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Caritas Thailand

Final External Evaluation Report

Empowering Mobile Populations in Laos through Safe Migration, Anti-human Trafficking, HIV/AIDS Prevention, and Partnership Development

2024 – 2027

PEOPLE
PROTECTION
PARTNERSHIP
SUSTAINABLE
FUTURE



Prepared for

National Catholic Commission on Migration (NCCM)

Suriya Kalasin | August 2026

SAFE MIGRATION
STRONGER COMMUNITIES
BRIGHTER FUTURES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS 1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2

1. INTRODUCTION 6
1.1 Project Context 6
1.2 Project Overview 7
1.3 Purposes and Objectives of the Evaluation 9
1.4 Scope of the Evaluation 9

2. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK 10
2.1 Conceptual Framework 10
2.2 Evaluation Criteria and Key Questions 12
2.3 Key Change Pathways 12
2.4 Learning and Future Programming 13
2.5 Evaluation Judgement Framework 13

3. METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS 14
3.1 Evaluation Design 14
3.2 Desk Review 14
3.3 Quantitative Data Collection 14
3.4 Qualitative Data Collection 15
3.5 Data Analysis and Triangulation 15
3.6 Fieldwork Coverage 15
3.7 Evaluation Limitations 15

4. EVALUATION FINDINGS 17
4.1 Relevance 17
4.2 Coherence 24
4.3 Effectiveness 30
4.4 Efficiency 37
4.5 Impact 43
4.6 Sustainability 48

5. PROJECT CHALLENGES 53

6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES 55

7. CONCLUSIONS 57

8. RECOMMENDATIONS 60

9. DONOR CONSIDERATIONS 67

Annex 1: Evaluation matrix 68
Annex 2: Summary of quantitiatve evidence used in the evaluation 70
Annex 3: List of documents reviewed 71
Annex 4: List of stakeholder consulted 72
Annex 5: Key Information Interview Guide 73
Annex 6: Online Survey Questionnaire 75
Annex 7: Proposed TOC for the next project phase 77

DIAGRAMS

- *Figure 1: Evaluation Conceptual Framework* 11
- *Figure 2: Evaluation Conclusion Summary* 59

TABLES

- *Table 1: Evaluation questions and key assessment dimensions* 12
- *Table 2: Key change pathways and areas of assessment* 13
- *Table 3: Evaluation judgement scale* 13
- *Table 4: Overall assessment of Relevance* 23
- *Table 5: Overall assessment of Coherence* 30
- *Table 6: Overall assessment of Effectiveness* 37
- *Table 7: Overall assessment of Efficiency* 42
- *Table 8: Overall assessment of Impact* 47
- *Table 9: Overall assessment of Sustainability* 53
- *Table 10: Key contextual challenges and implication for project delivery* 55
- *Table 11: Priority recommendations and implementation framework* 65

ACRONYMS

AAT	Alliance Anti-Trafficking
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
Miseror	Katholische Zentralstelle für Entwicklungshilfe e.V. (Misereor)
MOA	Memorendum of Agreement
MOU	Memorendum of Understanding
NCCM	National Catholic Commission on Migration
NGO	Non-Government Organization
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
PEDA	Population Education And Development Association
PHO	Provincial Health Office
PLHIV	People Living With HIV
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
ToR	Terms of Reference
VFI	Village Focus International

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Programme Context and Evaluation Purpose

The National Catholic Commission on Migration (NCCM) has implemented a programme to support mobile and vulnerable populations in Lao PDR through an integrated approach to safe migration, human trafficking prevention, HIV/AIDS prevention, labour rights, livelihood support and partnership development. The programme has evolved through three phases since 2018. Phase I (2018–2021) focused primarily on direct service delivery and awareness raising; Phase II (2021–2024) expanded support to returning migrants and vulnerable households during the COVID-19 period; and Phase III (2024–2027) has placed greater emphasis on institutional partnerships, capacity development and sustainability.

The programme responds to continuing vulnerabilities associated with migration, labour exploitation, human trafficking and HIV/AIDS. Thailand remains the principal destination for Lao migrant workers, while economic pressures, limited employment opportunities and mobility continue to expose people to risks associated with unsafe migration and exploitation. Phase III aims to promote fair and safe access to employment and public welfare services and strengthen collaboration among Church organisations, government agencies, NGOs and other stakeholders.

The evaluation assesses the programme against the six OECD-DAC criteria of Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability. It covers Phases I–III, with particular attention to Phase III implementation in Vientiane Capital, Khammouane and Luang Prabang and relevant cross-border linkages with Thailand.

Evaluation Approach

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach combining document review, project and financial records, pre- and post-training assessments, key informant interviews, stakeholder consultations, field visits and an online survey. Evidence was triangulated across sources. Given the project's predominantly output-oriented results framework, the assessment distinguishes between outputs, emerging outcomes and longer-term impact. Where evidence was insufficient to establish direct attribution, the evaluation assessed NCCM's plausible contribution.

