

EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (DECO)
NORWEGIAN MISSION ALLIANCE
IN ECUADOR

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This external evaluation for the Norwegian organization Mission Alliance in Ecuador (MAN-E) started on April 18th and ended on June 15th 2006. An important aspect of the methodology has been the high participation of MAN-E's personnel and of beneficiaries through interviews and workshops.

The project's development objective is:

“To contribute to the empowerment of poor and marginal groups, giving them back hope and opportunity to build their future and demonstrating in this way that God's love and justice are equal for everyone.”

To reach this objective the project is structured in **Lines of Action** and **Axes of Work**, terms that are defined as follows:

- **Lines of Action.-** These are the areas where the project will focus its efforts, with the purpose to reach the project's proposed objectives. They are: Education Development Line; Churches Development Line; and Disabled' Line.
- **Axes of Work.-** These are cross cutting areas, meaning that they participate in all the Lines of Action. They are: Community Organization; Health and Social Relations; and Family economics.

In the target areas the Project works with “Counterpart Groups.” A “Counterpart Group” is composed of a formal institution, which can be an Education Center or a Church, and committees or commissions organized by the beneficiary population and composed in its majority of parents. Currently, the Project is working with 15 Education Centers and 13 churches. The objective is that by the end of the project, it will work with 30 Education centers and 30 churches. Since 2004, of the 15 Education centers only 4 are new and of the 13 churches 6 are new. The fundamental remaining question is whether the project will be able to include 15 new schools and 17 new churches in the little more than 3 years that remain of the project. There are no operational plans to reach these goals that do not seem very realistic.

Of investments and expenditure in 2004-2005, that sum a total of USD 1,376,120, 62% was infrastructure and furnishings and 38% educational training, materials and salaries. Regarding the project performance, we consider that the project efficiency has been good. During 2004-2005, little over 100% of the budget has been spent.

Concerning the project efficiency, the analysis shows that for the majority of objectives the project is producing the expected results in relation to project schedule.. There is good coherence between the project's six sectorial strategic objectives and the methodology and activities to reach these objectives.

The beneficiary survey showed a very high appreciation of the positive **impacts**. Concerning infrastructures and equipment in the education line, 76% of parents and 64% of directors and teachers graded the impacts as high. The same figure was 63%

for ministers and leaders. In the disabled' line, the appreciation of impacts was much less favorable, 40% for the parents and only 9% for the personnel, from which 91% graded the impact as medium. In the educational training activities, 74% of the parents and 50% of the directors and instructors graded the impacts as high. The same figure for ministers and leaders was 68%.

The **sustainability** of infrastructures and training results is not well guaranteed.

The beneficiaries have confirmed the project's **relevance** and **pertinence**, with observations on different training activities, in particular for teachers and parents, which should be strengthened in order to improve quality of children's education. The disabled line is very relevant for the region, but it is questionable if these social assisting activities are pertinent for an integral development project. In summary, the project's objectives continue to be valid and of interest in relation to the regions' situation of MAN-E's target population.

The project's methodology reflects the region's social complexity and the fact that there are no organizations with solid and permanent foundations, which the project can work with. The methodology for planning and execution is very participatory.

The recommendations for the Project are the following:

For the **education line** we recommend:

- To keep current focus with "new" centers (infrastructure / equipment, educational training)
- To strengthen in-classroom educational training at established centers
- To take greater advantage of resources from the Group of Directors in order to strengthen the line and assure transference of experiences
- To continue parental educational training to support the aforementioned processes
- To discontinue technical educational training on household economy in schools and high schools
- To support handicraft centers
- To strengthen activities for children's health
- To strengthen cooperation with health centers
- To incorporate the church into activities of preventive health and family relations for adults and families
- To concentrate activities for community organization with committees and commissions from the education center

For the **disabled line** we recommend:

- To clarify this line's prospects (This line corresponds to action more related to social assistance than to community development)
- To decide what will happen with the two current centers based on what has been previously described
- To discontinue the technical educational training on household economy
- To strengthen activities for children's health

- To discontinue activities for health and family relationships for adults and families
- To strengthen parent associations

For the **churches line** we recommend:

- To strengthen strategies for community involvement
- To apply better strategies for a) incorporating new churches into the project (when they exist in the region and they are new), and b) for managing the termination process of other churches.
- To strengthen and enlarge the implementation of the household economy axis
- To strengthen activities for adults' preventive health
- To strengthen family relations
- To strengthen cooperation with education and health centers
- To motivate participation of head churches with health brigades
- To strengthen activities of community organization at the church level, in order for community leaders to get educational training and replicate knowledge of community organization in fields associated with the project or to the community.

Other recommendations are:

1. We recommend that the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of project methodology, as presented in our report, be used for an internal workshop with the leaders to make relevant decisions as a consequence of this analysis.
2. The position of the Department General Coordinator, which is currently vacant, should be filled as soon as possible. The profile of proved experience on managerial abilities is a key element for Development Programs.
3. We recommend elaborating a program to ensure the inclusion of new counterparts, in order to attain the goal of working with 30 education centers and 30 churches at the end of the Project in 2009.
4. We recommend preparing a system of impact indicators with base lines for each type of micro-project, procedures to collect data and for a data base system.
5. We recommend integrating the architect advisor, who is the site supervisor , as a member of the project's team in the Programs and Projects Department. For position a description of functions and responsibilities should be prepared.
6. The committee of leaders should be more involved in the implementation of Project activities..
7. We reiterate the recommendation to complete a manual of policies and procedures that contributes to regulate the supporting conditions and participation of the other sectionc of MAN-E with the Project.

8. The DECO team should be strengthened, filling the current available positions with committed individuals, who have proved experience in development and, where possible, in programs of education quality improvement, an area that will be the Project's priority in the coming years.
9. MAN-E should develop a more specific strategy on how to initiate activities in new sections of the target area and how to end its cooperation with counterparts after a defined period, and should communicate this strategy to the counterparts in a more comprehensible way.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

The Norwegian Organization Mision Alianza in Ecuador (MAN-E) initiated its diaconal work and community development in some marginal areas of Guayaquil in 1994. The Organization is known as Mision Alianza (MA) in the region. During the last years its work in this region is through the Community Development project (DECO). The most recent Project Document is the “Project Plan 2004-2009.”

The main office of the Norwegian Mission Alliance in Oslo, MAN, and the Norwegian Cooperation for Development, NORAD, entities that finance the DECO project, periodically require evaluations that ensure its success. The last external evaluation of this project was done in 2003. Thus, because three years have already elapsed, it is necessary to provide updated information on the project’s progress and impact. The terms of reference are presented in annex 1.

1.2. MAN-E and the DECO Project in Ecuador

1.2.1. *Brief history and Project area*

The MA initiated its work in the “Isla Trinitaria” sector in 1994. With the “2004 – 2009 Project” the organization started to work in the Northern Area. It is currently working in two areas with a total population of 185.000 inhabitants. (See map and table 1.1).

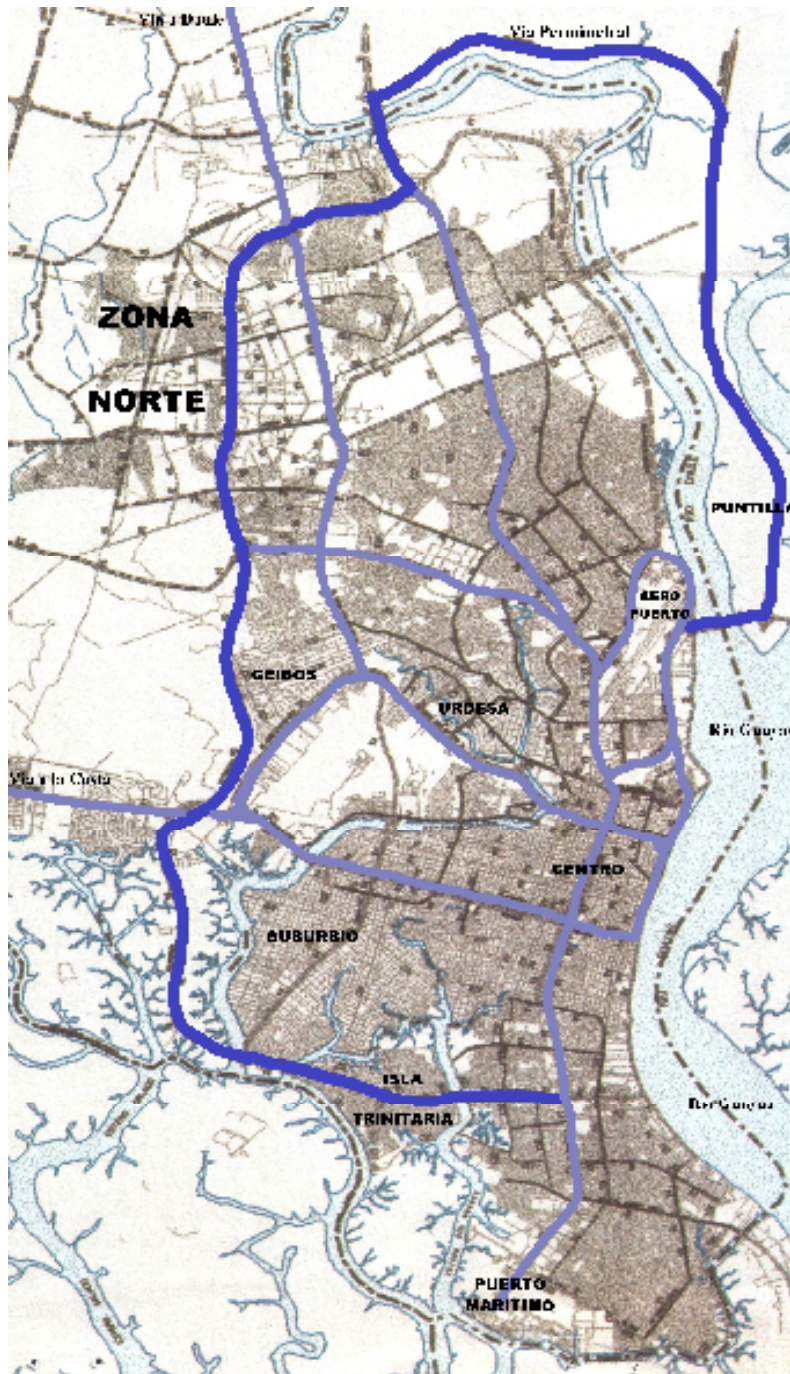
Table 1.1 Characteristics of the Projects’ Area

	Isla Trinitaria	North-West Area
Location of target area	South-west of the City	North-west: Flor del Bastión, Paraíso y Fortín
Area	512 hectares	1020 hectares
Inhabitants	75.605	109.477
Literacy	Yes: 59.155 No: 6.310 (9,6%)	Yes: 81.440 No: 12.271 (13,1 %)
Predominant ethnicity	Mestizos and black	Mestizos and black

The Project areas are mainly made up of migrant populations from different provinces of the country, which came from rural communities in provinces such as Guayas, Los Ríos, Manabí, Esmeraldas from the Coastal region and the provinces of Chimborazo, Cotopaxi, Bolívar from the Andes, among others.

The diverse origins of the population (several regions and provinces) are also translated into ethnic differences: native races from the coastal region, mestizo

populations from the provinces of Guayas and Manabi, black populations from the province of Esmeraldas and a significant indigenous population from the highlands.



Map of the project area

The population settlements are relatively new, between 15 and 20 years old, and they have been created by immigration, which is a product of rural sector poverty and the need to look for work in Guayaquil, which is a center of commercial activity.

Therefore, the majority of this immigrant population works in informal commerce and construction activities.

At the sectors Flor de Bastion, Paraíso de la Flor, Cordillera del Cóndor and other adjacent cooperatives from the North-east area and Isla Trinitaria, the crisis of the national educational system is reflected with greater incidence. The majority of state schools have few teachers, who are appointed by the state. Consequently, young high school graduates are hired to play the role of teachers, and logically, they do not have either the experience or the didactic and pedagogical knowledge required.

Likewise, another factor of concern is the high number of private education centers that are mainly focused on quantity of knowledge instead of teaching quality.

The initial organizational system in these areas responds to “invasions” of unoccupied lands through movements that are led by popular leaders “caudillos”, who, taking advantage of violence and people’s needs, have taken possession of private or municipal properties and have distributed these lands among them for families to build precarious homes. On such lands there was scarcity of basic services.

In this context, the basic organization responded to aspects related to sales of plots of land, which are called “solares.” Subsequently, this organization became home cooperatives, which were constituted by the afore-mentioned “caudillos” and a group of supposed organizers, who supported and worked with the “caudillos” in exchange of *solares* for them and their families. These organizers were the ones who would allow (or not) the access of NGOs and/or institutions to support the families’ situation. They would do so only when these organizations did not disturb their economic or local political interests. In many cases they were backed up by political parties and leaders who saw in these sectors potential votes for their electoral campaigns.

In order to establish a foothold in the area and to implement the DECO Project, the MA Organization established contact with several of these leaders and accepted some of their informal conditions, with the consequent legal irregularities for the acquisition of *solares*. Nowadays, on these lands we find the various infrastructures of the Organization for each one of its lines.

We consider this analysis on organizational conditions important because the major MAN-E’s challenge has been, and is, the insufficiency or lack of appropriate basic community organizations for a community development process.

1.2.2. DECO Project summary

The document “Community Development Guayaquil, Ecuador – Project’s Plan 2004” is the basis of the project. This defines the development objective as:

“To contribute to the empowerment of poor and marginal groups, giving them back hope and opportunity to build their future and demonstrating in this way that God’s love and justice are equal for everyone.”

The Project has three lines of action that are Education, Disabled and Churches, and three axes of work that are Community Organization, Health and Social Relations and Family Economy. The project works with two types of counterparts: Education Centers, with committees and commissions made up of people from the community, and Churches, with the same types of committees and commissions. The project supports different types of educational training processes and financing for infrastructure and furnishings. The global budget for 2006 is \$US 1,111,234.

1.3. Terms of Reference and Evaluation Methodology

The terms of reference (TOR) present questions to be evaluated in the study (see the TORs in Annex 1). The TOR also present some specific results, from which the first one is:

“That the evaluation process should have a high level of participation among the personnel and the target population, which should generate interest and learning, as well as strengthening of the work ethic at the different levels of the organization.”

According to this requirement the evaluation has applied a highly participatory methodology in the following stages:

1 Preparation: (March)

The evaluation team studied the presented documentation and prepared working plans, which were sent to the MAN-E. The personnel of the Programs and Projects Department prepared two documents:

- Current Project results with information related to each one of the result indicators in the “Project Plan 2004 – 2009” (annex 2)
- Results and implementation: where the weaknesses and strengths of the project methodology were identified in relation to each one of the project objectives (annex 3)

2. First visit to the Project (April 18 to 23)

During these days, two meetings with all the MAN-E personnel took place. At these meetings the TOR, the work plans and the survey program were presented. There were several meetings with the personnel of the Programs and Projects Department, where their work was presented, the documentation was evaluated (see annex 2 and 3) and the design of the questionnaire and programming for the Impacts survey were completed (see annex 4). There were also meetings with the personnel, in particular with the person in charge of the project accounts.

