

Response tables DEALS MTR

In the following tables are summaries of key issues that were the result of the observations and recommendations during the mid-term review. The first table is a list of appreciations. The second table includes a list of issues that we want to improve on and take action in 2021. For Manila, both tables are included presented in 1 table.

Kumasi, Pathein, Pereira, Sèmè-Podji

List of appreciations:

| #id | Topic | Appreciation |
|-----|-------------------------|---|
| 1 | Innovative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents rated the programme as highly innovative. 1) the entry point of each project is finding the problem on the ground: to unpack that problem and understand it. 2) the projects adopt an integrated governance approach. • The CFP model and the anti-silo, integrated approach with its six key elements are considered a innovative aspects of the project in Sèmè-Podji. Another reported innovation is the Institutionalisation of Zero Waste Week and Public Health Day. • Innovative aspects of the project in Pathein that have been mentioned by interviewees are, among others, its bottom-up nature, the adoption of the integrated approach with its six key elements, and the approach taken to capacity development – i.e. building local capacity and leaving it in the country, working with a strong CFP model and facilitating support from VNG staff. Through different forms of capacity building, the project ensured ownership of and commitment to the project and the process. Finally, another mentioned innovative aspect is the focus on sustainability. |
| 2 | Ownership and long term | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also of importance was the extensive use of local capacities, coupled with a ‘facilitating’ role on the part of VNG International. The latter used external consultants but tried to limit the traditional approach of consultants flying in and leaving after delivering a report. The project took a more practical perspective, based on two important principles: 1) putting the local authorities in the driver seat, therefore ensuring ownership, also over the longer term and 2) building local capacity that would remain in country after the project finished. These two principles are likely to influences sustainability. |

| #id | Topic | Appreciation |
|-----|------------------------|---|
| 3 | Capacity development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents at the local level generally agreed that capacity building played an important role in the projects and that they were able to apply learning in their work. They generally agreed that the range of activities contributed to increasing capacities for inter-departmental cooperation and multi-stakeholder collaboration. They appreciated the participative, practical and the 'learning by doing' nature of the events. Respondents perceived the study visit in 2018 to the Netherlands as a turning point: effective in creating commitment to the project, being exposed to international experience, and providing the opportunity for exchange of experience. Many of the respondents felt that awareness raising activities were important and made a difference. • The programme defined a range of services and typology of activities, designed and provided as necessary to respond to needs, at the all levels. Good thought was put into the nature/scale of the intervention and the definition of the target groups. • Most stakeholders that were interviewed agree that the DEALS programme has contributed to capacity building, that this capacity building was useful for them (or for other stakeholders), and that they or other stakeholders learned from the programme. |
| 4 | Stakeholder engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In effect, the events organised were able to achieve multiple objectives, some of them more subtle. As an example, working together in a participatory manner also served to change attitudes, to build trust, to deal with conflicts, etc. • Conflicts were minimal across the projects, though there were some. In general, these were manageable, which demonstrates that the multi-stakeholder, deliberative, problem-driven, and participatory approach was, on the whole, effective in ironing out differences in interests, in allaying concerns, and developing a consensus on the way forward. This also underlines the importance of giving time to these deliberative processes, so participants are given voice. |
| 5 | ToC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The outcomes and impact envisaged in the city theories of change are ambitious. In terms of outcomes, the revised theories of change are more realistic than the original ToCs. |

