



## UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

### Evaluating and improving international assistance programmes: Examples from Mongolia's transition experience

Schouwstra, M.C.

**Publication date**  
2013

[Link to publication](#)

#### **Citation for published version (APA):**

Schouwstra, M. C. (2013). *Evaluating and improving international assistance programmes: Examples from Mongolia's transition experience*.

#### **General rights**

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

#### **Disclaimer/Complaints regulations**

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

# 6.

## Conclusion

In this dissertation some of the programmes of the international organisations in Mongolia have been looked into with the aim to give advice on how they might be improved as many international programmes do not have the intended outcomes. The objective was to establish why the actual outcomes were different from the intended outcomes, and how it is possible to improve upon the programmes of international organizations?

### **6.1 *New models and methods***

As conventional models could not answer the above mentioned questions a new model of policy analysis and evaluation was developed in this dissertation in which not only the basic elements of policy-making are analysed, but in which also the conceptual and institutional frameworks are taken into account. Furthermore, in this dissertation an important indicator of the efficiency of a country, Total Factor Productivity, which is used by international organisations as one of the indicators to measure the development of a country, has been looked into. Here also, an extension of the present models is suggested, and a new method to calculate TFP has been developed. Furthermore, simulations were used to gain insight in the development of TFP in Mongolia after the transition. Finally, a new method has been developed to analyse large amounts of qualitative data quantitatively. With this new method, it is possible to ask open questions to a large number of respondents instead of closed questions. The predetermined (conceptual) framework which is necessary for closed questions can therewith be avoided. Open questions have the advantage that respondents can give their own answers, which gives a better insight in the ideas of the respondents, and thus the conceptual framework of the respondents – and therewith of the country concerned.

The new models that were developed were applied to (programmes in) Mongolia (see Section 6.2) in order to reconstruct parts of what happened in Mongolia during the transition, and to gain a better insight in the process of transition of Mongolia (see Section 6.3). In section 6.4 an alternative use of the model of policy analysis and evaluation is described as well as the need to do further research.

#### **6.1.1 A new explanatory model for policy analysis and evaluation**

A new model for policy analysis and evaluation was necessary as conventional models of policy analysis could not identify the factors that caused the policy outcomes in Mongolia to diverge from the intended results. Conventional methods as well as the basic framework of the new model of policy analysis and evaluation can identify problems such as badly-defined performance indicators or activities that are not implemented well. Such factors are often not sufficient to explain why policy outcomes diverge from the intended results, however, as many explanatory factors are inherent to the conceptual framework to which policy makers or those who implement

---

policies adhere, and to the institutional framework of the country or region in which a policy or programme is implemented. Extending a model of policy evaluation and analysis with a conceptual and institutional framework solves this problem.

The importance of this framework lies in the fact that it identifies and systematically represents all elements that play a role in real-world policies, without giving a weight – and thus value judgement – to the identified elements. The model can be used by scientists and evaluators to analyse and evaluate policies and programmes, to establish why a policy has, or has not, yielded the results expected from it, and to do cross-country analyses. National and international policy makers can use the model to improve – the effectiveness of – their policies and programmes by taking into account all elements that may exert a (possibly decisive) influence on their policies.

### **6.1.2 Total Factor Productivity (TFP) revisited**

International organisations can not only improve their policies and programmes, there is also scope for improving the indicators they use to establish whether programmes are successful or not, and whether the economic development of a country moves in the direction it ought to move according to their programmes. The international financial institutions use multiple indicators to measure the performance of a country. One of the commonly used indicators is Total Factor Productivity. Total Factor Productivity (TFP) is often used on the macroeconomic level as an indicator of efficiency of a country. IMF, World Bank and many other economists use TFP to compare various countries with each other or to compare the performance of a country over different years.