The evaluation faced several limitations, including incomplete comparable fieldwork in Luang Prabang, limited focus-group participation, a small and non-representative online survey, absence of direct observation of project activities during field visits, and incomplete Phase III monitoring information. These limitations were considered when interpreting the findings and assigning ratings.

Overall Evaluation Judgement

The evaluation finds that NCCM has established a relevant and credible community-based programme model that generates strong immediate results and provides an important bridging function between communities, government institutions and civil-society organisations. The strongest evidence concerns relevance, coherence, immediate effectiveness, knowledge and awareness gains, and partnership development. Evidence is less developed for sustained behavioural change, population-level impact and independent continuation of activities.

The overall ratings are:

Relevance	Coherence	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Impact	Sustainability
Excellent	Good	Good	Good	Adequate	Adequate

Key Findings

Relevance — (Excellent). The programme is highly relevant to the needs of mobile and vulnerable populations. Its integrated focus on HIV/AIDS, trafficking, safe migration and labour rights reflects overlapping risks, while the three project locations provide complementary entry points. The main future issue is more precise targeting of communities and groups according to vulnerability, service gaps and implementation feasibility.

Coherence — (Good). The programme is well aligned with Lao PDR's policy and institutional frameworks and complements rather than duplicates government services. Cross-border cooperation is an important strength, although some relationships remain dependent on individual contacts and periodic coordination rather than fully institutionalised referral and information-sharing mechanisms.

Effectiveness — (Good). Planned activities and most output targets have generally been achieved, with particularly strong evidence of knowledge and awareness gains. Participatory, context-adapted training is an important strength, and partnerships create potential multiplier effects. The main limitations are coverage, frequency, follow-up and outcome-level measurement. Livelihood assistance has produced mixed results depending on assessment, technical support and follow-up.

Efficiency — (Good). Financial management and accountability are sound, and the project makes effective use of available human, financial and partner resources through practical work planning and implementation arrangements. Cross-border travel, geographic distance and limited budget flexibility constrain opportunities to further optimise resource use, while monitoring and follow-up systems remain areas for improvement. Greater local delivery, integrated activities, resource sharing and adaptive resource planning offer opportunities to further strengthen efficiency.

Impact — (Adequate). The programme has contributed to meaningful short- and medium-term changes in knowledge, service access, peer support, selected livelihood outcomes and coordination. However, evidence is insufficient to establish sustained behavioural change, reduced trafficking or exploitation, or population-level and policy impact. Broader effects are therefore assessed as plausible contributions rather than direct attribution.

Sustainability — (Adequate). Important foundations exist through local capacity, volunteers, partnerships, referral networks and cross-border cooperation. However, continuation remains dependent on external funding and NCCM's direct involvement, and Caritas Laos is still developing the capacity required for full ownership.

Cross-Cutting Issues and Challenges

Women constitute a substantial proportion of participants and beneficiaries, reflecting the gendered vulnerability of several target groups. The programme demonstrates strong gender reach, although systematic analysis of gender-specific outcomes remains limited. Conflict sensitivity is also relevant because activities involving HIV, trafficking and potentially stigmatised groups can generate unintended perceptions. External challenges include cross-border administrative requirements, resource constraints, changing migration patterns and a sensitive operating environment.

Overall Conclusion

NCCM has built a strong and relevant foundation. Its comparative advantage lies in combining community-level prevention with government, Church, NGO and cross-border networks. The main strategic challenge is now to convert immediate results into more sustained and measurable change while reducing the cost and dependence associated with direct cross-border delivery.

Priority Recommendations

The evaluation identifies seven priority areas for the next phase:

1. **Strengthen strategic targeting and adaptive project management** through stakeholder mapping, clear criteria for selecting target groups and communities, risk analysis and more evidence-based geographic planning.
2. **Establish a stronger outcome-oriented M&E system**, including baseline and endline/KAP measures where feasible, outcome indicators, partner monitoring guidelines, systematic case follow-up and joint monitoring with relevant health and other counterparts.
3. **Strengthen behaviour change, local training and livelihood support** by developing a standardised TOT package, establishing a sustainable local training pool in each province, applying C4D and repeated communication approaches, and linking vulnerable groups to vocational and economic empowerment opportunities.
4. **Increase partnership, integration and resource sharing** by combining activities with NGOs, Church organisations, government agencies, UN actors and educational institutions. Existing IEC materials, trainers, community platforms and programmes should be used wherever appropriate to reduce duplication and improve efficiency.
5. **Prepare Caritas Laos for progressive local ownership** through a clear transition and exit-readiness framework covering staffing, technical capacity, M&E, financial and administrative systems, government relationships, donor reporting and programme tools. Transfer of responsibility should be based on demonstrated readiness rather than simply the end of the funding period.
6. **Use field evidence more strategically for advocacy and policy engagement** by documenting emerging issues, anonymised cases and lessons, developing learning products, and connecting evidence with existing government, NGO, Church and UN advocacy networks and policy platforms.
7. **Strengthen safety, safeguarding and conflict-sensitive implementation** through activity-level risk assessment, confidentiality and safeguarding guidance, staff and partner orientation, and appropriate protocols for engagement with authorities and sensitive groups.

