Fund

23 May 07 Wednesday

9.30 Mr. Dondog, Member of Parliament, Head of State Standing committee of Parliament of Mongolia

11.00 Mr. Erdembileg, Head of Dept. of Policy coordination for loans and aid
and Ms. Ts. Zolzaya officer, Ministry of Finance

12.00 Mr. Ya. Dolgorjav, Advisor to the President of Mongolia

14.00 Mr. Sambalkhunde, head of Office, Government Service Council of Mongolia

15.00 Meeting with full Project steering committee

17.00 Meeting with Master Trainers from Ulaanbaatar

24 May 07 Thursday

8.00 Departure to Darkhan-uul aimag

10.00 Arrival in aimag center

10.30 Mr. Khayankhirvaa, Governor

11.30 Mr. Gunchin, Chairperson of aimag Khural

12.20 Lunch

13.20 Meeting with Master trainers: Ms. Tungalag-Erdene, Ms. Byambajav

15.00 Meeting with Local Trainers: Ms. Byambajav, Mr. T. Ganbold, B. Sundermaa

16.00 Meeting with bagh Khural, regional micro project

17.00 Departure to ORKHON AIMAG

19.30 Arrival in Orkhon aimag
Check-in hotel Dinner

25 May 07 Friday

Waiting for fax from Orkhon aimag, similar programme as in Darkhan-uul aimag:

17.00 Meeting in Orkhon aimag will take place from 9.30–16.30
Departure to BULGAN AIMAG

18.30 Arrival in Bulgan aimag
Check-in hotel

26 May 07 Saturday

Waiting for fax from BULGAN aimag, similar programme as in Darkhan-uul aimag:

17.00 Meeting in Bulgan aimag will take place from 9.30–16.30
Departure to ULAANBAATAR
Arrival in Ulaanbaatar, check in hotel

27 May 07 Sunday

09.30 Departure to airport
11.00 Flight to UMNUGOBI aimag from UB
12.30 Arrival in Umnugobi aimag
Rest in Tourist camp

28 May 07 Monday

Waiting for fax from UMNUGOBI aimag, similar programme as in Darkhan-uul aimag:

Meeting in Umnugobi aimag will take place from 9.30–17.00

29 May 07 Tuesday

10.30 Departure to Ulaanbaatar from Umnugobi aimag
12.00 Arrival in Ulaanbaatar
15.00 Meeting with full Project steering committee
16.30 Meeting with Ms. Shatar, head of Secretariat of Mongol bank, former deputy head of Cabinet Secretariat, GoM, official client of LSG II project

30 May 07 Wednesday

17.00 Mr. Batbold, Head of Cabinet Secretariat, GoM

31 May 07 Thursday

De-briefing with the Swedish Ambassador in Beijing, Mr. Mikael Lindström
Debriefing meeting at the Swedish Embassy in Beijing with 1st Secretary Annika Siewertz

People met with and interviewed in Sweden

Eva Berger, Sida HQ, Stockholm
Åsa Hedén, Sida HQ, Stockholm
Gunnar Andersson, Sipu
Leif Wisén, Sipu
Björn Jonzon, Sala-Ida

Annex 3. List of Documents provided

by Sida and other References/Literature/Web-pages utilised in the Evaluation, June 2007

Stockholm/Ulan Bataar, May–June 2007

Evaluation of LSG II and Result Analysis of Sida – Mongolian Development Co-operation

I. Available and studied Sida Documents

Alternative budget: Capacity Building for Local Self-Governance in Mongolia

Agreement between Cabinet Secretariat of Government of Mongolia and SIPU International Ab.

Beslut: Sida (Diariennr: INEC 1995-0066) Mongoliet: Lokalt Demokrati (MNGo141)

Beslut: Sida Tilläggsbeslut Mongoliet. Kapacitetsuppbyggnad för Decentralisering och Lokalt Självstyre, fas 2.

Beslut: Sida insatsstöd (Diariennr: 2001-00430) Mongoliet Kapacitetsuppbyggnad för Decentralisering och Lokalt Självstyre, II.