In this dissertation, several mathematical properties of the concept of TFP were examined in order to explain the development of TFP for Mongolia since the transition in particular. The recommendation of this dissertation with regard to TFP is that it should not be used as an indicator of efficiency in a period of structural change as in those situations TFP basically is an unreliable indicator. Especially the exclusion of the informal sector – that changes from year to year in periods of structural change – causes the indicator to be unreliable. In general, for economies with unreliable statistics in combination with the peculiarities of income accounting, the present use of TFP may lead to a distorted picture of efficiency on the macroeconomic level.

For those economists who want to use TFP as an indicator nonetheless, the conventional method of calculating TFP (a regression analysis using the Cobb-Douglas function) has been extended in this dissertation with an extensive sensitivity analysis in which especially the errors in the data are analysed. With the sensitivity analysis it is possible to say something about the direction in which Total Factor Productivity develops itself (i.e. whether it increases or decreases) without having to estimate  $\alpha$ .

As a corollary of the chapter on TFP, a new method to calculate TFP has been developed together with A.G. Chessa, in order to forestall some of the problems that arise when TFP is calculated with the Cobb-Douglas function, and data are not available or are not reliable. By deriving a function for TFP – in this case with an application to Mongolia – some of the problems caused by poor data, and by the implicit assumption that TFP behaves according to an exponential function in time can be avoided.

### **6.1.3 A method to analyse qualitative data quantitatively**

The conventional method to conduct a survey, in which large numbers of respondents take part, is to design a questionnaire with closed questions. The framework within which respondents have to answer is predetermined. In this study the researchers did not want to lead the answers of the respondents, and wanted to ask open questions only. To be able to do this, a method was developed together with S.J. Schouwstra to analyse large amounts of qualitative data in a consistent and quantitatively meaningful way. With this new methodology researchers can use open questionnaires for large numbers of respondents, thus avoiding the problem of predefined answers. The answers to open questions give a better insight in the ideas, and thus the conceptual framework, of the respondents.

## ***6.2 International programmes in Mongolia analysed***

Three programmes were analysed in this dissertation: the privatization of agriculture in Mongolia, a curriculum change in medicine at the national university of Mongolia (NUM), and the well-rehabilitation programmes in Mongolia. What became evident when analysing these programmes was the overriding importance of the conceptual and institutional frameworks in explaining why policies of international organisations in Mongolia did not have the intended outcomes. International programmes are usually well-designed in the sense that all the steps of the basic policy-making cycle are conscientiously followed, and well described before a programme or policy starts. Though problems do arise even within the basic framework, the fundamental problems often arise outside of the conventional policy-design.

The philosophy of an international organisation is reflected in the policies and programmes that are designed by policy makers of that organisation. On the part of the international (financial) organisations there are two important ideas that deserve attention in this conclusion:

- a. The idea that a policy that works in one country will also work in another country; and
- b. The idea that there is one economic model that is universally applicable.

### *A policy that works in one country will also work in another country*

In the early 1990s, many international organisations, and the international financial institutions in particular, seemed to have the idea that if a policy or programme works in one country it will also work in another. Thus, economic and financial programmes that worked for Latin America were supposed to work for transition economies as well. A few years after the transition began in Eastern Europe and Mongolia, the International Financial Institutions (IFI) found out that their programmes in transition countries yielded different results than expected as the transition countries lacked the institutional structures necessary for the programmes, and more attention was paid to the institutional frameworks of the countries concerned. The conceptual framework was still overlooked as a decisive factor in a policy or programme outcome.

### *One economic model that is universally applicable*

The root of the misconception that a programme which functions in one country will function in the same way in another country possibly lies in the philosophy of the IFI, as they work from the conception that there is one economic model that is universally applicable. Economies all over the world basically function in the same way, or

should function in the same way if the right prerequisites are created. Given this assumption, it seems a logical conclusion that an economic or financial programme that has been successful in one country will also be successful in another, and that successful programmes can easily be duplicated from one country to another. In practice, this is not the case.