Strategic Direction for the Next Phase

The next phase should move from predominantly direct delivery towards a locally owned, outcome-oriented and network-based model. NCCM should retain its strengths in technical expertise,

coordination, cross-border relationships and access to vulnerable populations, while progressively enabling Lao-based trainers, health workers, teachers, volunteers, NGOs, government counterparts and Caritas Laos to undertake greater responsibility for routine implementation. A standardised TOT package, sustainable provincial training pools, C4D approaches, integrated livelihood referral and stronger M&E can provide the practical foundations for this transition. Overall, the evaluation finds that NCCM has built a strong foundation. The priority for the next phase is to convert that foundation into a more targeted, measurable, locally owned and sustainable system of prevention and support.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project contexts

Laos has undergone rapid economic and social change in recent years, but persistent inequalities and limited local opportunities continue to drive migration**.** A substantial diaspora has developed, and Thailand remain the principal destination country for employment, hosting 267, 871 documented Lao migrant workers in 2025, of whom 57% were women[1]. Many Lao migrants work in low-wage sectors such as construction, agriculture, services, garment factories, and domestic work, and often use irregular channels. Remittances constitute an important source of household income and national economic contribution, with US$ 278 mllion received in 2023, and roughly US $29 million sent by Lao oversea workers in the first half of 2025 alone[2]. This financial link highlights how dependent many rural families are on migration incomes. However, the predominance of women among Lao migrant workers, particularly those employed in domestic work, also increases their vulnerability to labour exploitation and abuse, as domestic workers often receive limited legal protection and are excluded from standard labour legislation in destination countries.

In recent years, economic shocks and policy changes have accentuated migration flows. Since 2022, Laos has faced high inflation, currency depreciation, rising debt, and slowed growth, factors which have *"accelerated migration among young people"* and increased pressure on households. The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact: the abrupt return of more than 140,000 Lao migrants from Thailand by 2021 caused widespread disruption in border communities and heightened vulnerability. Even as borders reopened, irregular migration remains widespread; up to half of Lao migrants in Thailand work without legal status, exposing them to excessive recruitment fees, contract substitution, wage theft, debt bondage, unsafe working conditions, and other forms of labour exploitation. These risks are further exacerbated by limited awareness of labour rights, inadequate access to legal protection, and insufficient access to support services throughout the migration cycle.

These migration dynamics are tightly linked with human trafficking and labour exploitation in Laos. The country is regarded primarily as a source and a transit country for trafficking victims, especially to neighboring Thailand and within the Mekong region. The U.S. Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report (2025) downgraded Laos to Tier 3, noting endemic corruption and weak enforcement, especially within Special Economic Zones. In 2024, the Government identified 85 victims of trafficking, a substantial decline from 168 victims identified in 2023, while prosecution and convictions remained limited. Provincial and community contexts vary, but border areas including parts of Khammouane are known trafficking hotspots due to porous borders and illicit recruitment networks. In this environment, community-based prevention and support services remain critical: as the TIP report recommends, Lao authorities should "continue to expand efforts to raise awareness on all forms of human trafficking, particularly among rural and border communities and vulnerable populations".

Health vulnerability is another key concern linked to migration. The Lao HIV epidemic is still relatively small, but increasing: UNAIDS notes that Laos is among the few Asia-Pacific countries with a growing HIV epidemic. By 2023 there were an estimated 17,000 people living with HIV (PLHIV) in Laos, including about 6,500 women. Approximately 10,130 of those PLHIV were on antiretroviral therapy, and there

[1] International Labour Organization (ILO), Triangle in ASEAN quarterly briefing note, LAO PDR, July – September 2025

[2] Laotian Time, 4th September 2025

were roughly 1,000 new infections in 2023. Although national adult HIV prevalence remains low at approximately 0.2 %, key populations and mobile groups continue to face disproportionately higher risks. Migrant workers often lack access to HIV prevention, testing, treatment, and continuity of care because of mobility, stigma, legal status, and lmited accces to health services. These challenges highlight the importance of integrating HIV prevention and referral services within broader safe migration and protection programmes targeting people on the move.

The project has been implemented in Vientiane Capital, Khammouane, and Luang Prabang province – three locations that reflect the diverse migration dynamics within Lao PDR. Vientiane Capital, as the political and economic hub, concentrates many internal migrants and serves as a transit point for outbound workers. Khammouane lies along a major cross-border corridor (the Third Thai–Lao Friendship Bridge at Thakhek), which experince substantial cross-border labour mobility and trade. It has also experienced rural displacement due to mining and development, adding to community vulnerability. Luang Prabang, a major tourism destination and an increasing important transport hub following the openning of the Lao-China Railway, has experinced growing labour mobility associated with tourism, hospitality, construction, and related service industries. Across all three provinces, local authorities and community stakeholders continue to identify limited awareness of safe migration, labour rights, HIV prevention, and available support services, together with weak referral systems and limited livelihood opportunities, as persistent challenges requiring sustained intervention.[3]

1.2 Project Overview

The intervention has been implemented through three phases, with the current evaluation covering the programme as implemented across Phases I–III. NCCM's intervention from 2018 to 2027 has evolved in response to the changing context of migration, HIV vulnerability, human trafficking and the needs of mobile populations in Lao PDR.