Beslut: Sida Principbeslut (Diariennr: 2001-00430) Mongoliet Kapacitetsuppbyggnad för Decentralisering och Lokalt Självstyre, II.

Beslut: Sida Yngre konultprogrammet, Gunnar Andersson Bakgrund (Beslut nr 818/02)

Capacity Building for Decentralisation and Local Self-Governance in Mongolia

Capacity Building for Decentralisation and Local Self-Governance in Mongolia 2001–2004

Capacity Building for Decentralisation and Local Self-Governance in Mongolia
–“Continuation of the co-operation between Swedish and Mongolian Local Governments”

Capacity Building for Decentralisation and Local Self-Governance in Mongolia II Steering Committee Meeting 16/11-2002.

Completed Evaluation Results of Master Trainer Seminar 2001-11-01–14

Detailed budget With Notes

“De kom från den riktiga glesbygden” Ljusdals-Posten 4 Juni 2002

“First years Progress report Sep 01–Sep 02”

Improvement of Local Self-Governance in Mongolia 2001–2004

Regional Development in Mongolia Suggestion for Additional support within the Project.

Regional Development Projects as part of a Learning Process

Report: “Capacity Building for Local Self-Governance in Mongolia” Project (from MALA)

Report: Field Visit to Central South Mongolia, Progress Report, March 2004

Report: Field Visit to West Mongolia, Progress Report, July 2004

Report: Field Visit to Central South and Eastern Mongolia, Progress Report June 2004

Report: Field Visit to Western & Northern Mongolia, Progress Report June 2004.

Report: Training and Development Component Progress Report, Master training seminar, Ulaanbaatar 15–19 November 2004.

Report: Final Project Report, September 2001–December 2004.

Report: Draft Final Report, sep 2001–July 2004.

Report: Training and Development Component Progress Report, Advanced level training Seminar, Ulaanbaatar 20–24 September 2004.

Report: Training and Development Component Progress Report, Master Training Seminar, Ulaanbaatar 15th–20th March 2004 and Advanced Level training Seminar, Ulaanbaatar 22nd–27th March 2004. And attachments to above mentioned report.

Report: Training and Development Component Progress Report, Master Training Seminar, Ulaanbaatar 24th–29th November 2003 and Advanced Level training Seminar, Ulaanbaatar 2nd–6th December 2003.

Report: Training and Development Component Progress Report, Advanced Level training Seminar, Ulaanbaatar 22–26 September 2003 and Master Training Seminar, Ulaanbaatar 1–3 October 2003

Report: Mongolian Handbook on Project Management, 2004

Report: Mongolian Researches Study Tour In Sweden 9–19 June 2002.

Report: The Mala Board Members Study Tour In Sweden. Feb 17–March 3, 2002

Report: First Annual Conference September 2001

Report: Second Annual Conference in Erdenet, September 2002

Report: Third Annual Conference in Ulaanbaatar September/October 2003

Report: Documents for training development

Report: Training of trainers in Erdenet, September 25–28 2002

Report: Training of Master Trainers, Ulaanbaatar 31 March–2 april 2003

Report: Applied Research in the Master Training Programme, November 2003

Report: Mongolian Researchers Study Tour in Sweden, 8–18 June 2003

Report: Second Year Progress Report, Sep 2002–Sep 2003

Report: Core Values & Guiding Principles, Nov 2001

Report: Mala-Workshops., April 2003

Report: Field Visit to Eastern Mongolia, Progress Report, March 2003

Report: Training of Trainers & Aimag Field Visit

Report: Training of Trainers, Ulaanbaatar, Nov 2001

Programme for the Master Trainer Seminar 15–19 Nov 2004

Sipu: Mongoliet. “Lokalt Självstyre II”. Projekt document, budget och avtalsutkast.

Sipu: Lokalt Självstyre II i Mongoliet Kontrakt mellan regeringskansliet i Mongoliet och SIPU International.

Regional Development in Sweden Study tour for Mongolian Cenral Government Officials Dec 8–9, 2003.

Training and Development Programme 17/07 2001

Training and Development Programme 17/06 2001

Training and Development Programme 18/07 2001

The constant struggle for local self governance and the role of MALA

Training Programme Overview: Improving Local Self-Governance in Mongolia.