3. Implementation of the Impact Survey of the beneficiaries (April 24 to 29)

An impact survey was done with:

- Directors from counterpart education centers (total 12)

- Teachers from counterpart education centers (total 67)
- Parents from counterpart education centers (total 104)
- Personnel from the CREER centers (total 11)
- Parents from the CREER centers (total 25)
- Ministers and leaders from counterpart churches (total 41)
- Parents from counterpart churches (total 65)

The survey was implemented according to the timetable presented in annex 4. The survey was directed by a member of the Evaluation Team and several MAN-E personnel members participated. For more details see annex 4.

4. Data entry, tabulation and analysis of the survey results (May 1 to 12)

The total number of surveys was 325.

According to the planned program, the first step to take was to enter all the results of the questionnaire into a data base, for which spread sheets had previously been prepared..

For the actual data entry process we had the support of 2 trained members of the DECO personnel. Their work was supervised until they presented all the spread sheets with the information from each one of the 325 filing cards.

The next step was to tabulate the survey results, ordering them by Lines, Axes, Groups, Counterparts, and establishing the number and percentage relations for estimating the different appreciations of high, medium, low or no impact.

The third step consisted of analyzing, comparing and interpreting each one of the results to be synthesized later in chapter 3 - section 3.2 of the current report.

It is important to emphasize that information of qualitative-character from the survey was also obtained through the filing cards. For this reason, it was considered prudent to leave in the project files such primary information, not only as support for the results on the impacts assessment, but also as material to be used by the DECO promoters and coordinators.

5. Second visit to the Project (May 13 to 23)

A meeting was held at the beginning of this visit. In this meeting a work plan and the survey results were presented. Also, another meeting with all the personnel was held at the end of the visit. In this meeting conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation were presented.

Four workshops were held with parents from the counterparts groups. A total of 74 parents participated in these workshops. The evaluation team designed and directed the workshops, and the group work was facilitated by members of the Programs and Projects Department. Annex 5 presents the workshops' programs and results.

There were also interviews with:

- The network of directors of education centers.
- The network of ministers of counterpart churches.
- Head Churches – With the main ministers from the churches Alianza and Bautista El Calvario.
- Health Sub-Center Flor III, with its Director.

Several meetings were held with the Programs and Projects Department to study different aspects of their work. Also, there were meetings with other sections of the personnel, in particular with the accounts section and the architect advisor on infrastructure

At the end of this visit the Evaluation Team had other meetings for analysis, interpretation, conclusions and recommendations. Moreover, they adjusted this information to the TOR and designed the report content structure, a timetable for the completion of each one of the chapters and their review through the internet.

6. Writing the Evaluation Report (May 24 to June 12)

The Evaluation Team exchanged the chapters by e-mail, according to the planned program, and finished writing the report.

1.4. Report structure

The report aims to answer the Terms of Reference (TOR) questions and chapter 6, Conclusions and Recommendations, follows the TOR's structure. For this reason, this chapter can be read independently.

As their titles show, chapters 2 to 5 deal with evaluation matters. Each chapter has a conclusions section, which may also be read independently.

2. EVALUATION OF DESIGN AND PROJECT METHODOLOGY

2.1. Project structure

2.1.1. Description

The document “Community Development Guayaquil, Ecuador – Project plan 2004” is the basis of the Project. This defines the development objective as:

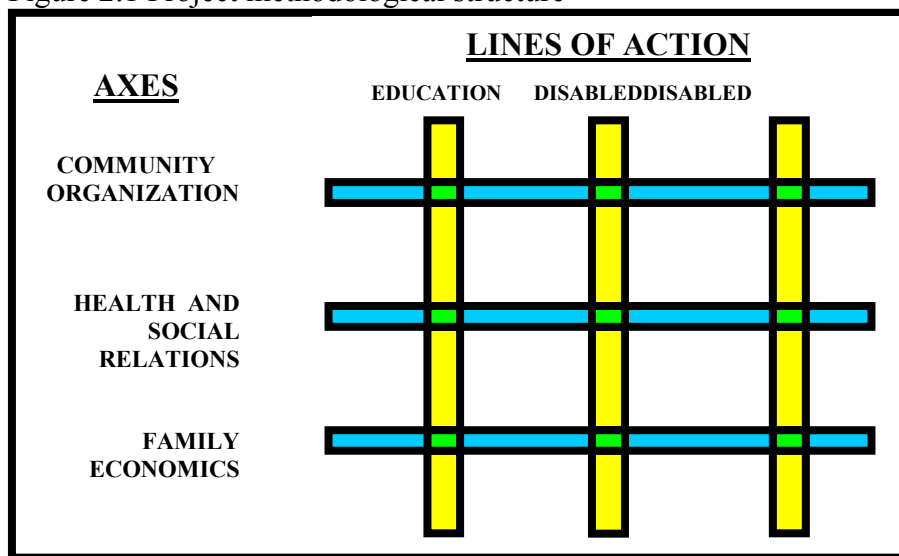
“To contribute to the empowerment of poor and marginal groups, giving them back hope and opportunity to build their future and demonstrating in this way that God's love and justice are equal for everyone.”

In order to reach this objective the project is structured in Lines of Action and Axes of Work, terms that are defined as follows:

- **Lines of Action.** - These are the areas where the project will focus its efforts to reach the project's proposed objectives. They are: Education Development Line; Churches Development Line; and Disabled Line.
- **Axes of Work.** - These are cross-cutting areas, meaning that they participate in all the Lines of Action. They are: Community Organization; Health and Social Relations; and Family Economy

Figure 2.1 presents the Project structure by lines and axes and shows how these are integrated. The relationship between the lines of action and the axes of work is that each one of the lines executes the foreseen activities of each axis of work.

Figure 2.1 Project methodological structure



The Project document does not present a complete Logical Framework with all the elements (development objective, purpose, outputs, indicators, assumptions). However, it has a hierarchy and structure with the following elements:

- Development objective
- Strategic sectorial objective for each line and axis – with a presentation of scopes
- Priority objectives of each line and axis (3 to 10 for each line and axis) – with output indicators of each priority objective (1 to 5 indicators for each priority objective)

2.2. Project methodology

The Project methodology may be studied from three angles:

- Type of counterparts that the project works with
- Cooperation process

- Type of activities that are supported by the Project

2.2.1. Project counterparts and their organization

In the target areas the Project works with “Counterpart Groups.” A “Counterpart Group” is constituted by a formal institution, which can be an Education Center or a Church, and committees or commissions organized by the beneficiary population and formed in its majority by parents. Currently, the Project is working with 15 Education Centers and 13 churches (See annex 6 with list of counterpart groups). The goal is that by the end of the project, it will work with 30 Education centers and 30 churches. Table 2.1 shows the time that the Project has worked and the different groups. It may be observed that 4 new education centers and 6 new churches have been incorporated since the beginning of the new project in 2004. Regarding the old centers, the project has worked with some of them since its beginning in 1995.

Table 2.1 Number of counterparts according to their creation date

	“Old” Before 2004	New After 2004	Total	Goal for 2009
Education centers	11	4	15	30
Churches	7	6	13	30
Total	18	10	28	60

Table 2.2 shows the total budget distribution among the different types of counterparts

Table 2.2 Budget by types of counterparts, 2004 - 2005

	\$ US	%
Education (*)	1'130,718	82,2
Church	245,402	17,8
Total	1'376,120	100,0

(*) Includes the two CREER centers, \$ US 378.130

A very important methodological aspect is the way in which the counterpart group is made up of two “instances”: one is formal and institutional, represented by the education center director or the church minister, and the other one is the organization of parents through committees or commissions for the different types of micro-projects. The most frequent committees or commissions are:

- Central committee of parents
- Family economics commission
- Health and family relationships commission
- Teaching or commission for Education
- Infrastructure and equipment commission

The committees and commissions are made up of parents and a representative from the institution that can be the director or a teacher in the education centers and the

minister or a leader in the church. For presenting micro-projects the documents generally have three signatures: the signature of a member of the committee or commission, the signature of the director or minister and the signature of the MAN-E promoter.

The institutions' size varies greatly. The schools have an average of 377 students; the average is 94 in the CREER centers and 25 members in the churches.

2.2.2. Types of cooperation (activities or micro-projects)

All the Counterpart Groups benefit from two types of support from the Project:

- Educational training to the groups themselves, their committees and commissions through all the activities since the first contact.
- Detailed support through the specific activities called "micro-projects", which can be:
 - Infrastructure construction (class rooms, sport grounds, etc.)
 - Furnishings and equipment
 - Educational training (for individuals or groups)

Table 2.3 shows the distribution of total investments and expenditures in 2004-2005 for these types of activities and micro-projects.

Table 2.3 Total Investments and Expenditures by type of activities

Infrastructure and furnishings	\$ US 851,366	62%
Educational training, materials and salaries	\$ US 524,754	38%
Total	\$ US 1,376,120	100%

Table 2.4 shows the distribution of total expenditures (\$US 1'376,120) for 2004 – 2005 among these three types of activities: 54,7% for the Education line, 17,8% for the Churches line and 27,5% for the CREER centers.

Table 2.4 Investments and Expenditures by types of activities in each line (2004-2005)

Education line

Infrastructure construction (class rooms, sport grounds, etc.)		463,679	509,584
Furnishings and equipment		45,905	
Lands		11,963	11,963
Educational training for individuals and groups	Family Economics	15,403	231,041
	Community organization – family relations	215,638	
Total			752,588

Churches line

Constructions	152,663	154,249
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Furnishings		1,586	
Educational training for individuals and groups	Family Economics	22,775	91,153
	Community organization – family relations	68,378	
Total			245,402

CREER Centers

Constructions		167,629	175,570
Furnishings		7,941	
Salaries		95,309	95,309
Educational training	Community organization – family relations	107,251	107,251
Total			378,130

TOTAL \$US 1'376,120

Table 2.5 shows how the expenditures in the three axes have been made through the education centers (not including the CREER centers) and the churches.

Table 2.5 Axes Expenditures

Axes:	Education Centers	Churches
Family Economics	15,403	22,775
Health and Family relations	10,596	3,267
Community organization	205,042	65,111
Total \$US	231,041	91,153

Investments and expenditures are studied with more detail in chapter 4.

2.2.3. The cooperation process

It might be said that the cooperation between the Project and its counterparts has two stages. First, there is an initial stage which has three steps:

1. Initial contacts with the community
2. Diagnosis of needs
3. Preparation of the Operational Plan (OP). When an OP covers a year it is called an Annual Operational Plan (AOP)

Having finished the steps of initial cooperation with its last step of the OP preparation, the cooperation is defined through micro-projects. This stage has six steps:

1. Identification of micro-projects (activities) – in the majority of cases these activities have been already identified in the OP
2. Preparation of the micro-project report
3. Micro-project approval
4. Execution (materials and equipment purchases, constructions, educational training events, capital and labor management)
5. Execution report

6. Monitoring report

2.3. The participants' appreciation of the project methodology

In section 1.2.3 the evaluation methodology was presented, this methodology was used to obtain information from the participants about the project methodology. Four workshops were carried out with parents who have participated in the project and two lengthy meetings were held with the two networks of leaders: one with the network of education centers directors and other with the network of the churches ministers.

In the following, sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2, opinions on the initial stage and the micro-projects stage are presented. In section 2.3.3 appreciations on the types of support from the Project are presented.

2.3.1. *Initial Stage*

2.3.1.1. *Initial Contacts*

The initial contact is the period when the Project promoters and coordinators approach a community in order to let them know about the Project and to talk to them about a possible cooperation.

In summary, the **positive** observations were:

- Mision Alianza (MA) visited the community several times
- MA explained its objectives very well
- During the visits a sense of group identity was created

However, there were also **criticisms and recommendations** to be used for improvement, of which the most important were:

- The number of people that the MA contacted was very limited and did not include community leaders. It is better to have a broad meeting in order to initiate contacts.
- Sometimes it was felt that the MA put too much emphasis on the family.
- Sometimes it was not clear if the MA was going to support a church or a school. It is better for this to be clear from the beginning.

There were certain differences in appreciation between participants from the Education line and participants from the Churches line. One comment was that the MA should make it clear from the start its evangelic orientation and treat the religious orientations that exist in the region with respect.

2.3.1.2. *Diagnosis of Needs*

MA carried out a diagnosis of needs with the community, using the “tree of problems and needs” method.

In summary, the **positive** observations were:

- The diagnosis resulted in improved knowledge of needs
- The diagnosis resulted in an agreement on priorities among participants
- The diagnosis is an important step in order for the community to know about the MA
- The diagnosis is an important instrument to get people involved
- The diagnosis was open; not only the churches' needs, but also the needs of other groups were identified
- The diagnosis helped churches and schools to recognize the needs of the community

However, there were also **criticisms and recommendations** to be used for improvement, from which the most important were:

- The purpose of the diagnosis was not sufficiently clear for the participants
- The diagnosis methods were not sufficiently clear for the participants
- The promoters did not manage the diagnosis techniques correctly
- The diagnosis did not include steps in order to have consensus
- Before the diagnosis, the promoters should compile sufficient background information about the region
- The diagnosis results in false perspectives and hopes which are outside the possibilities of the MA budget.

2.3.1.3. Preparation of Operational Plan (OP)

As result of the diagnosis, the Operational Plan (OP) is prepared. This Plan can be for one year – Annual Operational Plan (AOP) or for several years. The OP includes a logical matrix and the micro-projects to be carried out by the committees or commissions of an education center or church. The OP is signed by the education center director or the church minister and the operational coordinator of the corresponding line. In this way, the OP is a commitment between the two parts.

In summary, the **positive** observations were:

- The OP identifies objectives, organization and cooperation activities
- The OP is a good instrument to achieve joint planning
- The OP is a good instrument to determine priorities
- The OP is a good instrument to establish a budget with expenditures and investments

However, there were also **criticisms and recommendations** to be used for improvement, of which the most important were:

- There are cases where the activities previously planned in the PO are not carried out because of changes of promoters and policies in the MA
- More training is necessary to prepare and carry out the POs
- The OP approval takes long time, which implies that costs rise and they exceed the budget
- The OP is prepared in just one day, which is not enough time

- More people from the education center should be involved in the OP preparation
- Promoters did not manage the OP preparation methodology correctly

2.3.2. *Micro-projects stage*

Having finished the steps of initial cooperation, concluding in this way with the first OP preparation, the cooperation is defined through micro-projects. The OP includes micro-projects to be designed and executed. For this purpose, the Project has a form, called “Micro-project Report,” presented in annex 7.