During Phase I (2018–2021), the project focused on safe migration awareness, labour rights education, anti-trafficking training and HIV prevention. Working through a network of Church organisations and village volunteers, NCCM delivered pre-departure and community-based workshops for prospective migrants, particularly women and youth; organised HIV testing and counselling activities; and provided case assistance, including legal aid and referrals to shelters, for exploited workers and returnees. Phase I also established partnerships with government offices, including labour and justice authorities, and local hospitals to strengthen referral pathways.

Phase II (2021–2024) expanded these activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath. The project increased support for returning migrants and vulnerable families, introducing emergency livelihood assistance, psychosocial counselling and cash assistance during a period when border closures, reduced employment opportunities and declining remittances affected household livelihoods. Anti-trafficking outreach was also extended to remote villages, while youth engagement was strengthened through peer education in schools and churches. During this phase, the project further developed coordination among Church networks, local NGOs and provincial authorities. By the end of

[3] **Sources:** IOM/UN DESA migration statistics; ILO labor migration reports; UNAIDS epidemiological estimates; US TIP Report 2025 on Lao PDR; and NCCM project proposals and reports (2018–2024).

Phase II, NCCM had established Community Protection Groups in several districts, linking village volunteers with government social services and Lao Women's Union shelters.

The current Phase III (2024–2027) continues the project's focus on migration, human trafficking, HIV and support to vulnerable populations, while placing greater emphasis on institutional partnerships, capacity development and sustainability. Activities include training and coordination with relevant government counterparts in labour, education and health; awareness activities involving schools and communities; and collaboration with government and other stakeholders to strengthen support and referral mechanisms for mobile populations. The project also includes activities aimed at strengthening local capacity, including training community leaders and other stakeholders who can contribute to the continuation of preventive activities.

Taken together, the three phases show an evolution in the programme's approach:



This evolution provides an important context for the evaluation. While the core issues addressed by the programme—unsafe migration, human trafficking and HIV-related risks—remain relevant, the socioeconomic and migration environment has continued to change. The evaluation therefore considers not only the achievements of individual activities, but also whether the approaches developed across the three phases have strengthened local capacity, partnerships, systems and the conditions required for longer-term results.

Phase III Project Objectives and Activities

The Phase III project aims to contribute to the well-being and resilience of mobile communities in Lao PDR, enabling them to live dignified and fulfilling lives. The project is structured around two key objectives.

Objective 1: Promote fair and safe access to employment and public welfare services, particularly those related to HIV/AIDS. The main activities under objective 1 are as follows:

- Conduct labour and human trafficking awareness training for school students, service workers, relevant government officials and communities;
- Conduct HIV/AIDS prevention training for school students, service workers, government officials and communities in coordination with Public Health Offices; and
- Provide livelihood support and assistance to vulnerable individuals affected by HIV/AIDS, labour exploitation and human trafficking.

Objective 2: Facilitate partnerships and collaboration among Church organisations, government agencies, non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders to leverage expertise, resources and networks in support of mobile populations. The main activities include:

- Organise network meetings with relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organisations, Church leaders and community leaders, to strengthen capacity and coordination on HIV/AIDS prevention, human trafficking and child safeguarding; and

- Conduct coordination meetings with government counterparts twice a year to develop Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) and review and present annual project progress and results.

1.3 Purposes and Objectives of the Evaluation

The overall purpose of the evaluation is to provide an independent assessment of the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the NCCM programme, while generating practical learning for the final phase and future continuation of relevant interventions. The specific objectives of the evaluation seeks to:

- Assess the extent to which the project has achieved its intended objectives and expected results, including the effective integration of relevant cross-cutting themes.
- Evaluate project performance against the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.
- Assess the effectiveness of partnerships, coordination mechanisms, and stakeholder engagement in supporting project implementation, outcomes, and long-term sustainability.
- Identify key lessons learned, good practices, implementation challenges, and enabling factors that have influenced project performance and results.
- Assess the likelihood that project outcomes, institutional capacities, and community-level benefits will be sustained beyond the current funding period.
- Provide practical, evidence-based recommendations to strengthen programme implementation, inform future strategic planning, support programme scale-up, and enhance the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of NCCM's interventions.

1.4 Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation covers the implementation and results of the NCCM programme across its three phases, with particular attention to Phase III (2024–2027) and activities implemented in Luang Prabang, Khammouane and Vientiane Capital in Lao PDR, as well as relevant cross-border linkages with Thailand.

While the primary focus is on the current Phase III project, the evaluation also considers the evolution of the programme across Phase I (2018–2021) and Phase II (2021–2024). Reviewing the previous phases provides important context for understanding how the programme has evolved, how experience and lessons have informed subsequent implementation, and how cumulative achievements have contributed to the broader programme strategy and sustainability of results. This longitudinal perspective allows the evaluation to assess not only the performance of the current phase, but also the programme's adaptation and development over time.

