
End-of-project Evaluation Report on the Project for Construction of National Museum in the DRC

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Executive Summary

I. Outline of Evaluation

1) **Project for the Construction of a National Museum in the DRC, 2012-2020/ 21M USD)**

2) Evaluation Purpose and Scope

Through comparison with the planned objectives, this evaluation assesses the accomplishments of the project in the construction of a national museum in the Democratic Republic of Congo (hereafter DRC) and verifies whether the project has accomplished its intended goals. Furthermore, this evaluation aims to check the need for any further required support for the museum's operation and, in addition, to draw any lessons for other similar project in the future in accordance with the international context and in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

By checking that the project plan and implementation are consistent, this evaluation assesses relevance and efficiency in the planning and performance phases and estimates effectiveness and sustainability based on its PDM in the final phase.

In order to strengthen the sustainability of the project and promote its accomplishments, this evaluation was conducted in a participatory method with partner institutions.

3) Evaluation Method

Documentary research: Analysis of both governments' policy documents, Korea International Cooperation Agency (hereafter KOICA) strategy documents, and other related documents and reports of the project, etc.

Virtual on-spot-inspection (visiting the museum was prevented due to COVID-19): Checking operation status and issues that may have been generated after the end of the project.

Interview: Conducting interviews with project stakeholders and questionnaire interviews via emails.

Survey research: Surveys on the accomplishment and the process of project implementation have been conducted with participants in the project, such as visitors to the museum, representatives, and subcontractors. This project is a relatively new type of project by KOICA and therefore lacks any similar cases for comparative evaluation - however, the project was established with a focus on the strong needs and demands of the partner country -, it tried to include various opinions and evaluations from different participants and representatives as much as possible.

4) Evaluation Period

From 8th December, 2020 to 15th January, 2021

II. Major Evaluation Outcomes

1) Summary of the Evaluation

After the Feasibility Study and Basic Design Study in the initial stage of the project, PMC was selected and the museum masterplan was established to determine the realistic direction of the project, such as adjusting project details and budget increases. Despite many variables occurring during the project process, KOICA and participating experts actively dealt with the issues and carried out the project in accordance with the procedures established during the implementation stage. As a result, the outputs presented by PDM have been produced.

- The overall process of closely consulting with government agencies in the partner country step by step has been checked and verified.
- The opinions of professionals in various sectors were collected and reflected upon, expert advice and on-site evaluation results in each stage of the project have been reviewed in detail.
- By utilizing experts in the museum sector from the early stage of the project, such as consultations with the DRC government and the basic research stage, the project has been able to secure the complete budget and project period. In this process, the KOICA office in the DRC has played a very important role.

The division of roles between the KOICA headquarter and the local office in the DRC was clear. When a problem occurred, the headquarters actively utilized internal experts and external advisors to connect each agency to solve the problem effectively.

- However, given the fact that it is a specific cultural infrastructure, it is regrettable that it did not select competent professional project operators, exchange professional information, and utilize experts from various South Korean museums at appropriate stages of the project.

2) Relevance

The aim of the project was clearly established to correspond to the vision of the Musée National de la République Démocratique du Congo (hereafter MNRDC): *“a representative museum where national history, art, and culture coexist within a vibrant educational venue promoting national unity.”*

The project has been appropriately planned to meet KOICA's cultural ODA strategy for implementing SDGs policies of the DRC and South Korea and, furthermore, reflected the agreement between the two countries' presidents.

The specific goals of the project, such as improving the environment of the MNRDC, strengthening the capabilities of the exhibition and education, and establishing infrastructure for cultural experiences and entertainment; were well organized and achieved in consideration of local conditions.

Suitable construction sites, museum design and construction management have been planned, managed, and implemented at the appropriate level in order to achieve the objectives of the project; i.e., the establishment of 'the representative national museum of DRC'.

3) Efficiency

The budget presented in the initial execution plan was 10 million USD, but the final budget was increased to 21 million USD, which was spent efficiently within the scope of the project plan. Since the budget changed in consideration of local conditions, rather than cost-saving reasons, it resulted in preventing any hinderances that would extend the construction period and threaten the safety of the participants. The budget increase was considered a necessary change as the project expected high-quality outcomes for the national museum.

Not only the construction of the MNRDC, but also the importance of conservation and preservation of artifacts, the curation of exhibition, the digitalization of national archive, and educational programs were recognized; and the related budget was efficiently calculated and executed.

Despite environmental limitations, such as unstable administrative support conditions and an insufficient construction environment, the project made efforts to pursue efficiency in order to promote the project by inaugurating the museum according to the proposed schedule.