The micro-project cycle includes the following steps:

1. Identification of micro-project (activities) – in the majority of cases, these activities have already been identified in the OP
2. Micro-project report preparation
3. Micro-project approval
4. Execution (materials and equipment purchases, constructions, educational training events, capital and labor management).
5. Execution report
6. Monitoring report

For each one of these steps the actors are: the counterpart committees and/or commissions, the institutional counterparts (education centers directors or churches ministers) and the MAN-E (director, DECO department with its coordinators and promoters, other departments and in particular accounting department). The analysis, achieved along with participants, had the objective to see how each one of the actors executed their functions in relation to the afore-mentioned steps.

2.3.2.1. *Micro-project Identification*

The comments in table 2.6 show that the committee or the commission plays a very important role in this phase and the other actors provide support. Nevertheless, the need of more support to the committees and commissions is simultaneously expressed.

Table 2.6 Comments on the process for identifying micro-projects

Committee or commission	Institutional Counterpart (educational center or church)	Mision Alianza
<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzes needs • Establishes priorities • Verifies budgets • Prioritizes activities 	<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designates commissions • Supports commissions • Conducts meetings 	<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps the actors to execute priorities
<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties to reach an agreement 	<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of attention to some committees and commissions 	<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excess of trust in presented documents

<u>Recommendations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More efforts and time to reach agreements 	<u>Recommendations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More support to all the committees and commissions when taking decisions • More transparency 	<u>Recommendations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More training on techniques for groups management • More attendance and participation in meetings • Further analysis of needs
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2.3.2.2. *Micro-project Report Preparation*

Table 2.7 shows that committees and commissions have the responsibility. However, the committees and commissions depend greatly on the directors and ministers' support to move forward. At the same time, it is necessary that the MA be aware of the need to keep good communication with these committees and commissions in order to know about their work criteria.

Table 2.7. Comments on the micro-project report preparation

Committee or commission	Institutional Counterpart (educational center or church)	Misión Alianza
<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training in planning • Identifies the micro-project • Analyzes the activity, and prepares quotes and budgets • Teachers selection • Tasks Distribution • Takes responsibilities 	<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training in planning • Verification of activities and budgets • Supports documents planning and preparation of documents • Impulses processes 	<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and support to prepare the documentation • Presents several alternatives of teachers • Quality control for designs and constructions
<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge on the topic • Problems to get cooperation from members and community 	<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient support • Should be more communicative 	<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demands and distrust
<u>Recommendations:</u>	<u>Recommendations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need of more training 	<u>Recommendations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More frequency on visits for training and support • Joint revision with committees and commissions

2.3.2.3. *Micro-project approval*

Table 2.8 shows that it is the committee or the commission who prepares all the bases for the micro-project approval. The fact that the three actors jointly sign the micro-project is important in order for all of them to take responsibility for it. At the same time, the MA needs to be aware of attaining a good communication with the committees or commissions with respect to their approval criteria and requirements. For this, it is recommended to hold meetings for approval with the counterpart groups at the micro-project area.

Table 2.8 Comments on the approval and preparation of the micro-project report

Committee or Commission	Institutional Counterpart (educational center or church)	Misión Alianza
<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares all the documentation for approval • Signs the agreement for the micro-project 	<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verifies the documentation and presents to the MA • Signs the agreement of the micro-project 	<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verification and approval of the activity • Signs the micro-project agreement
<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disintegration of commissions • Lack of accomplishment with deadlines 	<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More participation 	<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of clarity on the MA approval criteria • Delays in the approval
<u>Recommendations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote participation with the groups 	<u>Recommendations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More efforts to guarantee parent commitment 	<u>Recommendations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be clearer on the approval criteria • To hold meetings for approvals with the counterpart groups at the micro-project area.

2.3.2.4. *Micro-project Execution*

Table 2.9 shows that the committee or commission is in charge of the project execution

Table 2.9 Comments on the micro-project execution process

Committee or commission	Institutional Counterpart (educational center or church)	Misión Alianza
<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has responsibility for the execution 	<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision of committees and 	<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational control of the Project progress

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The responsibilities imply training • Capacity - strengthening for communitarian and common work 	commissions' accomplishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation and escorting • Purchases documentation review
<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of transparency in the groups • Too much trust in hired teachers 	<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not meet with committees and commissions • Delays for presenting information that is necessary for the execution process • Too much responsibility 	<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays in processing checks • MA has too much influence on the teacher selection process
<u>Recommendations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To strengthen transparency • To amend the teacher selection criteria • To strengthen the control capacity of teachers • To strengthen the materials control capacity 	<u>Recommendations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To strengthen communication • More presence during the execution process • To guarantee communication to the community on the project progress • To delegate more functions to committees and commissions 	<u>Recommendations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More agility for the budgetary execution • More involvement in the teacher selection process • To strengthen the monitoring process to the MA's operational controller • Further share responsibilities

2.3.2.5. *Micro-project Execution Report*

Table 2.10 shows that the committee or commission is in charge of the micro-project execution and once the activity has been concluded they prepare and present the respective execution report.

The execution report is presented in annex 7. This is a mechanism to assure that all actors accomplish their responsibilities and to verify the micro-project progress.

Table 2.10 Comments on the micro-project's execution process

Committee or commission	Institutional Counterpart (educational center or church)	Mision Alianza
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<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility and transparency instrument • Presents reports on advances and details • Presents accounting reports • Ensures use of registers • Basic information for meetings on project progress • Favors involvement 	<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instrument for controlling responsibilities accomplishment • Filling out the report is a shared responsibility 	<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report allows a monitoring process
<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not everyone uses the same information • Members' discontent 	<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u>	<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses the execution report more as a base for communication and not only for control
<u>Recommendations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further training in filling out and using the report • To use the report for solving execution issues 	<u>Recommendations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To guarantee permanent communication 	<u>Recommendations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More training in filling out and using the report • Meetings for filling out and verifying the report

2.3.2.6. Monitoring Report

The monitoring report is the final document of the micro-project (see annex 7), it is signed by the three actors and manifests shared responsibilities. Table 2.11 shows the opinion of participants that the Project personnel should strengthen their monitoring capacity.

Table 2.11 Comments on the micro-project execution process

Committee or commission	Institutional Counterpart (educational center or church)	Mision Alianza
<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verification of attained goals • Identifies issues encountered • Ensures documents organization 	<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verification of attained goals 	<u>Positive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verification of attained goals

<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u>	<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u>	<u>Weaknesses or problems:</u>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MA personnel has limited capacity on this type of monitoring
<u>Recommendations:</u>	<u>Recommendations:</u>	<u>Recommendations:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further dissemination of the report More participation of beneficiaries in the report preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To work further with the committee or the commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To further use the monitoring report as an experiences-data base for other micro-projects To strengthen the MA monitoring capacity

2.3.3. *Appreciation of Types of Support*

The topic of types of support was discussed with the Directors' and Ministers' networks. Their appreciations and commentaries are presented as follows.

The appreciation of **infrastructure (classrooms and sport grounds)** was the same for the two networks representatives:

- The constructions were adequate and according to needs
- In some cases the construction workers (qualified labor) approved by the MA were of varied quality
- In some cases, during construction there was lack of monitoring, technical advice and technical quality control.
- Better technical support for infrastructure planning and execution processes is recommended
- The costs of the construction works are reasonable
- There was a good participation from the community in the infrastructure construction
- Once the construction was approved, it was accomplished in acceptable periods without major delays
- Generally, the institution and commission did a good job in their joint functions
- Regarding the MA, its support was good; yet, training on funds management and accounting requirements was not enough
- The micro-projects do not include written commitments on infrastructure maintenance (sustainability)

Regarding **furnishings and equipments**, these were acquired according to requirements and needs and there was no additional individual comments.

The education centers directors and the ministers had distinct appreciations with regards to **educational training**. The directors confirmed that it was their network itself that identified the needs. The results show improvements in the classroom

work, the teachers' self-esteem was raised and demands on teachers' performance were promoted. It was recommended to continue and strengthen teachers training.

In contrast to the directors' perspective, the ministers expressed that educational training for ministers and church leaders was prepared only by the MA and that it was of low content and superficial. However, the church's view towards the community has been broadened and the educational training process should be strengthened and sustained.

Regarding the Project support to family economy, neither the directors nor the ministers could document that these activities had had significant success. The directors manifested that this type of activities should not continue through education centers, because they are exhausting and they distract from the teaching work. In contrast, the ministers manifested their wish to continue and broaden the activities in the family economy "axis" because the population is very interested in this matter. Yet, they also expressed that the planning of activities should be improved based on interviews and needs and the activities should be executed in cooperation with national institutions specialized in these subjects.

Concerning **preventive health and family relations**, directors as well as ministers manifested their interest in this field and their wish to continue and broaden their activities in this regard.

Finally, the directors and ministers agreed on the perspective that the Project had worked very little on **Community Organization** and that there were no achievements in this field.

2.4. Means of verification for activities and impact

The Project document has a well-established structure of objectives at different levels:

Level 1	Development objective
Level 2	Strategic sectorial objective for each Line of Action and Axis of Work
Level 3	Priority objectives for each Line of Action and Axis of Work

For each priority objective the document presents several results indicators. As it is shown, these are a combination of goals and indicators but no results. Even if this scheme has certain deficiencies, it is a basis with which to measure to what point the project is doing its planned activities as they are presented in section 3.1. However, the project does not have the means to measure the impact of its activities. Neither does the document have a logical Framework that includes verification means.

The Project has several instruments to enable its management. These instruments allow the Project activities monitoring and verification and they are:

- AOP for all activities with explanation
- AOPs per each line of action with results and indicators (which actually show year goals)
- Counterpart AOPs

The counterparts AOPs are complete Logical Frameworks that also include indicators and means of verification.

Of the two networks (directors' network and ministers' network - see section 2.5.6) the ministers' network also has a plan that includes a logical framework matrix and an AOP.

2.5. Project Organization

2.5.1. The Project within the MAN-E Organization

The Norwegian Organization Mision Alianza in Ecuador (MAN-E) has three components: D-MIRO (Micro-credit), Casa Alianza Anonymous Society (guest house) and Community Development. This last MAN-E component is responsible for the Project planning and execution and its organizational structure is presented in figure 2.2. The responsibility for the execution of the whole Project is shared among its departments and units of the organization..

The Programs and Projects Department is in charge of the Project management (see details in section 2.5.2). For this purpose, the Department depends on other units' support and contributions. From such units, the following have a particular importance.

Director

The Director is the maximum authority and legal representative of the Organization. This person is responsible for implementing the Institution's policies and procedures and directing the administrative and technical management (Community Development) of the MAN-E and the Project.

Accounting and Finances

This area is included within the Administration Department; it is in charge of managing and controlling the financial resources of the MA and especially of the Project. It keeps a budgetary management control of expenditures as well as the control and justification for these. This unit emits periodical reports for the processes of revision and policymaking executed by the Director and his/her executive team, as well as for the information requirements requested by the MAN Organization in Oslo and the donors.

Systems

The tasks of this unit are oriented to the acquisition of equipment and supplies and their maintenance as well as to the advice to users of Microsoft Office, Outlook and others programs. Its duties do not include developing support software for the Project implementation.

FIGURE 2.2 ORGANIZATION

External Advisory services

The most important advisory service in this Project is from an architect, who is hired as supervisor for construction of physical infrastructure. Actually, this architect has two roles and tasks:

- Supervision (payments are processed based on this control)
- Technical advice to the counterparts in response to requirements

Actually, the architect intervenes in the micro-projects cycle in the following way:

- An initial request from the promoter of the project initiative
- Visit to the project location with the group of counterparts in order to verify the technical viability of the micro-project initiative
- The group of counterparts prepares a project proposal with a budget (sometimes with the architect's assistance)
- Budget verification and approval, which includes costing of labor and materials costs
- Selection of construction workers
- Control visits (once a week) for reports on construction work advances. Payments are processed based on this control
- Construction work liquidation with 5% retention
- Final payment authorization (a month after the construction work has been presented)

In this process the committee or commission has the responsibility to ensure the correct utilization of materials and oversee the work execution.

Currently, the architect does not have a working place at the MA's office.

LEADERS Committee

The Leaders Committee is created to ensure communication, discussion and in some cases policymaking of organizational character. However, since the beginning of the Project to this moment this unit has not had the opportunity to become a real instrument for policymaking and discussion to direct the Project technical and methodological development.

2.5.2. Personnel organizational structure at the Programs and Projects Department level

A General Coordinator leads the Programs and Projects' Department. (This position has been vacant since April this year). There are two Operational Coordinators: one for Education and Disabled and the other one for Churches. An Operational Coordinator is in charge of each one. Each Operational Coordination component has three promoters. Because of the lack of the General Coordinator during these last months, the two Coordinators have been assuming some of the functions of such position. Nevertheless, this position should be filled as the Project structure needs to have this head.

For the General Coordination and the two Operational Coordinators the "Manual of MA's personnel functions 2006" presents the objectives, functions, responsibilities and tasks of each position. For the promoters there is a "Promoter's Manual" which is actually a procedures manual.

Most of this Department's team has an education background that is somewhat related to the lines of intervention, although with little or no previous experience on development. In its majority, their only experience has been developed at the project and through processes which led the project at particular moments. The two coordinators and the promoters are bachelors in education or sociology, with the exception of a promoter who is industrial engineer. Moreover, some of them have a theological education background.

In the interviews with the Coordinators, they explained to us that the hiring system varies. The previous trial period, which used to last a year, has been reduced to 6 months, with a first period of three months under the work per hour modality and then a contract for three trial months.

Lately, the organization has passed through difficult circumstances that affect the current situation. During the last five months, several employees have been dismissed from the organization for different reasons and various positions are still not filled. Therefore, frustrations and uncertainties exist among the personnel, which could have negative repercussions for the Project management and accomplishment. Nevertheless, apparently this situation is now improving.

2.5.3. Organization at the level of Counterpart Groups

As it was explained earlier, the Group of Counterparts is composed of two components, the formal institution – Education Center or Church – and the committee or commission that is responsible for the micro-project planning and execution. A “Cooperation Agreement” between the MAN-E and the institution is established and signed by the Director or Minister, a representative from the central committee or commission and the MAN-E Director. This agreement is the basis and reference for any micro-project. Sometimes, the parents’ central committee already exists, in other cases this committee, as well as the commissions, are specifically created for the micro-project. The organization of committees and commissions is relatively open. Normally it has 4 to 6 members. A representative of them signs all the documents with the institution director or the minister with the promoter. The committee or the commission is responsible for the micro-project progress, while the role of the director or minister is to support and ensure the accomplishment of formal requirements.