### **6.2.1 International programmes and the importance of the conceptual framework**

One of the main problems of international programmes is, first, that the conceptual framework of the policy designers is fundamentally different of the conceptual framework of the people who have to implement the policies, and, second, that these differences are not acknowledged and taken into account when designing policies.

People with different backgrounds tend to adhere to different definitions, and have different ideas and theories on how a policy or programme – and the world in general – is supposed to work. If such differences are not acknowledged and addressed in a policy or programme, that is a recipe for failure. Even when the same words are being used, it is quite well possible that people adhere to their own different definitions of the central or main concepts of a policy.

Just after the transition, difficulties arose in international programmes in transition countries, as the advisors of, for instance, the IMF had a fundamentally different understanding as compared with the people in transition countries of how an economy works, and what the role of the state should be in an economy. As the assumptions inherent to the conceptual framework of the policy designers of the IMF and those of the people of transition economies had not been made explicit, they were not taken into account in policy and programme designs. This led to problems in the implementation phase, and meant that the outcomes of the programmes were often disappointing, and nearly always different from the intended outcomes.

In the programmes analysed in this dissertation, it was the differences in the conceptual framework of the programme designers, and of the Mongolians who implemented the programmes, that led to problems in the implementation phase of the programmes, and that present a threat to the long term sustainability of the goals of the programmes. The rural Mongolians that participate in the well rehabilitation programmes have a different understanding of the role of the state, and of their own role in the programmes than the programme designers had in mind. Rural Mongolians expect the state to provide water, and to step in when things go wrong, whereas in the programmes they should take care of the wells themselves. The programmes try to train the people that participate in the programme in order to adjust their mentality to one that is necessary for the programme. It is the question whether that is a sufficient solution.

In the programme to change the curriculum in medicine at the NUM, a few problems with regard to the conceptual framework were encountered. The fluidity of the job market, due to the willingness of Mongolians to change jobs when an opportunity is presented, was one of those problems. By the end of the programme most of the people that had been trained in the programme had changed jobs, which obviously is a threat to capacity building and thus the long-term sustainability of a programme.

### **6.2.2 International programmes and the importance of the institutional framework**

The importance of the institutional framework came to the forefront when at the beginning of the transition liberalization, privatization, and stabilization commenced at the same time in Mongolia, even though there were no institutional structures upon which new institutions could be built. This led to unforeseen outcomes of policies and programmes. It took a few years before the international financial organisations realised their oversight, and before they started spending more energy and resources on building the necessary institutional structures. The idea that market institutions would automatically come into existence when the economy was being liberalized and privatized has proved to be wrong. But even now, the institutional requirements which have to be fulfilled for a programme to be successful in a country do not get the attention they deserve.

The analysis of the privatizations in agriculture in Mongolia at the beginning of the 1990s demonstrated the importance of the institutional framework for international programmes. Even though the privatizations were successful in the sense that within a year almost all the herds in Mongolia had been privatized, the policy outcomes were not at all what the international organisations had envisaged.

One of the goals of the privatization policy was to generate economic growth by increasing market-oriented production in agriculture. The policy designers had expected an increase of the number of animals, and therewith an increase of input in animal processing industries. The number of animals did indeed increase after the privatizations, but input in animal processing industries decreased both quantitatively and qualitatively. There were both institutional and conceptual reasons for this unintended outcome. On the institutional level, the transport system had collapsed, there was no insurance system and the state could not provide security and basic necessities anymore, and rural Mongolians had resorted to barter trade as cash money was not available and inflation enormously high. On the conceptual level, Mongolians were not willing to sell their animals unless they were in need of money, for instance to pay for taxes. In rural Mongolia, a large herd gives more status than money, and a large herd is also the best insurance against calamities. The actual outcome of the privatization could have been foreseen had the IFI had more knowledge of the institutional and conceptual characteristics of rural Mongolia at that time.

What the analyses of the three programmes in this dissertation clearly demonstrate is how much is being missed in searching for explanations for the success or failure of a policy, if the conceptual and institutional frameworks are not taken into account.