Undertaking by Sida to pay for Consultancy Service.

Local Self-Governance Capacity Building Project II. Sida decisions: INEC-KTS/563-01.

II. Other References/Literature/Web-pages utilised in the Evaluation

The Constitution of Mongolia, 1992

Public Sector Management and Finance Law, 2003

Law on Administrative and Territorial Units and Their Governance, 1995, 2003

Government of Mongolia, Project Proposal. Improvement of Local Self-Governance in Mongolia II, Aug 2001

Gov. of Mongolia, Request for additional support for regional development within the project Capacity Building and Local Self-Governance in Mongolia II, 2001–2004.

Gov. of Mongolia, Final Project Report, September 2001–December 2004

Sida Evaluation 2000/1, Swedish Support to Local Self Governance in Mongolia,

Nils Öström and Lennart Lundquist

POM Working Paper 2006: 4, “Tankepapper om de två perspektiven”

Sida: Looking Back, Moving Forward, Sida Evaluation Manual, 2004

UNDP, UNDAF, Mongolia 2007-2011

UNDP, Governance Indicators: A Users Guide, second edition

Annex 4. List of Reports and Training Materials within the Project LSG II, January 2005

List of Reports and Training Materials within the Project

Local self Governance II in Mongolia

September 2001–December 2004

First annual conference September 2001, Ulaanbaatar, Progress Report

SIPU consultants: Messrs Leif Wisén and Bengt-Göran Carlsson

SALA-IDA consultants: Messrs Björn Jonzon, Bengt Holmblad, Berndt Brikell and Mikael Granberg.

Training of trainers, Ulaanbaatar November 2001

SIPU consultants: Messrs. Bengt-Göran Carlsson and Leif Wisén

SALA-IDA consultant Mr Berndt Brikell

Training of trainers

Instructions for training sessions, Ulaanbaatar November 2001

SIPU consultants: Messrs Bengt-Göran Carlsson and Leif Wisén

SALA-IDA consultant: Berndt Brikell

Core values and guiding principles, November 2001

Documents for training development, November 2001

- Poverty reduction
- Combat Dzud
- More Open Local Governance
- Manifesto of Mongolia on Local Self-Governance

Applied research in the master training programme, November 2001

Mr. Berndt Brikell, SALA-IDA and Örebro University

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- Master Trainers' seminar in Ulaanbaatar 1–3 October 2003

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Mr. Leif Wisén, Mr. Bengt-Göran Carlsson, Mr. Gunnar Andersson all from SIPU International and Mr. Björn Jonzon, Mr. Bengt Holmblad, Mr. Berndt Brikell and Mr. Mikael Granberg all from SALA-IDA.

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– 20–24 September in Ulaanbaatar

Mr. Gunnar Andersson, SIPU International and Ms. Zolzaya Lkhagvasuren, MALA

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Ethics in local politics – research work report, September 2002

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Mongolian Research Team, Local Governance Development Foundation

Swedish Research Team, SALA IDA and Örebro University

List of training materials developed during the project

- The basic text book “Improving Local Self Governance in Mongolia” – the revision and further developed “Black Book” into the “Blue Book”
- Complementary text book “Representing the Citizens – Democratic Governance in Sweden
- Trainers Handbook “From Training to Continuous Learning
- Mongolian Project Management Handbook
- Textbooks for the Advance Level Training comprising three booklets on
 - * Financial Management and Local Self Governance
 - * Democratic Governance and Local Self Governance
 - * Legal Issues and Local Self Governance
- Four different materials developed within the development projects

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Department for Infrastructure and Economic Cooperation

Sida Evaluations may be ordered from:

Infocenter, Sida
SE-105 25 Stockholm
Phone: +46 (0)8 779 96 50
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sida@sida.se

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Sida, UTV, SE-105 25 Stockholm
Phone: +46 (0) 8 698 51 63
Fax: +46 (0) 8 698 56 43
Homepage: <http://www.sida.se>



SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY
SE-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden
Tel: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Fax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64
E-mail: sida@sida.se. Homepage: <http://www.sida.se>