2.5.4. Project Management

2.5.4.1. Activities planning

The Operational Plan of each counterpart is the document that becomes the basis of the Project planning. The OP has two parts:

- The first part is a complete logical framework matrix for cooperation (objectives, results, indicators, verification means and assumptions)
- The second is an activities list by commissions. Every list presents the means of varification, people in charge, budget and calendar for each activity

There are AOPs at two levels, at the level of each line of action and at the Project level.

2.5.4.2. Meetings

Because a General Coordinator is currently lacking, the Coordinators of Lines with the promoters' team hold weekly (Thursdays) meetings for monitoring, mainly informational meetings about the micro-projects progress and problem-solving for the micro-projects' execution.

The meetings with the counterparts are sometime formal and sometime informal, sometimes with the counterparts' leaders (Networks members) and others with their commissions and representatives. The main topics are the coordination for planning and execution of micro-projects and other activities as well as training events.

2.5.4.3. Project administrative-financial operation

Once the OP is approved and ready, the Counterpart Groups together with the promoter and coordinators start the process for the Micro-project report.

After the "Micro-project's Report" has been completed and signed by the two Counterparts' representative signatures, the promoter proceeds to sign and approves it. Then, the Coordinators review and approve the report, and subsequent to this approval the checks are emitted according to the type of counterpart. There are two modalities for processing checks: a) for counterparts that have a bank account, and b) for the ones that do not have it.

For the Counterparts that have bank account, such account is habilitated with joint signatures from the Counterparts' representatives and a MA representative. In this case, the procedure is to emit a check in advance, like an advanced payment designed to finance the activity or micro-project.

In the case of the Counterparts that do not have bank account, after the presentation and approval of three cost estimates, the checks are usually emitted directly to providers of goods and services.

The criterion to approve bank account openings for counterparts includes a prudent time in which the counterpart has demonstrated its disposition and competence.

The Project uses an accounting reports system that allows observing the Project financing execution. This system is used to control that the budgetary executions correspond to the approved budget and that the expenditures coincide with the accounting information.

In general, during this evaluation the MAN-E Accounting unit has been able to provide the requested information. However, some problems have come into sight, for example:

- When presenting the accounting reports, the expenditures of two axes (Health and Community Organization) have been mixed, which makes the process to differentiate each axis' expenditures difficult.
- The frequency for the Project financing reports has not been established.
- There are no meetings for information exchange and coordination between the financial results from the Accounting unit and the Programs and Projects Department requirements.

- The type of financial reports probably responds to the information requirements from Oslo, but there are no reports that would contribute to adequate processes of monitoring and policymaking for the Project, especially information on details of lines and axes.
- The processes for budgetary changes and adjustments are informally executed. Many of the changes of resources from one account to another are verbally done. The control for documenting changes and adjustments authorizations is not accomplished.
- There is no manual on the accounting section procedures for a control system that responds to the Organization internal requirements more than to the information and control requirements from the MAN-Oslo.

2.5.4.4. Relations between the Project and other Organization Areas

Weaknesses in the support provided by other units to the Project have also been recognized:

Concerning the Director's involvement in the Project no weaknesses have been identified, the appreciation is that it is strengthened.

Regarding the Systems unit, its support specifically involves acquisitions and maintenance of "hardware" and "software" used by the project teams. However, this area does not intervene in developing specialized automated programs that are necessary.

The leaders' team usually meets every 15 days. In these last months their efforts have been oriented to solving issues of organizational character. For this reason, they have not had the opportunity to focus on the administrative and technical management of the Project.

The members of the technical committee have been nominated as a first step. However, this committee has not been functioning yet.

The external technical advice for infrastructure has contributed to improve the execution of this component. However, there is evidence of informality in the way that the Organization optimizes this resource. Its participation is not coordinated based on a timetable and a periodic plan of technical assistance, but it is informally coordinated by promoters and coordinators. This is seen as a weakness, especially when the amounts for this component are highly significant within the project execution (62%).

2.5.5. The two Networks: Directors' Network and Ministers' Network

Two networks have been created – The Directors' Network and the Ministers' Network. The Directors' Network was created in 2001 with the purpose of unifying ideas and taking joint decisions. Currently, this network particularly works on the content for teachers training. The Ministers' Network was created more recently with the purpose of strengthening churches so they can act as the Project counterparts.

This last network has a logical framework, an Operational Plan for the year 2006 with a budget, working plans with activities, calendar and responsibilities.

2.5.6. *External relations and cooperation*

The MAN-E has cooperation agreements with some institutions that work in the region. There is an agreement with the Municipality for scholarships to students from CREER centers. There is also an agreement with the Sub center of Health, Flor III de Paraiso, on strategic alliance for joint work in the region. An agreement with the Ministry of Education will be signed for working on education improvements in the north-east area.

2.6. Conclusions

The Project design shows a highly integrated focus and a very developed philosophy on how to integrally reach the beneficiaries. This is based on three lines of action through which three axes of work are executed. The Project design counts with different types of objectives positioned at an established and coherent hierarchy, as well as indicators to measure activities achievements and results. Such framework is defined in the Operational Plans (AOPs), with indicators that allow measuring the extent to which the Project is achieving its planned activities. However, it does not count with means to measure the activities impact. It is important and urgent that the Project establishes base lines with indicators and verification methods to measure the impacts.

The Project methodology is composed by three components:

- Type of counterparts that the Project works with
- Cooperation process
- Type of activities supported by the Project

The two types of institutional counterparts, one made up of education centers and the other made up of churches, reflects the local situation; which is characterized by the lack of base organizations that have the ability to promote participation of the population. The Project's strategy is to reach the target population through the education centers and churches. These institutions as well as the committees and commissions are created through the Project and they are called "Counterpart Groups." In this way the Project has been successful in involving and training the beneficiary population. This contributes to the empowerment of poor and marginal groups, as it is expressed in the Project development objective. However, the Project confronts limitations. First, it is necessary to recognize that the number or population that is possible to involve through this strategy is limited, especially with regards to churches which do not have more than an average of 25 members. Second, with regards to the group of people involved through education centers, it is not very stable and often does not participate more than a limited period. Third, one of the challenges is to avoid that education centers directors and ministers become too dominant because this would limit the space for real participation from the beneficiary population.

From the effective expenditures \$US 1'376,120 for the years 2004-2005, 54,7% (752,588) was for schools and high schools micro-projects, 27,5% (378,130) for the

two CREER centers and 17,8% (245,402) for churches. From the general expenditures, 62% was for infrastructure and furnishings and 38% for training.

The AOPs and the processes of micro-projects planning and execution are highly participatory. The steps are clear and parents and ministers generally express a high level of satisfaction with the MA methodology and advice for the accomplishment of different phases and tasks. Despite this general favorable appreciation, there are also criticisms that should be taken as recommendations for improvement, which are particularly important when the Project will work with new counterparts:

- In the initial phase the Project should have broader contacts group and not only with a small group. It is important to involve a greater part of the population as well as formal and informal community leaders.
- The promoters should strengthen their management of the methods applied in the '*diagnosis of needs*' phase. Prioritization and consensus techniques should have a greater emphasis.
- In the AOP preparation it is important to explain very well its purpose (beyond the institutional requirements) and the commitments that it implies, in particular the relation between the AOP and every micro-project that needs to be approved.
- Counterpart groups have requested more training on the micro-projects planning and execution phases, in particular on funds management and accounting.
- It is necessary that the groups have a better knowledge about the MAN-E criteria on micro-projects approvals (uniformity of promoters' criteria). We recommend holding meetings for approvals at the same location of the micro-project in order to jointly examine the request.
- For the execution of construction works it is necessary:
 - To improve the selection criteria for qualified workers
 - To strengthen the ability for controlling construction workers
 - To strengthen the monitoring work of the MAN-E supervisor
- The MA should review its checks emission processes for purchases and labor payments in order to examine possibilities to facilitate processes without losing financial control.
- The execution and monitoring reports may be used as means for training and communication and not only for controlling.

In regards to the Project organization the more important conclusions are:

- The Project is well linked with all the MAN-E entities that have responsibilities for supporting the Project implementation.
- The advice from the construction supervisor is not well integrated to the Project implementation.
- It is important that the Coordinator position of the Programs and Project Department, which is currently vacant, is filled as soon as possible.
- To strengthen the team criteria on methodological management for planning, monitoring and evaluation processes with the counterparts.

- To strengthen the functionality and objectives of the technical committees and leaders who are part of the organizational structure.
- The system of accounting management should be strengthened with systems for controlling and doing reports in function of monitoring requirements and policymaking at the Project level.
- We reiterate the need of a policies and procedures manual that includes the Programs and Projects Department (the functions manual will be part of this manual).

3. EVALUATION OF RESULTS, IMPACTS AND RELEVANCE

3.1. Project Results

The Project period is of six years, from January 1st 2004 to December 31st 2009. This evaluation covers the period from January 1st 2004 to the end of March 2006, meaning only the third part of the Project period.

The Project document presents results indicators for each one of the priority objectives. As part of the evaluation, the personnel from the Programs and Projects Department identified results for the evaluation period in relation to the foreseen results in the Project document (goals 2009). For details see annex 4.

3.1.1. Results in the Education Line

Table 3.1 presents the most important results for each one of the priority objectives in this line.

Table 3.1 Education Line

Priority Objectives	Results by March 2006 (presented by DECO)
1. School coverage has improved	- 13 institutions have improved their coverage (goal 30) - 3771 students have benefited (target 12,000)
2. The counterpart schools' equipment has been improved	- 10 institutions count with furnishings, computers and audiovisual equipment (target 30)
3. The physical environments of the schools where Mission Alliance intervenes have been improved.	- Each institution has a plan for improving the school physical environment (target 30) - 5 schools have sport grounds (goal 30)
4. Teaching system has improved in the counterpart schools	- 156 teachers have been trained (target 500) - 15 teachers professionalized and 9 with degree
5. The school dropout rates in the project area have improved in relation to the country indicators	- Decrease of school dropout rate by 16%
6. The school year repetition rates in the	There is no information

counterpart schools have improved in relation to the general average	
7. The school performance of students who attend to the education centers has improved	There is no information
8. The indicators on parental literacy and basic education completion have improved	- 1 literacy teaching center and 3 extensions of this center (target 10) - 119 parents improved their academia level - 32 parents finished primary education
9. The community participation at counterpart schools has improved	- Each education institution has a central committee of parents which is functioning - Each institution has functional commissions that are operating
10. The regular access of Disabled people to education has been improved	- 5 institutions know about the inclusion process (target 30) - 2 schools carry out school inclusion (target 5) - 3 children and 2 young adults have been included (target 50)

In this line there are 10 priority objectives. Through the identified results, table 3.1 shows that the Project is reaching an average of thirty per cent of its priority objectives for the cases that have quantified targets, which are 8 of these objectives.

3.1.2. Results in the Disabled Line

Table 3.2 presents the most important results for each one of the priority objectives in this line.

Table 3.2 Disabled Line

Priority Objectives	Results by March 2006 (presented by DECO)
1. The attention to Disabled people has improved	- 8 classrooms, 4 therapy rooms and 1 pre-workshop (corresponding targets: 12, 6 and 4)
2. Coverage for physical and teaching rehabilitation has improved	- 186 children attended at installed centers (target 300) - 170 families in the program (target 250)
3. Civil population actively participates in this problem	An action plan target for civil society participation has not been determined
4. Active participation for disabled issues by the state and/or municipalities in the marginal areas	An agreement with the municipality, another agreement with the Social Welfare Ministry (with the Education Ministry is pending)
5. Develop forums and events to discuss and bring awareness on the <i>Disabled</i> theme	None yet (target one per year)
6. Strategic alliances are optimally used	None (except with D-MIRO) (target 3 alliances)

7. Scholar inclusion for the existent Disabled population in the marginal areas	- 3 predisposed institutions and 2 work in inclusion (target: 5) - 3 children and 2 young people have been included (target 50)
8. The disabled indexes decrease in the – urban-marginal areas	- No result

Table 3.2 shows how the Project is practically reaching all its priority objectives in the centers.

3.1.3. Results in the Churches Line

Table 3.3 presents all the most important results for each one of the priority objectives in this line.

Table 3.3 Churches Line

Priority Objectives	Results by March 2006 (presented by DECO)
1. Knowledge on the diaconal view and the churches' practice of social responsibility have improved	- 13 churches are participating (target: 30) - 10 apply knowledge in their churches (target: 15) - 114 leaders and ministers have been trained (target: 150) - 11 ministers and leaders serve to their community (target: 15) - 201 people from churches have been trained (target: 1200 people)
2. Churches' administrative systems have improved	- 11 trained churches (target: 30) - 33 people trained in administration and sustainability in topics (target: 30) - 6 churches have Board of directors - 10 churches work in function of AOPs (target: 15)
3. There is more participation of national churches in the intervention areas	- 9 churches with social responsibility, working together with their head churches (target: 15)
4. The counterpart churches have diaconal plans (plans for community development)	- 84 % of the churches have a local development annual plan (target: all) - 84 % of the churches have an annual budget to execute diaconal plans
5. The church knowledge in relation to development projects has improved	- 5 trained leaders elaborating projects (target: 30)

Table 3.3 shows quantitative results for each one of the priority objectives. The majority of results exceed the third part of the targets. The achievements that are less favorable are related to training people who are not leaders in the churches.

3.1.4. Results in the Family Economy Axis

Table 3.4 presents the most important results for each one of the priority objectives in this axis.

Table 3.4 Family Economy Axis

Priority Objectives	Results by March 2006 (presented by DECO)
1. To have access to Technical-handicrafts training	- 72 workshops in Technical Artisanal areas have been implemented (target: 150) - 1157 received training on technical courses (target: 3,000)
2. Access to the Micro-business training has improved	- 1 workshop of micro-enterprise (target: 30) - 32 micro- entrepreneurs received training (target: 600) - 7% of those who were trained count with their own business (target: 25%) - 8% of those who were trained have had access to credit (target: 25%)
3. Counterparts families' incomes have improved	- 30% of those who were trained have improved their family incomes (target 30%)
4. Levels of inclusion in the labor market have improved	- 7% of those who were trained have attained labor stability (target 10%)
5. The number of qualified and professional workers has improved	- 5% of workers are considered more qualified (target 30%)

Table 3.4 shows that a certain number technical artisanal training activities have been implemented. However, the micro – business training has been low and few people have improved their labor situation and incomes.

3.1.5. Results in the Health and Social Relations Axis

Table 3.5 presents the most important results for each one of the priority objectives in this axis.