The advice in this dissertation is that when designing a policy or programme, it is worthwhile to analyse the institutional framework thoroughly – especially in connection with the theories, assumptions, and definitions that underlie a specific policy or programme. If the assumptions with regard to any of the elements of the institutional or conceptual framework are wrong, one can expect a different policy outcome from that intended. Thus it is important to establish what requirements should be fulfilled with regard to the institutional and conceptual framework in order to be able to implement a policy successfully. If requirements are not fulfilled, it should be established what influence that may have on the outcomes of the policy when it is being implemented, and what measures should be taken to prevent

counterproductive or negative influences. In general, the advice is that policy makers combine good ‘programme’ knowledge with excellent country knowledge in order to identify what conceptual and institutional pitfalls are lurking when a programme is implemented in a specific country in order to prevent them.

### ***6.3 Mongolia’s process of transition***

The new models that were developed in this dissertation were applied to international programmes implemented in Mongolia. Thus, new insights were gained in parts of the history, and the process of transition in Mongolia.

Mongolia’s process of transition is comparable to the process of transition of other transition countries. The process of transition started in 1990, was spurred by the collapse of the Soviet Union, and by the abrupt end of the Soviet subsidies in 1991. From one moment to the other, Mongolia had to stand on its own feet after 70 years of Soviet guidance, and it had to look elsewhere for guidance and money. Due to the abrupt end of the Soviet subsidies, the social, agricultural, educational, and health systems more or less collapsed, especially in the outlying regions. Scarcity of food was universal during the first years of transition, and many Mongolians came to live under the poverty line. In the first years of the transition especially rural Mongolians resorted to barter trade due to high inflation and – because of stringent macroeconomic policies to attain macroeconomic stability – a shortage of cash money.

#### ***A lack of basic institutional structures***

The international financial institutions (IFI) and other countries and organisations came to the aid of Mongolia, and started a multitude of programmes. Under the guidance of the international financial institutions Mongolia embarked on the way of shock therapy, and commenced with liberalization, privatization, and stabilization. The IFI advised the Mongolian government to privatize all state-owned assets as soon as possible in order to create a market economy, and to stimulate economic growth. The IFI had, however, both overlooked the fact that there were no basic institutional structures upon which to build capitalist institutions, and underestimated the time and effort needed to bring about a system transformation. The lack of basic institutional structures was a very serious complicating factor in virtually all the programmes of the international organizations, and many policies tended to have unforeseen outcomes.

#### ***Privatization and efficiency***

To give an example, whereas the goal of privatization of enterprises is that firms will operate more efficiently, in Mongolia factories were bought by Mongolians, and closed down to sell the inventory to China. Therewith, there were no gains in efficiency in Mongolia, and it led to widespread unemployment – and thus poverty – in the areas concerned. The simulations in Chapter 4 on Total Factor Productivity actually confirm this observation, as according to the simulations not the least efficient enterprises closed in Mongolia, but enterprises closed randomly. These findings contradict the theory international organisations adhere to, that TFP rises because the least efficient enterprises close, and they also shed a positive light on ideas of some international organisations in Mongolia to reopen closed enterprises in some regions of Mongolia in order to generate employment.

#### ***Institutional consequences of the geographical vastness of Mongolia***

The analysis of three international programmes in this dissertation provides an insight into the institutional and conceptual characteristics that are specific to Mongolia, and that influenced the process of transition. The geographic characteristics of the country, together with its sparse population have consequences for the institutional structure of the country, and are important to most – international – policies and programmes.

To give an example, where the geographical vastness of the country calls for decentralization, the sparseness of the population, in combination with the fact that higher educational facilities and job possibilities are much better in Ulaanbaatar than in the *aimags*, leads to a local administration that does not have the human resources (neither the capacity, nor the capabilities and expertise) to design and implement many policies and programmes. Delegating to lower levels of government may therefore lead to the opposite result than that intended. This may complicate international programmes enormously, as decentralization is a starting point of most international policies and programmes. The geographical vastness of the country also makes it very improbable that an efficient market-oriented system will develop with low transportation costs. Furthermore, where some methods and programmes have been successful elsewhere, they are impossible or too costly to implement in Mongolia because of its geographical and demographic characteristics.