The assessment draws on document review, field visits and interviews, beneficiary and stakeholder consultations, project monitoring information, financial and audit documentation, and an online survey. These sources are triangulated to assess both the achievement of results and the factors that have influenced programme performance. Given the programme's relatively output-oriented design and monitoring system, the evaluation pays particular attention to the distinction between outputs, emerging outcomes and longer-term impacts. Where available evidence is insufficient to establish direct attribution, the evaluation assesses the programme's plausible contribution to observed changes rather than attributing those changes solely to NCCM.

2. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

2.1 Conceptual Framework

The evaluation conceptual framework provides the structure for assessing the NCCM project and understanding how its interventions are expected to contribute to changes among target groups, communities and partner institutions.

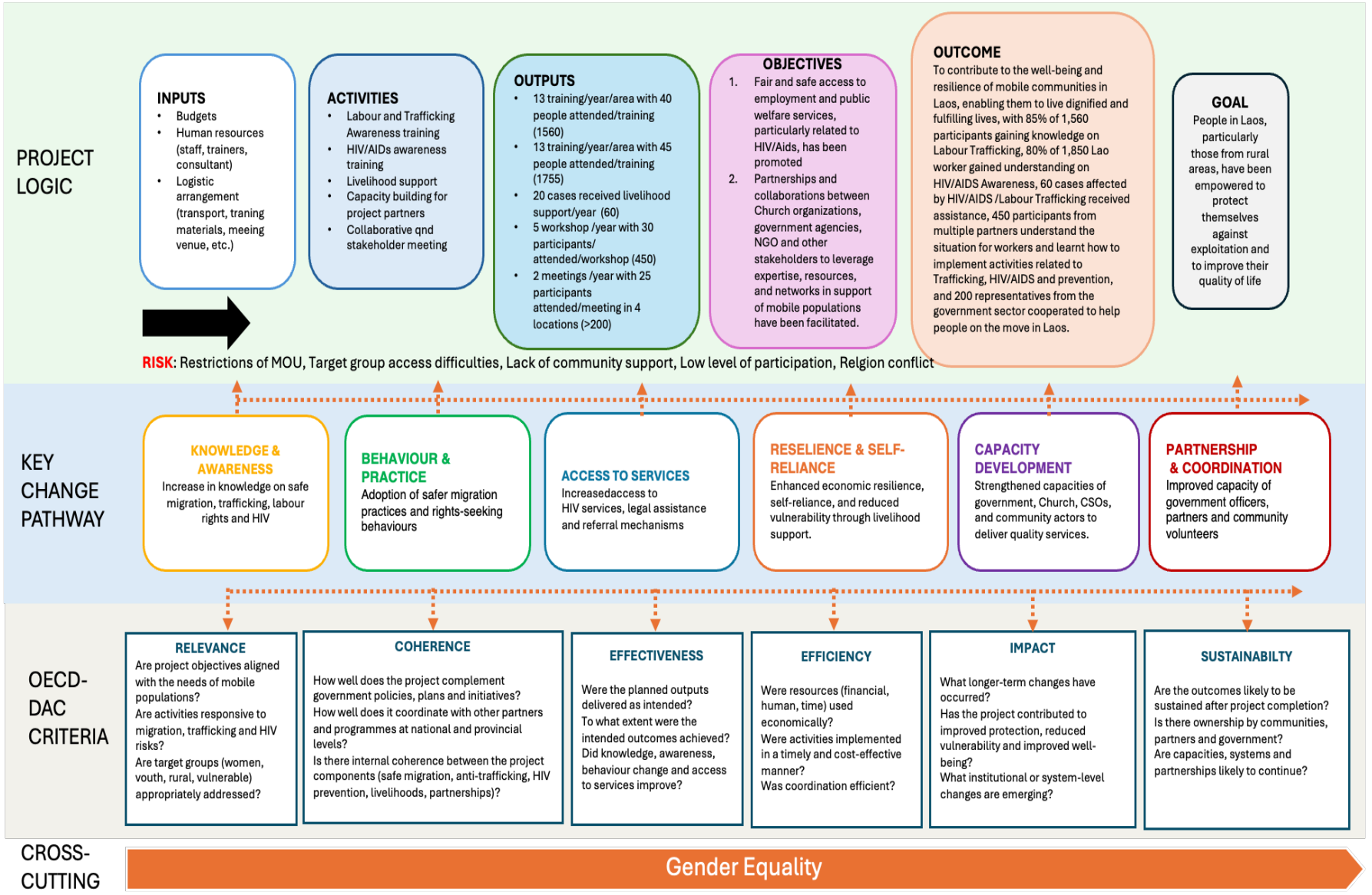
The framework is based on the project's results chain and examines the pathways through which project activities and outputs may contribute to outcomes and longer-term changes. The OECD-DAC evaluation criteria provide the principal basis for evaluative judgement, while six Key Change Pathways are used to examine how change is expected to occur.