| #id | Topic | Appreciation |
|-----|---------|--|
| 6 | Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results at the outcome level mentioned in the interviews concerned improved capacity, strengthened institutions and improved policy, but sometimes also more tangible results. An outcome of the project in Pathein is that there are sustainable waste and water management systems. • Monitored results at output level include a rise in the number of government staff and politicians with increased awareness of aspects related to waste management increased in Pathein, Pereira and Sèmè-Podji. A perceived outcome that is common to all the projects is increased awareness of issues related to solid waste. ... In general, stakeholders consider that VNG International facilitated the processes of raising awareness among the population and supporting the waste pickers on a regular basis. It has helped to direct resources of the integrated solid waste management plans to the strengthening of recyclers' organisations. • In Sèmè-Podji, it was mentioned that "local actors now understand the need to work in synergy to better manage waste" and that the town hall better understands its role in waste and sanitation management and has a strong commitment to invest in the management of this sector. • Some interviewees did actually refer to impact such as reduction of urban poverty, but others referred to involvement of targeted vulnerable and poor people in the policy process, giving them voice in decision-making on decongestion and slum development. In the case the project in Kumasi, several stakeholders referred to the inclusive nature of policy formulation. • The project with VNG International facilitated the process of registration of recyclers at the sorting stations, or in other words, the formalisation of the waste recyclers (in line with the observed increase in the formalisation rate shown in Table 12). This contributed to an improvement in their working conditions and, indirectly, in their living conditions. Recyclers have made progress by grouping themselves into organisations, receiving assistance and funding. VNG International has also supported the creation of a second-level waste picker organisation that would allow for economies of scale in dealing with competition. • The support to the creation of second-level organisations of waste recyclers is likely to translate into a sustained institutional strengthening. Survival of the waste recyclers' organisations can contribute to a sustained rise in the waste recycling rate and incomes of waste recyclers and therefore to environmental and social sustainability. • The project in Kumasi was seen as particularly innovative in the approach to integrated and participative working, with the initiation of inter-departmental working meetings and the approach to IMIF for funding as especially important. Strong involvement of the university and its students and involvement of young people from poor communities was also seen as innovative and positive. The relatively recent "design sprint" related to the Kanko Circular Hub was appreciated both for the new approach and the content. |

List of recommendations and actions

| #id | Topic | Observations/recommendations | 2021 actions (partly in annual plan) | Operational plan |
|-----|--|--|---|--|
| 1 | Coherent understanding of the ToCs and the concept of DEALS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ToC good instrument to guide, but was too complex to be used locally Minimal awareness / understanding of, involvement in making / reviewing the ToC, too complex at local level Mixed awareness of objectives of the project Unawareness in implementation according to the ToC; familiarity with different levels of results Make a simpler version of the ToC, to be shared with a wider group of stakeholders, or find a better way of communicating objectives, etc. with target groups. Integrated approach is innovative, but seen as complex. There are doubts regarding the realism of putting the integrated approach into practice in some contexts. More time could be spent on understanding the causes of problems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve ToC understanding, involvement, communication and translation into more understandable format Improved introduction to and joint building of knowledge on the integrated approach <p>Through a stakeholder-based approach (using the DEALS capacity development clusters), continuous attention and tailored tools and means.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> |
| 2 | Impact of COVID-19 on target population and inclusivity & improving digital skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 impact in all programmes, focus on local capacities and remote working Step-up capacity building. Put continued emphasis on capacity building of local staff and experts. This is considered even more important in the current COVID-19 situation. Consider additional investments in information and communication systems. Make different scenarios about the impact of COVID-19 on programme implementation and results. Assess whether the (possible) implications of the COVID-19 situation and other contextual changes require adaptation of the ToCs and, if so, make the required changes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve information on COVID-19 impact on the beneficiary population. Document and exchange on municipal approach to deal with COVID-19. Community of practice to improve digital skills with a stakeholder based approach Monitor on impact of COVID-19 on the inclusiveness of our activities. Explore improving accessibility of project network, documentation and progress information Explore possibilities of virtual reality applications for learning replacing study visits <p><i>See also more attention for the city focal person, due to increased pressure on the local teams because of the distance to the international teams</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> |
| 3 | Central role of the local city focal person | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of CFP is essential, important for success of the project and trust building Step up local capacity building of local staff and experts (e.g. the capacities to act and commit and to deliver on development objectives). Provide (more) distance coaching of the CFP (and other core members of project teams). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exchanges among CFP and managers to promote integrated thinking and learning. Tailored support package for CFPs and explore the potential of their 'boundary spanners' capacity. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> |