### ***The institutional structure and the concept of property rights***

With regard to the legal setting in Mongolia, during the first years of the transition, there was no proper legal system. The existing legal institutions did not function anymore, there were no institutions of mediation, and the rules necessary for a market economy were not yet in place. In later years, contradictions in laws were a source of potential problems.

A conceptual and institutional issue that is characteristic for Mongolia, and that has an impact on almost all international programmes there, is the concept of property rights. The concept – and protection – of property rights is central to a market economy, but it is a concept that is alien both to a nomadic culture and to communist ideology. Mongolia's nomadic system thrives on commonly-owned pastures. Defining and granting property rights – of land in particular, but also of water – to individuals is incompatible with the nomadic system of herding. It is fundamental to the nomadic system that nobody owns land, and that in times of difficulties, such as adverse weather conditions, nomads can move to pastures in other areas. The international organizations have never tired of pointing out to the Mongolian government that a market economy cannot function without a good definition and protection of property rights.

Thought should have been given by the international organisations to the fundamental question whether and how the fundamental concepts and requirements of a nomadic society (to the extent that can still be witnessed in rural areas in Mongolia) are compatible with the fundamental concepts of a market economy<sup>114</sup>. The example of

---

<sup>114</sup> More authors have commented upon the differences between, and possibly the difficulties to reconcile, Western ideas and concepts with Mongolian ideas and concepts. Campi (1996, p. 92) remarks '*Mongolia's command economy was a nomadic socialist economy, which operated in a cultural/philosophical world at odds with some of the basic assumptions of a free-market economy*'. In his article "From 'Public' to 'Private' Markets in Postsocialist Mongolia", Pedersen (2007) '*problematizes certain Euro-American assumptions of what the public and private might be*'.

the definition of property rights shows that careful manoeuvring between the two systems is called for, and clever solutions need to be found where the two systems are incompatible with each other. International organisations should attempt to meet the challenge of striking a unique balance between (the needs of) the prevailing system and a new system, instead of trying to override one of the two systems.

The definition of property rights has remained a problematic issue in Mongolia up to the present time. This has implications for the development of the necessary institutional structure for a capitalist economy. Therewith, it also has implications for the outcomes of programmes of international organisations that rely on those institutional structures for the attainment of their goals.

### ***A lack of resources***

The process of transition in Mongolia is characterised by the willingness of both the Mongolian government and the parliament to favour the interventions and programmes of international organizations, as too few resources are available to the government to realize their preferred policies. They are very eager to attract as many donors as possible to help fund projects, and are very cooperative. The economic, political and social settings have not been limiting factors in the case of the well-rehabilitation projects, but the lack of resources has, in general, made the Mongolians very dependent on international financial aid to realize projects. From a social perspective, the situation in many regions (*aimags*) is rather desperate, so any investment, and any generation of jobs is welcome.

### ***Many international organisations involved in the process of transition***

Following from the paragraph above, and characteristic for the process of transition in Mongolia is that many international organisations are involved in the process of transition. All organisations make their own analyses, use their own procedures, and impose their own conditions. Large initial differences between donor (and government) programmes, even though they are working towards the same goals, make it necessary for a national government to coordinate all efforts in order to prevent arbitrariness towards the beneficiaries of programmes, and to prevent duplication. With regard to the well-rehabilitation programmes, the Mongolian government coordinates, but at the same time exceptions to the rule are created for agreements with donors. Therefore, there are still arbitrary differences for those who take part in well-rehabilitation and construction programmes, depending on what organisation funds the programme. In general, the Mongolian government lacks the resources and capacity to coordinate many programmes. From the point of view of international organisations, the problem of donor coordination is clearly one that should be identified in the *ex ante* analysis of the institutional framework of the country concerned, in combination with the institutional requirements of the international programmes.