Table 3.5 Health and Social Relations Axis

Priority Objectives	Results by March 2006 (presented by DECO)
1. Practices related to preventive HEALTH have improved	- Each counterpart group has a plan for preventive health in their AOP (target: the same) - 2 annual workshops in each counterpart group (target: the same) - 3973 people were trained on preventive health
2. Families are improving their aptitudes and abilities to solve their problems	- 2 annual workshops in each counterpart group (target: the same) - 2.274 people trained in workshops or courses (target: 8.200)
3. Family values have been strengthened	- Workshops on this topic have been

	implemented for people to strengthen their family values (target: 4,100)
4. Attention in Health services has improved in the intervention areas	- 3 agreements with public entities - 1 agreement with a private entity
5. Families have a better understanding about sexual and reproductive education and AIDS	- 5 workshops on Aids prevention (target: an annual campaign) - 3.219 people received training (target: 6,000)

Table 3.5 shows that after two years the Project has carried out an elevated quantity of training activities with a high level of participation in relation to its targets.

3.1.6. Results in the Community Organization Axis

Table 3.6 presents the most important results for each one of the priority objectives in this axis.

Table 3.6 Community Organization Axis

Priority Objectives	Results by March 2006 (presented by DECO)
1. More organization and community participation	- 796 people have received training in this axis (target: 1,500) - 25% of the trained people apply organizational processes (target: 50%) - 28 counterpart groups were created (target: 65) - 75 commissions were created (target 260) - 12 parents central committees were created (target: 35) - 8 Boards of Directors were created (target: 20)
2. The community and counterpart groups formulate and execute development projects	- 124 leaders were trained (target: 300)
3. Creation of networks and local development committees	- 2 networks (education and church) were created (target: 4)

Table 3.6 shows that the results for this axis are relatively limited.

3.1.7. Observations from the Evaluation Team

In general terms, it may be said that the specific results in relation to the priority objectives in the lines of action and axes of work well correspond to what can be expected after the third part of the project period.

3.2. Project Impacts

Points 3 and 4 in section 1.2.3 as well as Annex 4 describe the Impacts Survey for the participants. The following table 3.7 shows the distribution of 325 interviews by line and category.

Table 3.7 Lines and categories of interviews

EDUCATION		DISABLED		CHURCHES		TOTAL
Esc / Col / CA		CREER		Church		
Director	12	Director	2	Ministers	12	26

Teachers	67	Teachers	9	Leaders	29	105
PPFF	104	PPFF	25	PPFF	65	194
TOTAL	183		36		106	325

3.2.1. *Appreciation of impacts from the education centers counterpart groups*

3.2.1.1. *Infrastructure and equipment in education centers*

Table 3.8 Impacts of infrastructure and equipment on quality of students' education

	Parents	Teachers	Directors
No impact	-	-	-
Low impact	4%	-	-
Medium impact	20%	30%	42
High impact	76%	70%	58%

In general, the impact of infrastructure and equipment on education centers has been positive. The great majority considers that the impact has been high and the rest appreciate a medium impact.

Table 3.9 Impacts of infrastructure and equipment on students' environment and health

	Parents	Teachers	Directors
No impact	2%	-	-
Low impact	4%	-	8%
Medium impact	25%	24%	33%
High impact	69%	76%	59%

As the previous table, the majority considers a high impact, the rest grades it as medium and very few considers it as of low or no impact.

Table 3.10 Impacts of infrastructure and equipment on students' attendance

	Parents	Teachers	Directors
No impact	-	-	-
Low impact	5%	-	-
Medium impact	16%	24%	8%
High impact	79%	76%	92%

It is clearly observed that the majority of counterpart groups consider that infrastructure and equipment have had a high impact. Some consider it as medium because infrastructure is an important motivator element of assistance activities for students.

Table 3.11 Impacts of infrastructure and equipment on the organization of education centers

	Teachers	Directors
No impact	-	-
Low impact	-	-

Medium impact	27%	33%
High impact	73%	67%

This table shows the high impact that infrastructure and equipment have had on the strengthening of teachers' work organization in classrooms and on the administrative spaces for the Direction and Rectory.

3.2.1.2. *Teachers training*

Table 3.12 Impacts of teachers training courses on their professional development

	Teachers	Directors
No impact	-	-
Low impact	-	-
Medium impact	12%	42%
High impact	88%	58%

Even if it is true that teachers as well as directors estimate that the impact has been high, it may be noticed that the Directors' grading is more conservative.

Table 3.13 Impacts of teachers training courses on the improvement of students' education

	Teachers	Directors
No impact	-	17%
Low impact	-	17%
Medium impact	24%	41%
High impact	67%	25%

While the majority of teachers consider that the impact on education quality is high, the majority of directors consider it medium/low and even a considerable percent estimate that there has been no impact. This could be explained because in the case of teachers they are grading themselves, while the directors are observing the performance from a supervising perspective.

3.2.1.3. *Training of parents*

Table 3.14 Impacts of training of parents on improving quality of children's education

	Parents	Teachers	Directors
No impact	6%	-	-
Low impact	6%	4%	20%
Medium impact	19%	49%	40%
High impact	69%	47%	20%

In this case most of the high grades come from parents who self-graded themselves, while teachers and directors in their majority graded this impact as medium and low.

3.2.2. *Appreciation of Impacts from the CREER centers Counterpart Groups*

3.2.2.1. *CREER infrastructure and equipment*

Table 3.15 Impact of infrastructure and equipment on education quality and students' rehabilitation

	Parents	Personnel
No impact	-	-
Low impact	-	-
Medium impact	60%	91%
High impact	40%	9%

In the case of the CREER Centers, the impacts are mainly considered as being of medium level. At this moment it is possible to compare with the education centers and appreciate that the high impact estimated in relation to those centers decreases for the CREER centers.

Table 3.16 Impacts of infrastructure and equipment on students' environment and health

	Parents	Personnel
No impact	-	-
Low impact	-	-
Medium impact	60%	100%
High impact	40%	-

In the CREER centers the perception of the impact on environment and health differs between parents and the Centers' personnel, while there is a percent of parents that appreciates a high impact, the totality of the Centers personnel estimates a medium impact.

Table 3.7 Impacts of infrastructure and equipment on assistance activities for students

	Parents	Personnel
No impact	-	-
Low impact	-	18%
Medium impact	60%	82%
High impact	40%	-

While parents think of this impact as the same level of the impact on health, the personnel estimate a medium and even low impact.

3.2.2.2. *CREER centers' personnel Training*

Table 3.18 Impacts of training courses on the CREER personnel concerning their personal development

	Personnel
No impact	-
Low impact	73%
Medium impact	9%

High impact	18%
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In this case the majority of the personnel consider a low impact.

Table 3.19 Impacts of training courses to teachers on education improvement and students' rehabilitation

	Personnel
No impact	-
Low impact	9%
Medium impact	82%
High impact	9%

The personnel tendency is to grade the impact as medium in this case.

3.2.2.3. *Training of parents in the CREER centers*

Table 3.20 Impacts of training of parents on improving quality of children's education

	Parents
No impact	-
Low impact	41%
Medium impact	24%
High impact	35%

The survey results reflect that the perception of impacts is equally distributed between the grades of high, medium and low.

3.2.3. *Appreciation of impacts for the churches counterpart groups*

Table 3.21 Project impact on the development of a diaconal perspective in churches

	Ministers and Leaders
No impact	-
Low impact	-
Medium impact	32%
High impact	68%

The great majority of participants grade the impact as high.

Table 3.22 Project impact on strengthening church organization

	Ministers and Leaders
No impact	-
Low impact	5%
Medium impact	32%
High impact	63%

The great majority of participants grade the impact as high.

Table 3.23 Project impact on the church capacity to develop communitarian plans and projects

	Ministers and Leaders
No impact	2%
Low impact	12%
Medium impact	32%
High impact	54%

The great majority of participants consider a high impact in this case as well.

3.2.4. *Appreciation Impacts of Work Axes*

3.2.4.1. *Family Economy*

Table 3.24 Training impact on family economy

	Education Centers			CREER		Churches	
	Directors	Teachers	Parents	Personnel	Parents	Ministers Leaders	Parents
No impact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Low impact	25%	18%	8%	73%	46%	5%	2%
Medium impact	50%	37%	38%	27%	15%	57%	47%
High impact	25%	45%	54%	-	39%	38%	51%

From the surveys in education centers, the directors are the most conservative when estimating the impact and they consider this impact medium and low. The CREER personnel is much more critical when grading the impact and they mainly grade it as low. In the Churches line the majority estimate the level of impact between high and medium. The majority of parents from the education centers and churches counterpart groups have a favorable appreciation of the impacts.

3.2.4.2. *Health and Social Relations*

Table 3.25 Training Impact on health and social relations

	Education Centers			CREER		Churches	
	Directors	Teachers	Parents	Personnel	Parents	Ministers Leaders	Parents
No impact	-	-	-	-	-	5%	-
Low impact	-	5%	6%	30%	7%	3%	3%
Medium impact	50%	40%	39%	70%	14%	46%	19%
High impact	50%	55%	55%	-	79%	46%	78%

The table clearly shows that participants have a very positive appreciation of a high impact, except the CREER personnel who appreciate the impacts as medium.

3.2.4.3. Community Organization

Table 3.26 Training Impact on community organization

	Education Centers			CREER		Churches	
	Directors	Teachers	Parents	Personnel	Parents	Ministers Leaders	Parents
No impact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Low impact	-	3%	-	10%	16%	11%	3%
Medium impact	50%	40%	47%	50%	38%	61%	19%
High impact	50%	57%	53%	40%	46%	28%	78%

In the education centers the percentage is between high and medium. In the CREER centers there are percentages of low impact., In the churches the perspective of ministers and leaders is that the impact is medium, even though a great majority of parents from the churches considers a high impact. With regards to the church, the interpretation is that the project has contributed to community organization as church members, but in the surrounding community the impact did not have the same success.

3.2.5. Summary of appreciations of impacts of the Project key activities (Infrastructure and Training)

Table 3.2.7 Percent of surveys who manifest a “High Impact” as result of interventions in infrastructure and equipment activities

LINE INTERVIEWS	EDUCATION	DISABLED	CHURCHES
Parents	76%	40%	
Directors and Ministers	64%		
CREER personnel		² 9%	
Ministers and Leaders			63%

The main observation in these survey results is that while the infrastructure impact appreciation from the Education and Churches Counterpart Groups is high in its

² 91% considers the impact to be medium

majority, the Disabled Counterpart Groups perception of a high impact decreases, especially for the CREER personnel.

Table 3.2.8 Percent of interviews who manifest a “High Impact” as result of interventions in “training activities for strengthening lines’ objectives”

LINE INTERVIEWS	EDUCATION	DISABLED	CHURCHES
Parents	74%	35%	
Directors and Ministers	50%		
CREER’s personnel		09%	
Ministers and Leaders			68%

The observation is that while the majority in the education centers and churches counterparts appreciates this impact as being high, in the disabled line the majority considers only a medium impact.

3.3. Pertinence and Relevance

The Terms of Reference (TOR) makes the following definitions:

- Relevance: The relation between attained goals and population needs.
- Pertinence: The Project objectives are still valid and of interest in relation to the regions’ situation of MAN-E target population.

In the surveys as well as in the workshops, the participants manifested that the attained goals are in accordance with the needs of the population and that the Project objectives are still valid and of interest in relation to the regions’ situation and of MAN-E target population.

Despite the confirmed pertinence and relevance, there were some recommendations in this regards:

- Training activities should be strengthened and include other groups
- Teachers training should be strengthened for improving the education level
- Parental literacy training should be strengthened
- The Project should have more relations with community leaders to guarantee that the Project’s benefits and relevance could be seen by them as well.

In regards to the lines and axes, there are some observations:

Regarding education it is important to keep in mind that Ecuador’s priority, and especially for areas such as the one in which the Project intervenes, is to take care of

the access, permanence and quality of child education. In this way, the Project's objective to improve education quality is in line with the country's priorities.

From all the results and analysis in each one of the previous chapters, we can observe that the results on education quality improvement respond more to indicators of infrastructure and equipment. It is considered that the Project is limited in its visualization of goals and indicators that prioritize education quality in an integral way, and also in its objectives and goals with a greater "focus on children." Because children are the main target population, this is where we will be able to find impacts and sustainability. Some actions have been promoted in this regard but they are still considered weak.

Education in Ecuador and especially in the type of education centers at the Project areas has major weaknesses in language and mathematics learning. The achievements and competence in these fields are extremely low, according to data submitted by international organizations and the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education. This has not been considered by the Project with the priority and consistence that should be given to the issue.

Regarding the Disabled line objective, it is understood that this is a relevant objective that responds to the needs of the region. However, there is an observation in relation to the pertinence of this objective in the frame of a Development Project. This objective responds more to a social assistance need than to a Project with a community development focus.

The Church line objective, oriented to strengthen the diaconal vision in local congregations, is relevant, especially because this line develops interesting possibilities. These circumstances could potentially legitimate the leadership of the Church in development processes which include Christian values and principles. The Church line objective is pertinent since in some way this is the line that has the ability to access parents outside the institutional frame with which the two other lines are working.

The proposed objectives in the work axes are considered relevant because they respond to the sectors' needs. However, they may not be understood as pertinent because of their focus within the project, as transversal axes without differentiating the objectives management in each one of the Lines. Therefore, we consider necessary to do a re-proposal to apply actions that are oriented to obtaining the axes objectives and that take into account the weaknesses or potentialities presented in the implementation of each one of the Lines.

3.4. Conclusions

This chapter has shown that in general the Project has attained the foreseen results and that a great majority of participants rate these impacts as high or medium. However, there are some differences between the Lines of action and the Work Axes:

- Education line – infrastructure: Results are attained and the great majority of participants grade the impact as high for the quality of education as well as for students' assistance.
- Education line – training: the training results are in accordance with the quantitative indicators. Teachers' estimations of the impact on themselves and on students' education are higher than those of the education center directors. The parents who have had literacy classes see the impact of the activity on the improvements of child education as more favorable than teachers and directors, who in their majority grade the impact as medium and low.
- Disabled line – infrastructure: Results are attained. However, the great majority of participants grade the impacts on education and rehabilitation and on scholar environment and students' assistance as medium.
- Disabled line – training: plans do not have specific results in regards to training. However, the Project has carried out activities of this type, but with very limited impacts. The great majority of personnel estimate a low impact on their personal development and only a medium impact on child education and rehabilitation.
- Churches Line: The majority of quantitative results surpass the third part of targets for the full period of the Project. These results are less favorable when training people that are not leaders. The majority of ministers and leaders grade the impact on the diaconal perspective and church's organization as high, but a bit less favorable in regards to community training.
- Work axis – family economy: The Project has done a certain amount of artisanal technical training, but the micro-business training has been little and few have improved their work situation and incomes. In general, the percentage who grades the impacts as low is a representative group. This appreciation is slightly more favorable in the churches line.
- Work axis - health and social relations: The Project has included a high quantity of training activities with a high level of participation in relation to the targets. The great majority of participants grade these impacts as medium and high, and from this majority the tendency is to grade the impact as high.
- Work axis – community organization: The results are relatively limited in relation to the targets. However, participants grade the impacts from medium to high and from those the tendency is to grade the impact as high. Appreciations are slightly more favorable in the churches line.