| #id | Topic | Observations/recommendations | 2021 actions (partly in annual plan) | Operational plan |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| 4 | Improvements in monitoring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some/minimal role of local stakeholders in monitoring • Some/minimal communication and use of monitoring reports • Problems with what is locally collected and what is used/feeds into programme reports • Limited comparability over time • Varied understanding of terms • Improve monitoring by strengthening the link between local monitoring and reporting with reporting at the level of the programme, share monitoring result with relevant stakeholders in the countries and promote reflexive thinking – both at local level and programme level. • Monitor output indicators that genuinely reflect key elements of the integrated approach and try to reconstruct a baseline situation. Keep monitoring some of the output indicators that are presently monitored, to be able to assess whether there is progress. Use operational indicators for activities linked to outputs and provide annual results for activities in meaningful activity groups. • Define and use intermediate outcome indicators that actually measure capacity that is built. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops with stakeholders post-evaluation, pre and post-monitoring, and in preparation to the action annual action plan. • Define protocols and establish monitoring on distribution/sharing of information/reports. • Standardisation (and documentation) of indicators and indicators changes, and collection (if feasible) of missing data/measurements. • Explore improvements in the frequency of data collection and storage. • Collect stories of significant change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • |
| 5 | Sustainability of project results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial sustainability is a challenge • Continue to focus on financial sustainability. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement sustainability strategy per city | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • |
| 6 | Up-scaling /replicability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear desire for upscaling, but finances poses a challenge, enabling framework a must, thus under certain conditions (institutional and financial) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elaboration on the conditions (assessment) and feasibility of up-scaling on some specific programme activities and results (on target population, other neighbourhoods, cities or national/international scale). • Connecting with national level actors who could play a role in adapting lessons learnt and potential upscaling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • |
| 7 | Improvements in learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation: system for feedback from the community and internal events to exchange and reflect. • Engage project staff more in exchange of experiences. • Discuss integrated governance approach and its application, and the use of the ToC. • Create more opportunities for exchanging the experiences of the projects among the project teams. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue and improve on learning events • Facilitate the organisation of feedback moments from the target population | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • |

| #id | Topic | Observations/recommendations | 2021 actions (partly in annual plan) | Operational plan |
|-----|------------------|---|---|--|
| 8 | Process/approach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VNG International should continue to play its facilitating role in the collaboration of relevant stakeholders Need for ensuring that relevant central ministries, the local government association and capacity building institutions have a stronger connection to the project. Have a long-term, strategic approach to capacity building, as well as a strong strategy to build capacity locally Some of the interviewees think that larger impact could have been achieved by shifting somewhat the focus of the programme from the local government to other stakeholders – doing more with capacity building at different levels of stakeholders and improving communication between the stakeholder groups Impact could have been larger if there would also be some emphasis on tangible results and if communication would be improved. Pay attention to the need for awareness raising. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder management/communication Capacity development strategy Awareness strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> |

Beira tables

List of appreciations

| #id | Topic | Appreciation |
|-----|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Creating ownership | An open and transparent approach and achievement of concrete results have created a sense of ownership from CMB leadership and CMB staff concerned. |
| 2 | Creating continuity and trust | The presence of a long term expert contributes to the continuity of project interventions, provides a framework for short term technical inputs, and strengthens follow-up of technical interventions into adaptations of organisational processes. It also allows to establish a relationship of trust that facilitates project implementation. |
| 3 | Focused project | The Beira project is a clearly demarcated and focused implementation project. |
| 4 | Mixed resources used | It has benefitted from a balanced mix of project resources, including provision of necessary equipment, regular inputs of short term expertise on specific technical issues and the presence of the long term residential expert for organisational strengthening. |
| 5 | Attention is paid to all stakeholders | Considerable attention is given to communication with relevant stakeholders, specifically the machambeiras in the assigned pilot areas and tax payers. |
| 6 | Needs-based | The Beira project responds to a clear need of CMB as identified in the BMP. |
| 7 | Added value | The project is creating an asset of considerable potential for CMB. |