Changes, that increase efficiency, were made to the plan and construction within budget and condition constraints. In the process of selecting exhibition contents, education plans and museum operation external advisory experts were chosen, verified and participated in the process. For example, the selection and installation of glass that determines the quality of the exhibition were examined precisely. The design of the roof of the building also has changed to consider threats such as terrorism and the broader construction environment.

4) Effectiveness

Despite various unfavorable conditions and unpredictable variables on the construction site, the museum was effectively built based upon PDM of the project with the outstanding capabilities and cooperation of KOICA headquarters, the

KOICA DRC office, Korean advisory experts as well as the participations of Korean constructors.

The exhibition has been curated and educational programs have been developed through the utilization of the museum collections. By providing museum operation manuals for each sector, the management process and academic work of the museum has been clearly presented. By curating the exhibition to encompass a variety of ethnic history, folklore, culture and art, the permanent exhibition halls and the special exhibition hall shows effective exhibition direction to secure the status of the museum as a national museum that represents the whole nation.

In the results of the *End-of-Project Evaluation by the Partner Country*, it received perfect scores in all fields, and more than 85% of the respondents said that the museum is functioning well in the *Visitor Questionnaire of MNRDC*.

5) Sustainability

In terms of the equipment and materials, the project has provided equipment suitable for local circumstances by separating items that can be maintained locally in the DRC and items that require follow-up support and investment.

Given that Korean standards and regulation of construction were applied with the equipment and materials, additional budget and follow-up support are expected to be needed.

Although more than 80% of visitors are satisfied with the new museum, due to the nature of the cultural ODA project, it is difficult to guarantee sustainability through short-term investment in the facilities. Thus, continuous and long-term follow-up support will be needed until MNRDC develops their own local capabilities independent from international involvement.

III. Lessons from Evaluation

1) Success Factors

In recognizing the vulnerability of cultural heritage sectors, including exhibition, collections, cultural education, and preservation of artifacts; the DRC had a strong will to improve its circumstance.

Under the agreement between the presidents of the two countries, the DRC and KOICA (Republic of Korea) established clear goals based on trust. KOICA headquarters have led and carried out the project by actively utilizing Korean professional advisors in various fields and, through this, overcome difficulties.

Through the network and cooperation of the project implementation agencies, KOICA, who is well aware of the local situation, understood the site and its difficulties and

decided decisively to increase the budget in the early stage. This is regarded as having significantly optimized the project and contributed significantly to the success of the project and the achievement of its goals to construct a new national museum and provide management manuals necessary for exhibition and museum maintenance.

As a result of the cultural ODA project, MNRDC can promote cultural welfare, such as cultural entertainment and experience of Congolese, in addition to continuously providing professional programs in humanities and arts to society through creative cultural heritage education and experiences. In addition to strengthening the museum's fundamental functions providing exhibition, preservation, and education; it is expected that the museum will act as a convention venue where the museum visitors and the local communities can enjoy and use the facilities in various way.

2) Factors for improvement

(The Stage of Planning and Implementation) Since a museum is a special public institution that requires high maintenance costs continuously, it is necessary to plan in more detail how the DRC will be able to sustainably and efficiently maintain the museum on its own after the end of the project. From the planning and Feasibility Study stage, it is recommended that a public cooperation system with the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism of the Republic of Korea is established or a link with Korean national museums that allows specialized support, or to entrust all project management to a specialized public organization related to the cultural sector.

(The Stage of Monitoring and Evaluation) This project is a large-scale project including the construction of a museum, the establishment of museum management in addition to the exhibition curation and the training of human resources. Therefore, this type of project requires a specific long-term evaluation process accompanied with a qualitative and quantitative evaluation as there are limitations to applying a short-term existing method of evaluation to the project. Although the project has been evaluated and achieved enough of the project's targeted outcomes, it is a project that, in fact, can identify success by continuously monitoring the maintenance, development, and visitors' participation in the long term. Therefore, mid- and long-term evaluation and management plans are also necessary to meet the local condition and the actual aims of the project.

(The Stage of Feedback and Reflection) Although the appearance, scale, and exhibition facilities of the museum have improved significantly; the exhibition halls, which is the main space of the museum, is relatively insufficient, as there is a shortage of storage for collections and incidental facilities. It is believed that the storage facilities will definitely need to be expanded in order to secure the collection and any further acquisitions. In the process of preparing for the inauguration, there were difficulties in carrying out activities such as additional excavation, developing exhibition topics, and further research on the collection. It should also be followed by continuous academic activities such as collecting archives (photos, videos, and audio materials) to supplement the exhibition.