The participants have confirmed the Project's relevance and pertinence, with observations that the various training activities, in particular for teachers and parents, should be strengthened in order to improve the quality of child education.

The disabled line is very relevant for the region, but whether these social assistance activities are pertinent for an integrated development project is questionable.

4. EVALUATION OF PROJECT EFFICIENCY

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the financial resources used to do activities and attain expected results and products. Moreover, the chapter intends to present a cost-benefit analysis in relation to the participants.

4.1. Budget and Expenditures

Table 4.1 presents the relation of budgets and accumulated expenditures for 2004 and 2005 and their variation.

Table 4.1 Budgets and Expenditures Variation (Period 2004/2005)

<i>Account's number</i>	PPTO	EXPENDITURE	DIFFERENCE	% Difference	% Variation
a) PROJECT'S INCOMES					
Transfer from Norway	2,294,170	2,294,170	0	100%	0%
Local counterpart community groups	200,000	196,125	3,875	98%	- 2%
Local incomes	98,000	172,798	-74,798	176%	+ 76%
Other incomes	0	3,163	-3,163		
TOTAL INCOMES a)	2,592,170	2,666,256	-74,086	103%	+ 3%
b) INVESTMENTS					
Inventory / Equipment	52,345	58,483	-6,138	112%	+ 12%
Vehicles	57,887	61,400	-3,513	106%	+ 6%
Furnishings	130,650	131,453	-803	101%	+ 1%
Lands for future activities	0	11,963	-11,963		
Lands previous years	0	-18,000	18,000		
Infrastructure SCHOOLS classrooms and sport grounds	635,000	509,584	125,416	80%	- 20%
Infrastructure CREER	140,000	175,570	-35,570	125%	+ 25%
Infrastructure CHURCHES classrooms and community sport grounds	150,000	154,249	-4,249	103%	+ 3%
Other institutions' collaboration	33,955	39,614	-5,659	117%	+ 17%
TOTAL INVESTMENTS b)	1,199,837	1,124,317	75,520	94%	- 6%
c) EXPENDITURES	0	0			
Ministers' expenditures and salaries	257,130	290,728	-33,598	113%	+ 13%
National employees' salaries	297,653	321,509	-23,856	108%	+ 8%
Consultancy-Fees	37,000	52,773	-15,773	143%	+ 43%
National employees' training	31,000	32,935	-1,935	106%	+ 6%
Expenditures EDUCATION Line	288,550	231,041	57,509	80%	- 20%
Expenditures DISABLED Line	40,000	107,251	-67,251	268%	+ 168%
Expenditures DISABLED Line Salaries	98,000	95,309	2,691	97%	- 3%
Expenditures ECCLESSIAL Line	80,000	91,153	-11,153	114%	+ 14%
Evaluation					
Transportation-Trips	26,000	23,086	2,914	89%	- 11%
Renting-Telephone-Main-Electricity-Water-Radios	63,000	70,459	-7,459	112%	+ 12%
Board Expenditures trips-lodging-meetings	32,000	30,344	1,656	95%	- 5%
Vehicles' maintenance	52,500	55,883	-3,383	106%	+ 6%
Other various expenditures	89,500	126,686	-37,186	142%	- 42%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES c)	1,392,333	1,529,157	-136,824	110%	+ 10%
TOTAL INVESTMENTS AND EXPENDITURES	2,592,170	2,653,474	-61,304	102%	+ 2%

In relation to the total budgeted and the effective investment, first the table 4.1 shows that the project was efficient in its expenditure, because it has invested all the available resources.

However, gaps were observed in the relationship between what was budgeted and what was spent. In the Education Line, there is an under expenditure of 20% compared to the amount budgeted.

In addition, variations in over-expenditures and in the Disabled Line investment are observed. There is an excess of investment in infrastructure by \$ US 35, 570, also in the training item there is an expenditure surplus of \$US 67.251.

This situation was clarified by the DECO team as follows: “In 2004, \$105.333 were added as local contribution (D-Miro, Municipality, Management funds) and in 2005 the amount of \$ 67,465, giving a total of \$ 172,798, which is summed up to the NORAD’s contribution to cover those expenditures that are not covered by them.”

In order of priority, the next observation regarding the variation corresponds to fees. The explanations are the legal assistance additional requirements and others that have been necessary during this period.

In the lands account there are 2 items that correspond to the debt resulting from irregularities in previous land purchases. It is our understanding that MAN Oslo requested that this would be included in the financial records.

Another observation is that in the last account “Other various expenditures,” an over-expenditure of 42% appears. We know that there were expenditures that correspond to salaries of MAN-E administration employees. This reflects a factual amount of destined resources in the account of the salaries of national personnel. This situation has been corrected in the 2006 budget.

4.2. Beneficiary-Cost

This section shows an analysis of the expenditures that have been destined to the direct benefit of the target population through micro-projects. For this analysis, the data that correspond to the amount of accumulated financial results for the years 2004-2005 have been used.

The Project accounting establishes 2 main items, one of INVESTMENTS and the other of EXPENDITURES. The first refers to resources destined to infrastructure and equipment activities and the second refers to training activities.

In the first part of table 4.2 we find the detail of financial resources utilization in micro-projects for each one of the lines.

At the end of table 4.2 there is a summary of the resources that directly reach beneficiaries through micro-projects, 62% has been destined to infrastructure and equipment and 38% to training and education material.

Table 4.2 Investments and Direct Expenses for participants (Micro-projects)

INVESTMENTS	Lands	INFRASTRUCTURE / Equipment		TOTAL
		509,584	Education	
		175,570	Disabled	
		154,249	Churches	
	11,963	839,404		851,366
EXPENDITURES	Salaries	TRAINING/ Education materials		
		231,041	Education	
	95,309	107,251	Disabled	
		91,153	Churches	
		429,445		524,754
TOTAL				1'376,120

Summary Investments and Expenditures for the Project participants

Infrastructure	851,366	62%
Training, education materials and Community salaries	524,754	38%
Total	1,376,120	100%

Table 4.3 presents the items and expenditures that do not go directly to participants through the micro-projects, but to the Project administration and operation. In the percentages column of distribution of resources that are destined to the Project operation and administration, it is possible to see that practically half of them (49%) are missionaries and expenditures and salaries of national employees.

Table 4.3 Administration and operation investments and expenditures

Total Administration and Operation investment and expenditures (including expenditures and missionaries' salaries)	1,255,740	100%
Missionaries' salaries and expenditures	290,728	49%
National employees' salaries	321,509	
Inventory/equipment, vehicles and furnishings	251,337	20%
Consultancy-Fees	52,773	4%
National employees' training	32,935	3%
Evaluation	0	0%
Transport-Trips	23,086	2%
Renting-Telephone-Main-Electricity-Water-Radios	70,459	6%
Board expenditures trips-lodging-meetings	30,344	2%
Vehicles' maintenance	55,883	4%
Other various expenditures	126,686	10%
Collaboration from other institutions	39,614	1%

TOTAL Investment + Expenditures 2004 – 2005	2,653,474
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Table 4.4 shows the total accounted budget for the Project (the sum of destined resources for micro-projects + administration and operation expenditures). It is possible to see that 52% goes directly to the beneficiaries and 47% corresponds to the Project's investments and expenditures, the additional 1% corresponds to other institutions' financial collaboration.

Table 4.4 Total Investments and Expenditures Summary

EXPENDITURE ORIGIN	Investments		Expenditures		TOTAL	
Micro-projects	851,366	76%	524,754	34%	1,376,120	52%
Operation and Administration	251,337	22%	1,004,403	66%	1,255,740	47%
Collaboration from other institutions	39,614	4%			39,614	1%
³ Previous purchases of land	-18,000	-2%			-18,000	-1%
TOTAL	1,124,317	100%	1,529,157	100%	2,653,474	100%

The expenditures and salaries that correspond to the advisory services of the missionary team are not included in the following table (4.5). Therefore, this table shows what the real project would be without these expenditures. In the percentages column of distribution of resources that are destined to the Project's operation and administration it is possible to see that 33% of these resources are destined to salaries of national employees.

Table 4.5 Operation and Administration expenditures (Without Missionaries)

Total Administration and Operation Investment and expenditures (Without Missionaries' expenditures)	965,012	100%
National employees' salaries	321,509	33%
Inventory/equipment, vehicles and furnishings	251,337	26%
Consultancy-Fees	52,773	5%
National employees' training	32,935	3%
Evaluation	0	0%
Transport-Trips	23,086	2%
Renting-Telephone-Main-Electricity-Water-Radios	70,459	7%
Board expenditures trips-lodging-meetings	30,344	3%
Vehicles' maintenance	55,883	6%
Other various expenditures	126,686	13%
Collaboration from other institutions	39,614	1%

TOTAL Investment + Expenditure 2004 – 2005	2,380,746
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³ Corresponds to an adjustment that is on record in the Project accounting that refers to the Cesar Campoverde's debt, this is why there is a gap of 1% in the data.

Table 4.6 presents a summary that excludes the missionaries' expenditures and salaries. It shows that the percentage of direct investments and expenditures varies; 58% that directly reach beneficiaries and 41% corresponds to the administration and operation expenditures.

Table 4.6 Summary of total Investments and Expenditures (without Missionaries)

EXPENDITURE'S ORIGIN	Investment		Expenditures		TOTAL	
Totals	1,142,317	100%	1,238,429	100%	2,380,746	100%
Micro-projects	851,366	75%	524,754	42%	1,376,120	58%
Operation and Administration	251,337	22%	713,675	58%	965,012	41%
Collaboration from other institutions	39,614	3%			39,614	1%

According to these results it is possible to observe that the operation and administration expenses are very high. This could be explained as follows:

- The expenses for furnishings and equipment are very high, precisely because in the two years analyzed in this report there were expenses in these items for the new DECO offices located in the Fortin sector. However, it is acknowledged that in the next years there is not going to be such investments and expenses.
- The salaries of national employees total 14% (\$US 321,509) of the total Project budget.
- This percentage, which in the beginning is considered high, could vary if it is considered that the resource and time of the promoters (80%) and coordinators (30%) are directly benefiting the target population.
- However, because there has not been a definite policy for the management of this item, the impression is that this was decided without any technical basis that could justify the reason of this percentage.

4.3. Expenditures per beneficiary

Weaknesses in the monitoring system and the absence of the person that managed the software during the evaluation did not allow us to obtain reliable information on the number of beneficiaries by line and axis. Nevertheless, the DECO personnel has made an effort to provide approximate information that allows us to calculate the cost per beneficiary and per line, which is presented in the following table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Costs per beneficiary and per line

LINE	PARTICIPANTS	Investment and Expenditure of Micro-projects	PARTICIPANT'S COST
EDUCATION			
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	3.776	\$ 740.625	\$196 per child
DISABLED			
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	186	\$ 378.130	\$2.033 per child
CHURCHES			
LEADERS	280	\$ 245.402	\$269 per participant
MINISTERS	11		
Church members (prom. 25 x 13)	325		
Community members (40 x 13)	520		
Children from Sunday schools 70 x 13	910		
TOTAL	2.046		

For the Education line the cost per participant is of “\$196” per child. Taking into account the results and the impact of the line, this is considered to be efficient.

In the case of the Churches line, its cost is “\$269” per each child, knowing that the cost is higher because this type of line implies processes of different character than the formal education line.

The Disabled line shows the cost of “\$2.033” per child, which reflects the type of assistance intervention and greater costs that this line has in relation to other interventions of the development project.

4.4. Conclusions

There are contradictions in the efficiency of resource utilization. Apparently it is efficient in the total budget's expenditure; however, on the other hand the adjustments and reclassifications between the budgetary accounts are not carried out in a timely fashion, but subsequently to the expenses approval.⁴

It is our understanding that MAN Oslo only controls that there are no variations between the total items of Investments and Expenditures; this has resulted in the informality and risk in the professional management and transparency of the budget.

From the total of the invested resources in the 2 years (\$US 2'653.474), 32% has been destined to Infrastructure activities through micro-projects and 20% to training, which is justified in an insertion stage.

⁴ E-mail from October 24 2004 from the Accountant to the DECO General Coordinator, requesting reclassifications of accounts subsequent to the expenditures and requesting attention for reclassifications done by promoters.

At first glance, the percentage of the item of employees' salaries seems inflated, but there is no technical criterion that can determine whether or not this is the case.

In the future it is important that there is a professional management of the budgetary processes that defines technical criteria for the distribution between items according to the proposed objectives and goals.

The beneficiary-cost in the Education and Churches lines is justified as efficient in the frame of a development project, the beneficiary-cost in the Disabled line is justified in the frame of a project of social assistance but not of community development.

5. PROJECT EFFICIENCY EVALUATION

5.1. Objectives and Results

In chapter 3 the Project results were analyzed in relation to the priority objectives. In the same chapter the project impacts on participants were analyzed. In the current section we analyze the extent to which the Project is attaining its sectorial strategic objectives in each line of action and axis of work and how this contributes to the Project development objective.

5.1.1. Sectorial strategic objectives

The Project has six sectorial strategic objectives. In the following the extent to which the Project has reached these objectives is commented upon.

Education – Strategic Sectorial Objective: To improve the education quality in the poor and marginal areas of the north and south of Guayaquil city.

Observations:

The interventions to improve education quality are the investments in classrooms, furnishings and equipment on the one hand and teachers training on the other hand. 82% of the 2004 – 2005 expenditures were done through the Education institutional counterparts. The beneficiaries were in their majority students. The conclusion in section 3.1.1 was that the identified results after the two years show that in the Education line the Project is reaching an average of thirty per cent of its priority objectives in the cases where quantitative objectives exist.

Tables 5.1 and 5.2⁵ show the different groups' grading of impacts and their appreciation of the interventions.

⁵ The tables that follow are the same as those in section 3.2. They are presented here to facilitate the reading, but the commentaries to each table are not repeated.

Table 5.1 Impacts of infrastructure and equipment on the quality of students' education

	Parents	Teachers	Directors
No impact	-	-	-
Low impact	4%	-	-
Medium impact	20%	30%	42
High impact	76%	70%	58%

Table 5.2 Impacts of teachers training courses on improving students' education

	Teachers	Directors
No impact	-	17%
Low impact	-	17%
Medium impact	24%	41%
High impact	67%	25%

Disabled - Strategic Sectorial Objective: To improve the quality of living of people with a disability problem in the poor and marginal sectors of the areas north and south in Guayaquil.