List of recommendations and actions

| #id | Topic | Observations/recommendations | 2021 actions |
|-----|---|---|--|
| 1 | Add the topic of land use planning | Exploiting the potential of the land administration information system for urban land use planning. In a rapidly expanding city uncontrolled urban expansion leads to problems for the construction of an adequate urban infrastructure (sewerage, drainage, roads, utilities). Better planning and control of the urban expansion will result in considerable future savings. | <p>A combination of interventions will be done to exploit the potential of the LAIS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of digitalizing maps of existing, and new planned areas. • Capacity building of civil servants in Autocad and QGIS. • Design an efficient procedure of land planning, combined with swift attribution of plots to civilians. |
| 2 | Design exit strategy | Design a phased exit strategy, making use of the strong feeling of ownership of the project among municipality staff. The abrupt termination of the BLAS project in April 2021 could well result in rapid deterioration of the project achievements, posing a threat to the sustainability of other investments envisaged in the BMP. A phased withdrawal of project support will enhance the perspective for sustainability of the LAIS and effective embedding the working processes and procedures in the CMB organisation. The start of this exit strategy may be included in the VNG International DEALS project that extends into 2022. | An exit strategy will be developed in early 2021. Initially it was unclear how long the long-term expert would stay in Beira on a full-time basis (as his fee is paid for by an RVO-funded project). Thankfully, the RVO found more available funds to extend his stay. That has had a considerable impact on the project and on the eventual exit strategy. |
| 3 | Fee system for cadastral services | Introduce a system of fees for cadastral services. If these fees remain in the cadastre unit they will contribute to the financial sustainability of the LAIS. This will probably not be sufficient to cover all operation and maintenance costs of the LAIS, therefore these fees must be complemented by a part of the additional tax revenues. | This was part of the initial assignment of Kadaster International. Their assignment has now come to an end, and this has not yet happened. We will see how we can get the Kadaster experts to advise on this in the first quarter of 2021. Possibly we could fit this in the current assignment of Kadastre. |
| 4 | Ensure funding for operations & maintenance | Channel part of the additional tax revenues to an "Investment Maintenance Fund", to create the routine that this will be done in the future when funding for maintenance is of BMP infrastructure is required. | The tax component of DEALS has really taking off during the second half of 2020. As the new tax system is being developed, we will work together with the CMB to allocate a sum for operations and maintenance in 2021. |

Manila table

| #id | Main Research questions | Observations/recommendations | Appreciation | 2021 actions |
|-----|---|--|---|---|
| 1a | Are the expected results relevant for the intended beneficiaries. | The choice to cooperate with LCP as local partner meant that VNG International interventions could 'land', as the evaluator observes, efficiently with Manila Bay LGs. However, it is also observed that through this position LCP's mandate and organisational capacity were stretched in order to co-implement capacity building activities and that there has not been a conscious recognition by either LCP or VNG International what effects this may have had on other Phillipine organizations. | <i>All parties involved in the Master Plan process appreciate the role VNG International and LCP have played. Communication between parties was easy, direct and effective. There was mutual respect between parties involved, both for their respective positions and mandates as well as their technical and organisational capabilities. LCP strongly appreciated the demand driven nature of the VNG International approach. It facilitated the exploitation of the strengths of each partner. The DET appreciated the involvement of VNG International and LCP to enhance involvement of LGU and the open an direct work relations with VNG International and LCP.</i> | As part of its internal strategic discussions LCP will consider how this observation may influence its operations. However, we do not realistically expect this to have any meaningful impact on the project's planning for the upcoming year, as this may upset the carefully built up relationships not just between VNG International and LCP, but also between LCP and its members. |
| 1b | | | <i>Whereas in the Philippines most major planning exercises are dominated by national level agencies, active participation of LGU (together with other stakeholders) in the Master Plan formulation process was achieved, and with this it became an innovative one for the Philippines.</i> | |