The six Key Change Pathways are:

1. Knowledge and Awareness
2. Behaviour and Practice
3. Access to Services
4. Resilience and Self-Reliance
5. Capacity Development
6. Partnership and Coordination

These pathways enable the evaluation to go beyond assessing whether activities were delivered and outputs achieved, and to examine how the project contributed to changes in knowledge, behaviour, access to services, resilience, institutional capacity and collaboration. The six OECD-DAC criteria are applied across these pathways, with relevant cross-cutting issues considered throughout the assessment.

Figure 1: A conceptual framework for project evaluation



2.2 Evaluation Criteria and Key Questions

The evaluation applies the six OECD-DAC evaluation criteria as the principal basis for assessment. The six OECD-DAC criteria were adapted to the specific characteristics and objectives of the NCCM project. Because the project was designed primarily around outputs and activity-level indicators, particular attention was given to distinguishing between achievement of planned outputs and evidence of higher-level outcomes and impacts. The criteria and overarching evaluation questions and key assessment dimensions are presented below.

Table 1: Evaluation questions and key assessment dimensions

Criterion	Main Evaluation Questions	Key Asssment Dimensions
RELEVANCE	To what extent did the project respond to the needs and priorities of target groups and remain appropriate to the changing context?	Needs and target-group relevance; geographical relevance; thematic relevance; institutional relevance; responsiveness to changing risks and contexts
COHERENCE	To what extent was the project coherent with relevant policies, institutional priorities and the work of other actors addressing HIV, migration and human trafficking?	Policy coherence; institutional coherence; internal and external complementarity; coordination; added value; avoidance of duplication
EFFECTIVENESS	To what extent did the project achieve its intended results, and what factors influenced the achievement of these results?	Output achievement; target reach; knowledge and awareness; capacity development; partnerships and referral mechanisms; evidence of emerging outcomes; unintended results
EFFICIENCY	To what extent were project resources and implementation arrangements used efficiently to achieve results?	Human-resource utilisation; budget allocation and management; cost-effectiveness; operational management; M&E resources; timeliness; resource sharing; external factors affecting implementation
IMPACT	What significant changes has the project contributed to, including intended and unintended effects?	Individual change; community change; institutional change; access to services and referral; health and protection outcomes; unintended effects; contribution and attribution
SUSTAINABILITY	To what extent are project results, capacities, partnerships and benefits likely to continue beyond external funding?	Institutional, human-capacity and financial sustainability; community ownership; systems and partnerships; localisation; Caritas Laos readiness; transition and exit prospects

This framework allowed the evaluation to assess both what the project achieved and the extent to which these achievements generated or contributed to broader change.

2.3 Key Change Pathways

The six Key Change Pathways provide an additional analytical lens, particularly for assessing Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability.

Table 2: Key change pathways and areas of assessment

Key Change Pathway	Assessment Focus
Knowledge & Awareness	Changes in knowledge and awareness of safe migration, labour rights, trafficking, HIV/AIDS, and related issues.
Behaviour & Practice	Application of knowledge, safer practices, rights-seeking, and protective behaviours.
Access to Services	Access to protection, legal, health, referral, and other support services.
Resilience & Self-Reliance	Changes in livelihood opportunities, resilience, and vulnerability.
Partnership & Coordination	Strengthened collaboration, referral mechanisms, and service delivery.

2.4 Learning and Future Programming

In addition to assessing the six OECD-DAC criteria, the evaluation identifies lessons, good practices and approaches emerging from Phases I–III that can inform future NCCM programming and the transition to greater local ownership.

Particular attention is given to lessons concerning targeting, implementation models, behaviour-change approaches, resource efficiency, monitoring and learning, partnership and coordination, local capacity development, and sustainability.

2.5 Evaluation Judgement Framework

Each OECD-DAC criterion was assigned a qualitative rating on a five-point scale. The rating represents the evaluator's overall judgement based on the balance of evidence across the relevant assessment dimensions, rather than an arithmetic average of individual indicators. Evidence from project documents, monitoring information, interviews, field observations and the online survey was triangulated before determining the final rating.

Table 3: Evaluation judgement scale

Level	Judgement	Interpretation
5	**Excellent**	Performance substantially exceeds expectations; strong and convincing evidence of results, quality and sustainability.
4	**Good**	Performance meets or exceeds expectations in most respects, with only limited areas for improvement.
3	**Adequate**	Performance is generally acceptable and achieves important results, but significant areas for improvement remain.
2	**Insufficient**	Some positive results or foundations are evident, but performance, systems or evidence are not yet sufficient to meet expectations.
1	**Poor**	Performance is substantially below expectations, with limited evidence of results or significant weaknesses affecting achievement.

Interpretation of the ratings

The ratings should not be interpreted as simple mathematical scores. A rating of 4 does not mean that 80% of activities were successful, nor does a rating of 3 mean that the project achieved 60% of its objectives. Instead, the rating represents the overall professional judgement of the evaluator based on the balance, quality and consistency of evidence across the relevant dimensions of each criterion.

For example, a project may achieve nearly all of its planned training outputs but still receive a Strong rather than Highly Effective judgement if evidence of behavioural or institutional outcomes is limited. Conversely, a project may experience implementation constraints but still be assessed as Excellent if there is strong evidence that its objectives, target groups and approach remain closely aligned with identified needs.