Observations:

The two CREER centers are the Project's principal interventions in order to improve the quality of living of people with a disability problem. Section 3.1.2 showed that the Project has practically reached all its priority objectives established for the CREER centers. Table 5.3 shows how parents and the CREER centers personnel grade the impact that the new infrastructure and equipment have had on students' education and rehabilitation in these centers.

Table 5.3 Impact of new infrastructure and equipment on education quality and rehabilitation of students from the CREER centers.

	Parents	Personnel
No impact	-	-
Low impact	-	-
Medium impact	60%	91%
High impact	40%	9%

Despite the achievements of the CREER centers, it is necessary to recognize that the number of assisted children is very limited in relation to the total population of the region. Because of this, the Project also has priority objectives to improve the quality of living of people with disabled who are not assisted by the CREER centers. Section 3.2.1 shows that these objectives have not been reached.

Churches - Strategic Sectorial Objective: To contribute to the evangelic church to develop a diaconal vision and to assume social responsibility in those communities that suffer the most.

Observations:

Section 3.1.3, which describes the work with counterpart churches, shows quantitative results for each one of the priority objectives. The majority of results surpass the third part of the targets. The attainments that are less favorable are referred to training of people who are not leaders in the churches. Table 5.4 shows the impact of the diaconal vision on leaders.

Table 5.4 Project Impact on the diaconal development of the church

	Ministers and leaders
No impact	-
Low impact	-
Medium impact	32%
High impact	68%

Family Economy - Strategic Sectorial Objective: To contribute to family economy development in function of an increase in their incomes and the development and application of an entrepreneurial perspective.

Observations:

The Project has done training activities to improve family economy through the education centers, CREER centers and churches. However, section 3.1.4 shows that few people have improved their work situation and their incomes, and that micro-business training has been low. Table 5.5 shows how people who have participated in these events, recognize the impact of such activities.

Table 5.5 Impact of training courses on the improvement of family income

	Parent		
	Education centers	CREER	Churches
No impact	-	-	-
Low impact	8%	46%	2%
Medium impact	38%	15%	47%
High impact	54%	39%	51%

Health and Social Relations - Strategic Sectorial Objective: To contribute to improve health and social relations through prevention.

Observations:

Section 3.1.5 shows that after two years the Project has carried out a considerable quantity of training activities with a high level of participation in relation to the targets. Table 5.6 shows how people who have participated in these training events see the impact of such activities.

Table 5.6 Impact of training courses on preventing illnesses and improving family relations

	Parents		
	Education centers	CREER	Churches
No impact	-	-	-
Low impact	6%	7%	3%
Medium impact	39%	14%	19%
High impact	55%	79%	78%

Community Organization - Strategic Sectorial Objective: To contribute to improvement of community organization and to the empowerment of the target population when solving their problems.

Observations:

All the Project interventions contribute to this objective through the activity lines and the work axes, and also through the particular axis of community organization. However, section 3.1.6 shows that the results in relation to this objective have been relatively limited. Likewise, table 5.7 shows a limited impact. In the Education centers the rating varies between high and medium. In the CREER centers there is a relatively high percentage of low impact. In the churches the ministers and leaders rate this as medium impact and the majority of parents from the churches rates this as high impact. The interpretation in this line is that the Project contributed to the members of the church more than to the general surrounding community.

Table 5.7 Impact of training on community organization

	Education centers			CREER		Churches	
	Directors	Teachers	Parents	Personnel	Parents	Ministers Leaders	Parents
No impact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Low impact	-	3%	-	10%	16%	11%	3%
Medium impact	50%	40%	47%	50%	38%	61%	19%
High impact	50%	57%	53%	40%	46%	28%	78%

5.1.2. Development Objective

The Project has the following **Development Objective:**

To contribute to the empowerment of poor and marginal groups, giving them back hope and opportunity to build their future and demonstrating in this way that God's love and justice are equal for everyone.

Observations:

Undoubtedly, all the results related to the sectorial objectives that were analyzed in the previous section, which include the ones that are related to the indicators as well as to the Impacts surveys, contribute to the accomplishment of the Project development objective.

However, the evaluation team maintains its view that empowerment will be consolidated and sustainability elements will be attained when the Project is enriched with indicators that prioritize processes and a greater focus on children is specified, because to this date the interventions have been oriented to infrastructure, equipment and training in punctual matters.

5.2. Coherence among objectives, methodology and activities

The characteristics of the Project methodology which have been presented in previous sections may be summarized as follows:

- To reach the target population through the two most important formal institutions that are the education centers and churches
- To promote the organization of groups of beneficiaries through micro-projects and specific activities
- To strengthen the link between institution and beneficiaries through committees and commissions with shared responsibilities
- To unify the cooperation process with defined steps in two stages: First: diagnosis of needs and elaboration of a AOP, second: Identification, design and execution of micro-projects
- To work in three lines of actions (education, disabled and churches), applying the same axes of work (family economics, health and social relations, and community organization) for each line of action
- To support with technical and financial advice the construction of infrastructure in education centers and churches, acquisition of furnishings and equipment, personnel and parental training in matters of education, technical capacity, health and organization.
- To involve other institutions from the area

Undoubtedly, there is a high level of coherence between the Project methodology and its activities and objectives. However, as part of this evaluation, the Programs and Projects Department identified the methodology's strengths and weaknesses. Recommendations were also proposed. For details, see annex 3.

5.3. Coordination Strategy

The Project and MAN-E as an institution have the following relations through the lines and axes that they are working on:

In the Education line with the objective of consolidating a political frame of their activities with the State, an agreement will be signed soon with the Ministry of Education to improve the education in the north-east area. As this is the Project's major line of investment, it is very important that MAN-E strengthen its coordination with the Ministry. However, the Government's policy is to not create new education centers. This fact implies that it is difficult that the new schools established and supported by the Project will be "operationally controlled" by the State, implying at the same time that the parents with their scarce resources will be in charge of the maintenance and operation of these schools.

However, the relations of coordination and support from the Ministry of Education employees and technicians respond to an institutional structure which is neither very proactive nor collaborative. Sometimes the type of relations is managed mainly based on the employees' personal characteristics. In the case of the Project, there have been public employees who have collaborated with the execution of activities and there have been others who have disrupted the relationship.

In the disabled line there is an agreement of cooperation with the Municipality of Guayaquil which, through its “Scholarships Project for special children and adolescents,” provides scholarships of an annual amount of \$480 for children who are attended to in the CREER centers with the objective of facilitating access to the required attention at the centers.

For the churches line MAN-E has agreements with some “head churches” that establish a commitment of support to develop evangelistic and diaconal work through churches that are located in the Project’s intervention areas, although the type of support varies from one to another. Basically, the relation is based on the support to their and the maintenance of a cordial political agreement with the MAN-E representatives, while the direct operational relations are between ministers and the Line Coordinator and his/her respective promoters. The ministers keep the head churches representatives informed.

For the health and family relations axis there is an Agreement of Strategic Alliance with the Paraiso Health Sub-Center to jointly work in the area. This includes medical and dental care for children from schools, high schools and the CREER centers in the area; general medical care, dental care, and medical care for pregnant women once a year at the churches. The MAN-E commitment has been to provide equipment for dental care to the Sub-Center. This type of relationship stands out because it is a specific local alliance initiative.

Despite what has been shown, it may be concluded that in general the Project and MAN-E have relatively few links and little coordination with other institutions that have responsibilities and/or work in the Project area.

5.4. The Project and the Gender theme

The document “Project Plan 2004 – 2009” manifests that “the Project will promote the gender theme in order to ensure equal opportunities for men and women; rescuing in this way the idea of complementation between the two genders.” However, there are no objectives, results and indicators that would reflect this strategy. Nevertheless, it may be recognized that the Project works with women and men, and the health and family relations axis has a very clear focus on gender. Judging by the parents’ participation in the survey and workshops, which had a majority of women, it seems that the biggest challenge in the gender theme is to increase the participation of men in the different components and activities of the Project.

5.5. Sustainability

The Project is attaining three types of results that should be sustained: a) built infrastructures and installed furnishings and equipment, b) abilities and knowledge acquired at the individual level and c) management abilities for community organizations.

It is the education centers and churches which are owners of the infrastructure and furnishings / equipment. Even if these are institutions with scarce economic resources, they have an interest in ensuring their maintenance. However, in the

agreements between MAN-E and the institution there is no article that would make the institution accountable in this sense. For the education centers, a major problem for keeping sustainability is the fact that it is very difficult for the state to assume responsibility for the operation and maintenance of new schools that are established with the Project support, because this is not in accordance to the new state policy.

Regarding the abilities and knowledge at the individual level it is probable that teachers, ministers and church leaders will keep and develop this knowledge while they continue in their jobs and functions. In regards to the technical abilities and knowledge on handicrafts and micro-business, this depends on the opportunities to apply these kinds of knowledge, and such opportunities are very limited. On the other hand, it is possible that people who have acquired knowledge on the health and family relations field continue applying this.

The organizational training has been transferred to members of micro-projects committees and commissions. The processes of planning and execution of these micro-businesses have a limited period and the committees or commissions do not have a clear responsibility on micro-business maintenance. For this reason the life expectancy of the committees and commissions is limited. In the education centers the parents members of committees are recruited each year, which implies that the knowledge on organization does not stay in the committee and each year the committee must be trained. In the churches the situation is different. The church members are more permanent and because of this there is more possibility of keeping and developing community organization abilities.

Finally, the sustainability was discussed at the workshops for parents and the interviews with the directors' and ministers' networks. In all these cases the participants did not show any clear vision on how to ensure the continuation of activities and maintain the investments and the achievements without the Project and MAN-E support.

5.6. Conclusions

This chapter has shown that in general the Project is achieving its objectives, taking into account that it has only gone through the third part of its period. Relating these attainments to the level of impacts identified by the participants, it is possible to conclude that the Project is on its way to reaching its objectives with a good level of impact.

The chapter presents a very detailed analysis on the methodological experiences in relation to each objective. This analysis, done by the Project team, is an important and very rich base for the continuation of the Project implementation.

The Project is making efforts to strengthen the coordination of activities with different entities and organizations. However, in despite of these efforts, it is possible to conclude in general terms that the Project and MAN-E are relatively unlinked to other institutions that have responsibilities and /or work in the Project area.

It is probable that the owners of infrastructures financed by the Project will ensure the maintenance and operation of such infrastructures. In regards to the types of training, it is probable that the beneficiaries will apply and develop their knowledge, especially when it directly contributes to their personal and professional situation.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Conclusions

Each one of the previous chapters has its section of conclusions with regards to the evaluated themes. In this chapter, we present the conclusions in reference to the different questions from the Terms of Reference – TOR (see annex 1).

The period of the Project is from 2004 to 2009, so the evaluation covers a little more than the two first years. In general terms, we find that the Project is on its way to reaching its objectives and planned results. At the same time, now is the right moment to do readjustments and changes that might strengthen the probability that the Project will reach its objectives and goals at its end.

Despite the favorable appreciation with regards to the Project implementation, we want to highlight a fundamental concern, which refers to the Project coverage. The Project goal is that at its end, it will work with 30 education centers and 30 churches. Now it is working with 15 and 13 respectively. From the 15 education centers only 4 are new after 2004, from the 13 churches 6 are new. The fundamental question remains, whether the project will be able to include 15 new schools and 17 new churches in a little more than 3 years that remains of the project. There are no operational plans to reach these goals that do not seem very realistic to us.

6.1.1. The DECO Project progress, emphasizing on the Project Performance, Success and Pertinence

In regards to the Project **performance**, the TORs present three questions.

We consider that the Project **efficiency** has been good. For the two years 2004 – 2005 a little more than 100% of the budgeted expenditures have been spent. However, there are contradictions regarding the efficiency of the use of these resources, as the internal management between the accounts of the Education and Disabled lines is not very efficient.

Regarding the expenditures that were done, it is evident that they are optimal in relation to what was planned and for responding to the region's needs. However, weaknesses are observed in the budgetary management in relation to the lack of clarity on the technical criteria and the control that backup the budgetary distributions of resources and adjustments during the year.

Because there is control only in the variations between the global items of investments and expenditures, management of the budget is not particularly efficient or transparent.

There is no technical criterion that would support the distribution and respond why investments and expenditures in micro-projects⁶ (53%) is almost the same proportion of administrative and operational expenditures (47%). This last expenditure category seems to be a costly operation. The reasonable thing would be to reach a relation of at least 75% and 25% respectively. Considering that in these first years there has been investment on the construction and equipment of the offices in Fortin and the purchase of vehicles, this would be justified, and it would be acknowledged that in the next years a more equitable proportion will be reached.

The percentage of employees' salaries appears inflated and there is no technical criterion that justifies whether or not this is resource efficient.

Regarding the proportion of micro-projects' expenditures for infrastructure and training, of the total resources invested in the 2 years (\$US 2'653.474), 32% has been destined to infrastructure activities through the micro-projects and 20% has been destined to training. If we consider that this is a first stage of the Project, this proportion is justified as efficient especially with the new counterparts, but not with the old ones (4-8 years). In the following years this proportion should be further modified towards training; yet, not as isolated events but with a training plan that implies change processes, especially regarding the objective of education quality improvement.

In the future, it is important to incorporate a professional management for the budgetary processes in the methodological and conceptual Project frame, which should define technical criteria for percentage distribution of items, according to the objectives and goals proposed in the Project and their efficient operation and administration.

Concerning the micro-projects' execution timeframes, the counterparts have commented on the MA's delays, especially for processing checks. Even if this could always be improved, it does not seem that these delays are very serious and we do not see them as a negative indicator in relation to the Project efficiency.

Regarding the relation **beneficiary-cost**, it may be observed that from the total counted resources in the two first years, 52% goes directly to the **beneficiaries** and 47% corresponds to investments and expenditures on the Project administration and operation.⁷ In reference to other similar organizations' projects in the same region, this relation is very costly, especially the salaries. For this reason, we recommend a more specialized analysis that justifies this.

The Project does not have clear data on the number of participants in the lines and axes' activities⁸. However, the mentioned calculation in the Education and Churches lines, for the costs of "\$196" and "\$269" per each child in the two first years, is justified as efficient in the frame of a development project. The beneficiary cost in the

⁶ Includes the 1% of other local contributions

⁷ Children International and Plan International have a relation of between 75/25 and 75/30.

⁸ Data of participants provided by the Project Coordinators that have been calculated based on investments in micro-projects.

disabled line of “\$2.033” per child, is justified in the frame of a social assistance project but not for community development.

Our analysis allows us to make observations in regard to the Project’s effectiveness. Our analysis on the extent to which the Project achieves its objectives and produces the expected results is positive. The analysis shows that for the great majority of objectives the Project is producing the expected results in relation to the time that has passed by.

In our analysis on the Project **coherence** we have studied the Project’s six sectorial strategic objectives and the methodology and activities to reach these objectives. In general, we find that there is a good coherence, but we make the following observations:

Development Objective

“To contribute to the empowerment of poor and marginal groups, giving them back hope and opportunity for building their future and demonstrating in this way that God’s love and his justice is equal for everyone.”