| #id | Main Research questions | Observations/recommendations | Appreciation | 2021 actions |
|-----|--|---|---|--|
| 2a | <p>Are the theories of change underlying the design of the programme components still valid.</p> | <p>The evaluator states that: <i>The planned activities by VNG International, limited inputs through short term expert missions, are adequate to achieve the process advocacy objectives. Meaningful change of the institutional structures or significant strengthening of the organisational capacity of the cities and municipalities involved usually requires a more prolonged presence of change management expertise. The modus operandi of the project is therefore less suitable to address the problem of organisational capacity (mentioned in the project problem statement) and drafting implementation arrangements to secure an effective role of LGU in subsequent phases of the Master Plan process.</i></p> | <p>As the evaluator notes: <i>Overall the theory of change underlying the project is still considered valid. The preconditions formulated in the ToC remain valid.</i></p> | <p>With the start of the Implementation Phase, we will implement a more focused thematic capacity building intervention strategy on 2 of the main municipal priorities: water management and waste management.</p> <p>While we do not have the budgetary room to expatriate an international expert for an extended period of time – nor is it advised during the Covid-10 pandemic – this focusing will allow us to use returning key experts both from the Netherlands and the Philippines that can build up relationships and provide contextualized advice.</p> <p>Realistically, it will still not be sufficient to attain structural organizational capacity development, but we can and will address the manner in which LG leadership commits itself and is involved in the implementation phase of the Master Plan process.</p> |
| 3 | <p>Are activities executed as planned and have these activities realised the expected output (and possibly outcome).</p> | <p>The evaluator observes that: <i>expected output has been realised as far as the representation of LGU interests in the Master Plan formulation process is concerned. The representation of LGU interests has materialised in the form of participation in the MBSDMP formulation process. (...) Apart from some paragraphs suggested by LCP, it is not possible to pinpoint specific phrases in the Master Plan documents that reflect the effects of LGU participation.</i></p> | <p><i>...between VNG International and LCP a level of knowledge of each other's positions and capabilities existed, as well as a level of trust in the integrity of both partners that facilitated cooperation.</i></p> | |

| #id | Main Research questions | Observations/recommendations | Appreciation | 2021 actions |
|-----|---|--|---|---|
| 4a | Is there a realistic perspective for sustainability of the component results. | <p>The evaluator observes: <i>A key constraint for sustainability, the limited organisational capacity of LGU to play this role effectively has not been significantly addressed through the interventions of VNG International / LCP.</i></p> <p>With his observation, reference is made to the recommendation under main research question (2), i.e. a prolonged presence of an expert would be required to address the issue of organizational capacities of LGs.</p> | <p>The evaluator concludes that: <i>The VNG International / LCP project has raised awareness among LGU in the regions concerned about their possible role in the Master Plan formulation and later implementation process. It has also raised the awareness among national level agencies of the important role that LGU may play in these processes. This creates a basis for a meaningful role in the remaining phases of the Master Plan process</i></p> | Please refer to the planned actions for 2021 under main research question (2) |
| 4b | | <p>The evaluator further observes: <i>The Master Plan process is to a large extent a resources management exercise with a predominantly technical perspective. A stronger VNG International / LCP contribution, for example by a somewhat longer presence of an expert in organisational capacity strengthening and institutional design, focused on the role of LGU, could have resulted in a better balance between resources management issues and LGU organisational / institutional considerations.</i></p> | | <p>While the recommendations is directed towards the formulation phase of the Master Plan, we believe it also relevant to the implementation phase. The lack of balance between the 'technical' and the 'governance' perspective risks to flow into key implementation phase activities such as project and business case formulation. It also risks upsetting progress of development projects that do not sufficiently take into account local political contexts and/or organizational capacity to implement and operate government projects or PPP-constructions.</p> <p>In order to contribute to restoring this balance, in 2021 we will focus on addressing the main identified bottlenecks at leadership level of LGs. These are (1) lack of cooperation between LGs themselves, with NEDA and other government levels and with the private sector, and (2) knowledge on project and business case formulation of development projects.</p> |