Another institutional problem that has been and still is regularly encountered in Mongolia when international programmes are being implemented is the fact that for many programmes more than one ministry or governmental organization is involved. Combined with the fact that the responsibilities of ministries and other governmental organizations are often not well defined – which means that is not obvious who is responsible for what – means that the implementation of programmes may be complicated in Mongolia.

***The Mongolian conceptual framework and international organisations***

During the process of transition, international organisations had underestimated the differences between their own conceptual framework and the conceptual framework of Mongolians. In the programmes analysed in this dissertation, many problems in international programmes arose because the Mongolians exhibited a different kind of reasoning and a different mentality than the policy makers had assumed when they designed their programmes.

Even more complicated for international policy designers is the fact that urban and rural Mongolians have a different conceptual framework. The urban-rural divide in Mongolia has grown enormously since the transition, and the difference in mentality between Ulaanbaatar and the rural areas, in particular, is striking, as is, for example, the difference in ideas on the role of the state and the government. There are also many practical differences in job opportunities, wealth, and etcetera between rural areas and Ulaanbaatar. When a programme does not make allowance for these differences, the outcome of the programme may well be different than intended.

A good example of the underestimation of the differences in conceptual frameworks during the privatizations in agriculture is the assumption of the IFI that herders would automatically display market economic thinking and behaviour when they would own their own animals. This assumption turned out to be wrong. Mongolian herders basically did not want to sell animals, and preferred to increase the number of animals in their herds. In general, rural Mongolians were – and possibly still are – very government focussed in the first decade of transition. When problems would arise, they expected the government to solve them for them. These ideas are shared by the local administrators in rural areas, a fact that may cause friction between the local governments on the one hand, and the central government and international organisations on the other hand.

In the analysis of the various programmes in this dissertation characteristics of the Mongolian conceptual framework were decisive in the outcome of a programme. The advice of this dissertation is, therefore, to give more attention to the conceptual framework of a country, and to analyse the requirements of the programme not only to the institutional framework but also to the conceptual framework, as well as the conceptual and institutional framework of the country concerned, in order to be able to anticipate upon the difficulties that are due to arise when a programme is implemented in a specific country, and take measures to prevent possible negative effects of conceptual differences between the organisation and the country concerned in order to reach the intended goals of the programme.

***The Mongolian conceptual framework: freedom and democracy highly valued***

The explorative research into the expectations and the outcome of transition gives a unique insight in the conceptual framework of the Mongolian respondents of the survey. At the beginning of the transition from a communist system to democracy and a market economy in 1990, Mongolians had high expectations of the new system. Hardly anyone had negative expectations of the system change, neither for themselves nor for society. Mongolians expected financial and material gains of the transition, a more pleasant life, more security, but also more freedom, an improvement of education, and a better situation for their own children. For society they expected an

---

improvement of state and politics, an improvement of justice, and many respondents expected an improvement of conduct and morality in society.

The outcomes of the transition can be divided in personal outcomes and outcomes for society. Respondents indicated that the expectations for their personal lives were reasonably well-fulfilled, which may be explained by the fact that most respondents had enjoyed a higher education. The expectations for society were only partially fulfilled.

The highest-valued gains of the transition – and exceeding the already high expectations – are ‘freedom’ and ‘foreign contacts’. Highly valued were, furthermore, the economy, the increase of private property, and democracy. Most losses due to the transition are found in the social sphere, the biggest loss being the general financial situation, i.e. the poverty that has occurred after the transition and the growing gap between the rich and the poor. For the issue of ‘state and politics’, (the growth of) corruption is the biggest loss. Over half of the respondents evaluated the influence of transition upon their personal life positively, and less than a quarter described the influence in negative terms only.

Policy makers who design policies and programmes can take advantage of the insights that surveys such as the one undertaken in this dissertation generate. (International) policy makers might even consider doing a survey themselves, in order to find out what characteristics of the conceptual framework might be important for their programme or policy.