In the development objective, the importance of including a focus on children should analyzed, understanding that in some way this focus implies processes oriented to the most vulnerable group, and in another way the sustainability of changes is stronger in those future adults than in the present ones.

The previous statement considers a profound new proposal for the Project, which probably, from the institutional point of view and from the perspective of donors, is neither coherent nor efficient. Nevertheless, from the point of view of the region’s reality it is efficient and coherent. If this new proposal is not achieved, “juvenile gangs,” which are increasing geometrically in number throughout the Project region, may become more and more attractive to children and young adults.

- **To improve education quality in the poor and marginal areas of the sectors: north and south of Guayaquil**

The activities are of infrastructure and equipment as well as teachers training. In our analysis we observed that the resources have been destined to infrastructure and separated training events and very little has gone to a consistent processes for education quality improvement.

This is a factor of concern, especially when in the majority of old counterparts (4 to 8 years) there is no evidence of any strategic change in the Project that favors processes. This fact leads us to assume that in the next years the project will maintain the same intervention modality and in this way its efficiency will be poor.

Because of this previous explanation, we specifically recommend the implementation of the process for education quality improvement, which is proposed in the document “Educating for Competitiveness,” and if possible, a

process with much more integral content that implies a real improvement in the quality of education.

- **To improve the quality of life of people with disabled in the poor and marginal areas of the sectors: north and south of Guayaquil**

The activities for this objective are oriented to supporting the two CREER centers, which is very limited in comparison to how complex this objective is. In one of the chapters it has been mentioned that this line responds more to an assistance project than to a community development project. Moreover, its cost is very high. It would be better to transfer the responsibility of this line to a specialized institution and direct efforts to strengthening of the essential Education line. It is not clear what the implications of such decisions would be for MAN Oslo, as the disabled line is an attractive element for fundraising. However, it may be possible to call for convocation to non-profit organizations that are interested in presenting their proposals to take charge of these two Centers.

- **To contribute to the evangelic church in its development of a diaconal perspective and to assume social responsibility for the most affected population from their communities**

All the activities within the churches line are coherent with this objective. We suggest that the potential importance of this perspective in a development project should be strengthened. For this purpose people will have to work with greater intensity on a practical proposal for carrying out an integral evangelization beyond traditional schemes.

- **To contribute to the family economic development as a function of family income increase; and development and application of an entrepreneurial perspective**

It is necessary to recognize that the activities directed to this objective have been limited to workshops with a very restricted scope because of the complexity of a process of such characteristics.

- **To contribute to improve health and family relations through prevention**

The activities directed to this objective are mainly workshops on family relations and less on health. These activities are coherent and pertinent given the conditions of the region's poverty in relation to this axis of work.

- **To contribute to the community organization improvement and the target population empowerment when solving their problems**

The Project with all its activities is contributing to this objective, although given the weakness of base organizations, the activities are oriented only to groups that belong to the counterparts and much less to the larger community.

The Terms of Reference have three questions in relation to the Projects' success.

We did a survey in order to identify how beneficiaries rate the Project impacts. This showed a very high appreciation of the impacts. Regarding the infrastructures and equipment in the education line, 76% of parents and 64% of directors and instructors graded the impacts as high. The same figure was 63% for ministers and church leaders. In the disabled' line, the appreciation of impacts was much less favorable, 40% for the parents and only 9% for the personnel, from which 91% graded the impact as medium. In the educational training activities, 74% of the parents and 50% of the directors and instructors graded the impacts as high. The same figure for ministers and leaders was 68%.

The infrastructure sustainability is not well guaranteed. There are no agreements between the MAN-E and the counterparts on their responsibilities for operation and maintenance. For fiscal schools, the state is in charge of the maintenance and operation of the schools, while for the other schools it is the parents themselves who have to assume this responsibility, even with their limited resources. Regarding the training results at the personnel, organizational and community level, there are no mechanisms that would ensure their sustainability. The interviews and workshops did not show a high level of awareness of responsibility among the participants, who actually expressed a tendency of dependency on the Project and MAN-E.

The participants have confirmed the Project's **relevance and pertinence**, with the observations that different training activities, in particular for teachers and parents should be strengthened in order to improve the quality of children's education. The disabled line is very relevant for the region, but is questionable if these social assistance activities are pertinent for an integrated development project. In summary, the Project objectives continue to be valid and of interest in relation to the situation of the MAN-E target population.

The Terms of Reference present five questions in regards to the Project **strategy**.

Regarding "how the Project coordinates with other organizations?" this occurs through agreements. However, and despite some agreements, the coordination between the Project and other organizations is limited. Concerning the question "**how are the counterparts and population involved in this coordination?**" other organizations only play a very punctual role.

Despite the fact that the Project document proposes a **gender** strategy, there are no objectives, results and indicators that reflect this strategy, neither actions that respond to the conscientious application of gender equity practices. Yet, it is necessary to recognize that the Project works with women as well as with men and that the health and family relations axis has a very clear gender focus.

Concerning the question "**how do you consider the counterparts' independence in the two phases of: concluding the financial support and monitoring?**" the project did not have a well defined strategy to terminate its cooperation with the counterparts. The MAN-E should develop this strategy and be clearer on communicating this to the counterparts.

Concerning the question “**how the Organization initiates its work in other areas?**” the Project is starting its activities in new areas in the North sector without having a clear strategy with adequate criteria.

Finally, concerning “**how to consider the nationalization of the Organization?**” the Board of Directors and the MAN Organization are following the recommendations from the study that was done on December 2005. Such nationalization with a national director is foreseen in the budget for the year 2007.

6.1.2. The Project Efficiency – Project Design

The Terms of Reference presents five elements to assess the effectiveness of the Project’s design.

The Project methodology reflects the social complexity of the area and that there are no organization of solid and permanent bases which the Project can work with. Because of this, the Project has chosen the two institutions which have at least a minimum of relations with the target population; these are the education centers and churches. In some cases these institutions do not exist or they are very weak, so the Project methodology is to support their establishment and their strengthening. It is through these institutions that the Project contributes to the empowerment of poor and marginal groups, which is the Project’s development objective. In practice the Project has a methodology with defined steps from the time when the first contacts with the community are established to the termination of the micro-projects. There are work manuals and formularies for the planning, executions and monitoring processes. The evaluation conclusion is that the Project has a well defined and adequate methodology.

The Project has different **planning systems**. At the level of the Project there are the Annual Operational Plans (AOPs) for each line of action and axis of work. At the level of counterpart groups there are also the AOPs, which were established at the beginning of the cooperation and which are regularly reviewed. There are also micro-projects plans, which are carried out with the commissions. All of this represents a system of adequate planning.

Regarding **evaluation**, the Project has some elements. It has a system for **verification of activities** which is based on the AOPs and the micro-projects’ formularies. It also has a system for evaluating the Project’s personnel, based on observations of promoters’ behavior and accomplishment in their jobs with the counterpart groups. What the Project does not have is a good system of **means of verification for the impact** of lines of action and axes of work. There is no system to establish the base lines and there are no impacts indicators and systems to register and measure the impacts.

6.1.3. The Project Implementation

The TORs present five questions in relation to the **organizational capacity**.

With regards to the Project effectiveness within the current organizational structure, we have the following observations:

It is the Programs and Projects Department which has the responsibility for the Project's planning and execution. To this end, the department depends on other entities of the organization.

The Director's role is formal-administrative as well as leadership support. Lately this Director's involvement has been strengthened. However, the importance of the Director being the person who leads the policies and strengthening of the execution of a Development Project, as DECO, is reiterated.

The Administrative-Accounting Department is the most important unit. Accounting is fundamental both for the management of funds for the counterparts as well as for the management of funds control and the monitoring of expenditures in relation to the budget. It is our appreciation that the cooperation between the Programs and Projects Department and the Accounting unit works well, but there are aspects that should be improved in relation to the optimization of information and reports management, as explained below.

For the planning and execution of micro-projects the Department and the beneficiaries depend greatly on the advisory support of the architect. Our conclusion is that this professional is not well integrated and linked to the Project. It seems to us that certain promoters do not have an adequate understanding of the role and importance of this type of technical knowledge for the Project and the reason why this collaboration must be well integrated within the Department.

In the Organization there is a Leaders' Committee, which currently is not playing the role that it should to discuss and decide policies and technical directions for the Project.

Finally, there is a serious problem for the Project implementation and its integration with the MAN-E organization, which is the lack of a Management Information System (SIG, for its Spanish acronym) that includes information for management, monitoring and evaluation. Previously, the Programs and Projects Department had a monitoring computerized system which currently does not work. However, this system was not connected and accessible to the financial information section. It was exclusively accessible to the Department Coordinator and not to the rest of the Organization.

Regarding the MAN-E **personnel functions**, there is a "Manual of the Mision Alianza personnel functions 2006," for the General Coordination and the two Operational Coordinators, which presents objectives, responsibilities and tasks of such positions. For the promoters there is a "Promoter Manual" which is actually a manual of processes. These manuals define well the functions and roles of the Project personnel. It is necessary to consolidate what already exists and implement a procedures manual that would regulate all the work of the Programs and Project Department and its managerial administration.

Lately, the **hiring system** has changed in the sense that the previous testing period of one year was reduced to 6 months, with a first period of three months under the work per hour modality and then a contract for three testing months. As a complement to the system of legal hiring, it is important to strengthen the criteria used during the selection processes at the managerial level.

During the interviews and workshops with participants, they have explained that the Project has good **abilities and capacities to orient, direct and manage the different levels of participation for policymaking and the Project execution**. The beneficiaries have been clear in regards to their responsibilities and participation in policymaking. At the same time, on various occasions they have expressed concern for cases when apparently the same promoters do not direct the Project techniques in an adequate and unified way.

It has not been possible to evaluate the **identification of the personnel with the vision, mission and values of the Organization**. We can only say that during conversations with the personnel and observing their activity in workshops with beneficiaries we have obtained a good impression of the personnel with regards to their values and behavior.

Concerning the **accounting system**, the TORs present two questions – The **availability of a system** that would allow the Project's financial execution to be seen and verifying whether the **budgetary executions** correspond to the approved budget and if the expenditures coincide with the accounting information. In this respect we have the following observations:

The Project accounts show two large items, one of INVESTMENTS and the other of EXPENDITURES. The first refers to resources destined to infrastructure and equipment activities, and the second refers to training activities.

In the lands account there are two items that correspond to the accounting debt from irregularities in previous land purchases. We know that MAN Oslo has requested that this be included in the accounting process.

Another observation is that the last account "other various expenses," appears with an overexpenditure of 42%. We know that an amount was spent on corresponding MAN-E employees' salaries. This does not allow reflection of the real resources amount that were destined to the national personnel salaries account, which leads us to question the transparency in accounting over this period. We understand that this situation has been corrected in the 2006 budget.

There are other contradictions in the efficiency of resource utilization. Apparently, the budget has been spent in an efficient manner; yet, on the other hand some adjustments and reclassifications between the budgetary accounts were not carried out in a timely fashion but subsequent to the expenses approval.⁹

⁹ E-mail of October 24, 2004 from the Accountant to the General DECO Coordinator requesting reclassifications of accounts subsequently to the expenses, and calling for attention on the reclassifications done by promoters.

Gaps in the relationship between what has been budgeted and spent in the Education Line are observed. There is a under expenditure of 20% compared to the amount budgeted. The amount is high.

In relation to the budgetary control, MAN Oslo only controls that there are no budgetary variations between the total items of Investments and Expenses. However, in the MAN-E internal control systems there are no norms that regulate the appropriate documentation for approvals of gap adjustments in the accounts, which should be done before spending the resources and not subsequently. The adjustment amounts should have supports of all the budgetary changes and adjustments and be justified and accepted before approving outflows.

6.2. Recommendations

Based on the analysis and conclusions of this chapter we want to make some recommendations:

In table 6.1 we make very concrete recommendations for the lines of actions and axes of work.

In addition we want to make the following recommendations:

1. Section 5.2 has an analysis on the strengths and weaknesses of the Project methodology which was done by the Programs and Projects Department personnel. This is a very good analysis and very important. As this analysis is presented in our report, we recommend that it be used for an internal workshop with the leaders in order to take relevant decisions as a consequence of this analysis.
2. The position of the Department General Coordinator, which is currently vacant, should be filled as soon as possible. The profile of proved experience on managerial abilities is a key element for Development Programs.
3. We recommend elaborating a program to ensure the inclusion of new counterparts in order to attain the goal of working with 30 education centers and 30 churches at the end of the Project in 2009.
4. We recommend preparing a system of impact indicators with base lines for each type of micro-project, procedures to collect data and for a data base system.
5. We recommend integrating the architect, who is the supervisor, as a member of the Project's team in the Programs and Projects Department. For this a description of functions and responsibilities should be prepared.
6. The committee of leaders should be more involved in the implementation.
7. We reiterate the recommendation to complete a manual of policies and procedures that contributes to regulate the supporting conditions and participation of the other instances of MAN-E with the Project.

8. The DECO team should be strengthened, filling the current vacant positions with committed individuals, who have proved experience in development and, where possible, in programs for improvement education quality, an area that will be the Project's priority in the coming years.
9. MAN-E should develop a more specific strategy on how to initiate activities in new sectors and how to end its cooperation with counterparts after a defined period, and should communicate this strategy to the counterparts in a more comprehensible way.

Table 6.1 Recommendations for lines of action and axes of work

		EDUCATION	DISABLED	CHURCH
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To keep current focus with “new” centers (infrastructure / equipment, training) • To strengthen classroom training in established centers • To take advantage of the Directors’ Network resources in order to strengthen the line and guarantee transfer of experiences • To continue parental training for supporting mentioned processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To clarify the future of this line • Based on the previous point, decide what will happen with the current centers • This line corresponds more to a social assistance action than to community development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To strengthen strategies for community involvement • To apply better strategies for incorporating new churches to the Project (when they already exist in the region and when they are new) as well as for managing the termination process of other churches
A X E S	FAMILY ECONOMICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To discontinue technical training in schools and high schools • To support handicrafts centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To discontinue technical training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To strengthen and broaden the implementations of this axis
	HEALTH AND SOCIAL RELATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To strengthen child health • To strengthen cooperation with health centers • To incorporate the church in activities of preventive health and family relations for adults and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To strengthen child health • To discontinue activities of preventive health and family relations for adults and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To strengthen preventive health for adults • To strengthen family relations • To strengthen cooperation in matters of education centers and health • To motivate participation of head churches with health brigades
	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only for committees and commissions of the education center itself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To strengthen parents associations 	<p>To strengthen activities at the church level, in order for community leaders to obtain educational training and replicate knowledge of community organization in fields associated to the project or to the community.</p>