Judgement Rating Process

The evaluation judgements were based on a structured, evidence-based process. Evidence was gathered from multiple sources, including project documentation, financial and audit records, relevant policies and contextual information, interviews, field observations and the online survey.

Evidence was assessed against the project-specific assessment dimensions established for each OECD-DAC criterion and triangulated across different sources. This allowed the evaluation to identify areas where evidence was consistent, complementary or contradictory. The final judgement for each criterion reflects the overall balance of strengths, weaknesses and evidence gaps, rather than a single indicator or source. Each rating is supported by a concise explanation of the key evidence and relevant limitations.

3. METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach, combining document review, a structured beneficiary survey, and qualitative interviews and discussions. These methods were used to assess project performance and results against the OECD-DAC criteria and to examine the six Key Change Pathways. Evidence from different sources and stakeholder groups was triangulated to strengthen the credibility of findings and to provide contextual explanations of project performance.

3.1 Evaluation Design

A convergent mixed-methods design was applied, with quantitative and qualitative evidence considered together. The quantitative component provided descriptive evidence on participants' experiences and perceived changes, while qualitative methods provided deeper understanding of implementation, outcomes, stakeholder perspectives, partnership dynamics, challenges, and lessons learned.

3.2 Desk Review

The desk review examined project documentation and relevant contextual materials to establish the project context, intervention logic, implementation progress, and reported achievements. Documents reviewed included project proposals for Phases I–III, annual progress reports, the SWOT analysis, financial and audit reports, monitoring data and project databases where available, relevant national policies and legal frameworks, and literature on migration, human trafficking, HIV/AIDS, livelihoods, and safe migration in Lao PDR.

3.3 Quantitative Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was administered through an online survey to project participants and stakeholders in the project areas. The intended respondent groups included students, service workers, Church leaders, government officials, and other participants who had engaged in project activities.

Due to the school closure period and internet/connectivity constraints, only 15 completed questionnaires were received. The survey results are therefore treated as supplementary qualitative-descriptive evidence rather than as a representative sample of project beneficiaries. They are used selectively to complement and triangulate evidence from interviews and document review.

3.4 Qualitative Data Collection

Semi-structured Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with stakeholders involved in project implementation, coordination, and service delivery, including Provincial Health Office representatives, NGOs, community leaders, Church members, and project volunteers.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were planned as part of the qualitative approach; however, participant availability was limited during the field visits and only a small number of potential participants could be mobilised. Consequently, KIIs constituted the main qualitative source of primary field evidence.

Direct observation of project activities was not possible because no project activities were taking place during the field visits.

3.5 Data Analysis and Triangulation

Quantitative survey responses were reviewed descriptively and used to identify patterns in participants' perceptions and experiences. Qualitative information from KIIs and available FGDs was analysed thematically against the evaluation questions, OECD-DAC criteria, and Key Change Pathways.

Findings were triangulated across documents, survey responses, and stakeholder perspectives. Where evidence was limited or inconsistent, this is reflected explicitly in the evaluation findings and conclusions.

3.6 Fieldwork Coverage

Field data collection was conducted in Khammouane and Vientiane Capital. The planned coverage and timing of fieldwork were affected by the government permission process, which delayed the field schedule. Luang Prabang was therefore not covered through comparable in-person fieldwork, and available evidence from that location was limited.

3.7 Evaluation limitations

The evaluation was conducted under several practical and data-related constraints. These limitations do not invalidate the assessment, but they affect the breadth and strength of evidence available for some evaluation questions. The findings have therefore been interpreted with appropriate caution and, where possible, triangulated across multiple sources.

Limited fieldwork time and geographic coverage — Field visits were conducted only in Khammouane and Vientiane Capital, with approximately two to three days available in each location. The field schedule was postponed from the originally planned period because government permission was required before data collection could proceed. This reduced the time available for field engagement and limited direct coverage of other project locations.

Limited availability of respondents — The field visits coincided with the school closure period, making face-to-face interviews with students and teachers impracticable and reducing access to students for the online survey. Some stakeholders were also unavailable because of work commitments or field assignments. This particularly affected access to some government officials and potential respondents in all project locations.

Small quantitative survey sample — Only 15 questionnaires were completed. The survey therefore cannot be considered statistically representative of the project's beneficiary population. Survey findings are used only as supplementary evidence and are interpreted together with qualitative and documentary evidence.

Limited qualitative group discussion evidence — Although FGDs were included in the evaluation design, participant availability meant that only a small number of people could participate. As a result, KIIs provided the main source of qualitative primary data.

Limited observation of project activities — No project activities were taking place during the field visits. Consequently, direct observation could not be used to verify implementation practices or observe activities in operation.

Incomplete project documentation and monitoring data — Project data for the second year were available only through the third quarter at the time of the evaluation, with fourth-quarter data not yet available. In addition, some relevant documents, including the Caritas Laos strategic plan, were not available. The assessment therefore relies on the information and documentation available at the time of analysis.

