



Comments from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development on the DEval Evaluation Report **Impact, Diffusion and Scaling-up of a Comprehensive Land-use Planning Approach in the Philippines. From Development Cooperation to National Policies**

Background and introductory remarks

The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) welcomes the report *Impact, Diffusion and Scaling-up of a Comprehensive Land-use Planning Approach in the Philippines. From Development Cooperation to National Policies* submitted by the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval). The report confirms that land use planning is a key element if the BMZ wants to successfully support rural development in its partner countries.

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess a technical approach for enhanced land use planning in the Philippines. This approach had been pursued as part of the Environment and Rural Development (EnRD) program under German Technical Cooperation between 2006 and 2015. The intervention focused on systemic capacity development at multiple levels in order to enhance planning processes and implementation of the plans and thus contribute to long-term socioeconomic and environmental improvements.

In terms of methodology, the evaluation was based on qualitative expert interviews and on an analysis of panel data comprising 3,000 households spread across 300 villages in 100 municipalities, which had been collected through extensive household surveys in 2012 and 2016. In three of the eleven participating provinces, Super Typhoon Haiyan (locally called Yolanda) caused severe damage in 2013. In addition to looking at the agreed program objectives and impacts, DEval also checked for broader impacts that are often associated with land use planning but had not been part of the intervention's program logic.

The evaluation's findings show that the methods of land use planning in the relevant municipalities have successfully been improved. The quality and completeness of planning documents in the municipalities has been increased.

With regard to disaster risk management, the evaluation found that municipalities have been able to increase their risk management capacity (for instance with regard to floods). Risk awareness at the village and household level has been improved.

However, even though the intervention included measures to increase participation in planning processes at the village level, it had very limited success on that count. Moreover, municipalities only partly managed to implement the plans that they had drawn up. The evaluation found that positive impacts with regard to sustainable management of natural resources have been limited. For example, the intervention has succeeded in increasing the number of nature conservation areas (albeit not marine conservation areas), but there was no measurable impact in terms of real changes in land use.

Households also stated that little had changed with regard to the implementation of regulations (such as building codes and zoning), and that political interests continued to dominate.

The evaluation found that, overall, there were more impacts in the area of municipal planning and administration, which was also the focus of the intervention. However, the further impacts were removed from the level of the planning administration, the smaller they were. This applies, in particular, to the household level.

The evaluation was unable to find any effect on household welfare that could be attributed to the intervention. However, it was noted that this was not surprising, as welfare gains are located at the end of the causal chain. DEval believes that such effects are not very likely, as it found that the implementation of plans by municipalities was in some cases inadequate during the period under observation.

The evaluation found that the intervention has been relevant for the partner system. It has been effective, as it has led to visible improvements in the planning process and in municipal planning administration. Thanks to the fact that the methodology has been enshrined in the national Enhanced Comprehensive Land Use Planning (eCLUP) guidelines and that it has been brought to further municipalities, it is likely that the effects of the intervention will be sustainable.

The BMZ has drawn the following key conclusions from the evaluation and its recommendations:

1. Systemic capacity development in a partner country system is effective if it focuses on enhancing the capacity of public authorities. However, it cannot always be assumed that this will have a direct, short-term positive impact on the target group. Thus, it appears advisable to undertake greater efforts in future interventions to address the household level directly so as to ensure that measurable benefits are generated at that level, too.
2. In the case of the approach used in the present intervention, cooperation with national partners who are able to incorporate the new methods in longer-term policies and spread them more widely has turned out to be very successful. The BMZ thus believes that scalability (in line with national capacity and circumstances) is a key ingredient to the success of future interventions.
3. At the level of municipal planning and in the field of sustainable natural resource management, effects turned out to be stronger wherever the intervention was accompanied by other measures, such as other components of the EnRD program. This shows that land use planning should not be carried out in isolation. Rather, it makes sense to integrate planning activities in a broader range of interventions.
4. The evaluation identified insecure tenure, unresolved land use conflicts, and the role of powerful political elites as key factors that influence the success of land use planning activities. The BMZ agrees with the DEval recommendations to a certain extent: it is true that land use planning activities must be preceded by an analysis of their chances of success in the context of land rights, land use conflicts and the political commitment of the players in question. However, land use planning can also be an important step towards creating transparency on land rights and strengthening them, and towards revealing land use conflicts and putting in place a basis for their resolution. But for land rights to be strengthened, there certainly must be a minimum level of political commitment – which, however, cannot be taken for granted. Providing additional support to build conflict management capacity on the partner side is an option that should be pursued.
5. Improved planning and, in particular, the implementation of such plans require political change, which usually can only emerge over a longer period. Thus, the BMZ feels that land use planning interventions should be aligned to the partner side's implementation capacity. Generally, responsibility for implementing the plans lies with the partner side, and usually outside the scope of the German side's influence. However, it is possible and advisable to integrate other support interventions in the field of rural development in the land use planning intervention, so as to actively encourage the implementation of plans and to generate greater benefits from land use planning. This insight is to be taken up in future

rural development projects that have land use components.

6. The BMZ will take up DEval's recommendation that communication with, and information for, target groups be expanded so as to ultimately improve participation.
7. The BMZ supports the recommendations which are addressed to the partner side. DEval has recommended that planning requirements and processes be simplified, training programs be improved, and efforts to implement the plans and foster target group participation be stepped up.
8. The BMZ also welcome's DEval's proposal that future interventions should take greater account, from the beginning, of the use of rigorous quantitative evaluations, so as to facilitate the collection of robust data for an intervention and communicate them to decision-makers in the partner country and other stakeholders.