#### ***6.4 The use of the new model of policy analysis and evaluation***

In this dissertation the examples given of the use of new model of policy analysis and evaluation (also called the Geelhoed-Schouwstra framework (GSF) for policy analysis and evaluation) were in an international context. The use of the GSF is, however, not limited to uses in an international context. Fornili (Fornili, 2008; Fornili & Burda, 2009) used the framework to evaluate health policies. In her 2008 article she demonstrated how nurses and policy makers can utilize systematic models of policy analysis and evaluation to evaluate how health policies affect service delivery, patient outcomes and nursing practice. As influences on the conceptual level, she described the perception of unmet needs for mental health care, personal histories of trauma, and the role of intimate partners. Influences on the institutional level were in this case funding trends and involvement in domestic violence or child welfare programmes. In her 2009 article, she examined policies related to the implementation of buprenorphine therapy<sup>115</sup>, and explored various exogenous influences that contribute to its underperformance. The GSF can thus be used to examine all kinds of policies, whether these are the policies of an international organisation, a national government, a community, or an individual organisation. It is a matter of further research to investigate how the framework can be used optimally for the various policies and organisations.

---

<sup>115</sup> Buprenorphine is one of the newest treatments for opiate addiction: it is a long-acting partial agonist that acts on the same receptors as heroin and morphine, relieving drug cravings without producing the same intense "high" or dangerous side effects.

### 6.4.1 Further research

Unfortunately, the more knowledge one gathers, the more one realizes how little one knows. Whereas the conceptual and institutional framework have been identified as important factors that cause policy outcomes to differ from the intended policy outcomes, there is still a great deal to be learned and to be found out about these frameworks. A question raised by Mann and Sweiger (Mann & Schweiger, 2009) is how to identify the conceptual framework. With regard to international organisations this question can also be rephrased as: ‘How to identify the relevant elements of the conceptual framework and of the institutional framework in a country for a policy or programme?’ In this dissertation, even though examples have been given, and suggestions made as how to find out more about both frameworks, much more work could be done in this direction.

It would, furthermore, be interesting to know more about the connection between the two frameworks – as they are evidently connected or even intertwined – and how this connection influences the outcome of policies and programmes.

With regard to the new model of policy analysis and evaluation (GSF), this model can be further developed and refined for its various uses. In general, it is an advantage that no weights are given to its identified elements. However, it is well imaginable that its usefulness for particular evaluations and policies may be enhanced by identifying what weight should be given to what element, and by clarifying the ways in which the various elements can be identified for those particular evaluations and policy designs. Knowing more about the constituent elements of the conceptual and institutional framework means that it will be easier for policy makers and evaluators to use this instrument to systematically analyse and improve their policies and programmes.

It would, furthermore, be interesting to investigate more commonly-used indicators and the models underlying these indicators, to find out in what circumstances the indicators are meaningful, in what circumstances they are meaningless, and how the indicators can be adjusted so that they really indicate what should indicate. In this way, their usefulness would be enhanced.

Finally, it would be useful to convert the knowledge obtained from surveys – such as the one undertaken in the dissertation – into information with which policy makers can work. Information on what is fundamental to people, how people perceive specific changes, and how they value them, ought to feed the policy-making process. It would be useful to find how this information could contribute to the policy process, and aid policy makers in designing policies and programmes.

In Dutch there is a saying ‘De domme kan meer vragen stellen dan honderd wijzen kunnen beantwoorden’<sup>116</sup>. In the context of this dissertation and further research, it means that there is an endless array of possibilities for further research on the issues touched upon in this dissertation. Even so, I hope this dissertation contributes to the awareness that the conceptual and institutional frameworks are of crucial importance to the outcomes of policies and programmes, and will henceforth be taken into account when policies and programmes are designed.

---

<sup>116</sup> Literally translated: ‘An ignorant person can ask more questions than a hundred wise persons can answer’.