Implications for Interpretation

Given these limitations, the evaluation does not seek to generalise survey results to the wider beneficiary population or attribute observed changes solely to the project. Instead, conclusions are based on the convergence of evidence across available documents, stakeholder interviews, survey responses, and other qualitative information. Where evidence is insufficient to support a firm judgement, the report identifies the evidence gap and qualifies the conclusion accordingly.

4. EVALUATION FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the evaluation against the six OECD-DAC criteria: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability. The findings are based on the triangulation of evidence from document review, fieldwork and stakeholder consultations, project and financial records, and the online survey.

The analysis focuses on both what the project achieved and how and why results were achieved, taking into account the implementation context, stakeholder perspectives and factors that facilitated or constrained performance. Given the project's predominantly output-oriented results framework, particular attention is given to the distinction between output achievement, emerging outcomes and longer-term changes.

Each criterion presents the key findings and analysis, followed by an overall assessment matrix and visual summary. The ratings reflect the balance of evidence across the relevant dimensions of each criterion, as described in the evaluation judgement framework.

4.1 RELEVANCE

To what extent did the project respond to the needs and priorities of target groups and remain appropriate to the changing context?	Excellent

The evaluation finds that the NCCM project was highly relevant to the needs of vulnerable populations in Lao PDR and to the institutional context in which HIV prevention, human trafficking prevention and safe migration activities are implemented. The project was particularly well aligned with the circumstances of young people, prospective migrant workers, entertainment-sector workers and other populations exposed to overlapping risks of HIV infection, labour exploitation and human trafficking.

The relevance of the intervention is strengthened by the strategic selection of Vientiane Capital, Khammouane and Luang Prabang as implementation locations. Although the three locations have different socioeconomic and geographic characteristics, they represent interconnected risk environments. Vientiane Capital and Khammouane are important centres of migration and movement towards Thailand, while Luang Prabang is an important tourism and service-economy centre and a source of migrants from rural and ethnic minority communities. The project therefore addresses vulnerability at different points along the migration and trafficking pathway.

The project is also relevant because it addresses a gap between the scale of existing needs and the capacity of public and civil-society services. Fieldwork indicated that public-health authorities face significant resource constraints in conducting HIV prevention and health-promotion activities, while relatively few organisations provide an integrated approach combining HIV prevention with human trafficking and safe-migration education, particularly among school students and young people approaching entry into the labour market.

The online survey provides additional support for this finding. Respondents generally rated highly the extent to which the project addressed critical community needs and targeted vulnerable groups. Qualitative responses particularly highlighted the urgency of safe migration, human trafficking prevention and HIV/AIDS awareness.

Overall, the evaluation considers the project's geographical focus, target groups, integrated thematic approach and community-based delivery model to be appropriate to the needs and context identified during the evaluation.

4.1.1 Relevance of the strategic geographical focus and changing risk contexts

The selection of Vientiane Capital, Khammouane and Luang Prabang was strongly justified by the different forms of vulnerability present in these locations.

Project documentation identifies Vientiane and Thakhek in Khammouane as major centres and hubs for Lao people seeking employment and economic opportunities, particularly those intending to travel to Thailand. The earlier project proposal specifically described Vientiane and Thakhek as locations through which many Lao people seek access to Thailand in search of employment and income. This geographical rationale remains relevant given the continued scale of Lao labour migration to Thailand. The project proposal reported that, as of July 2023, there were 227,025 Lao migrant workers in Thailand through MOU and Cabinet Resolution channels, while also noting that undocumented migration continued and that some workers were subsequently deported to Laos.

The relevance of these locations is therefore not simply based on their proximity to the Thai border. They are important migration preparation and transition points where young people and workers make decisions about employment and migration and where preventive information can potentially reduce subsequent exposure to trafficking and exploitation.

Vientiane Capital

Vientiane Capital represents an important convergence point for migration, employment and HIV-related vulnerability. It is a major urban centre and an important departure and transit point for Lao people seeking employment in Thailand. The project has therefore appropriately targeted young people and prospective migrant workers before they leave Laos.

Previous NCCM implementation demonstrated that insufficient knowledge of human trafficking, labour rights and migration procedures can contribute to workers, students and young people using irregular migration pathways. The project also has an established relationship with Vientiane health authorities, alongside cooperation with the Provincial Health Offices of Luang Prabang and Khammouane, including activities related to cross-border health prevention, young women working in the entertainment sector and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Available HIV programme data further supports the importance of Vientiane Capital. The 2025 HIV estimates contained in the project documentation indicate approximately 9,120 people living with HIV in Vientiane Capital, compared with 1,404 in Luang Prabang and 863 in Khammouane. These figures should not be interpreted as prevalence rates, but they demonstrate the substantial HIV burden across the three target locations and reinforce the relevance of maintaining HIV prevention as an important component of the intervention.

Khammouane

Khammouane presents an especially strong case for the project's integrated focus on migration, trafficking and HIV prevention. The province is closely connected to Thailand and has been identified as a major centre through which Lao workers seek employment opportunities. Project documentation identifies Thakhek and surrounding areas as important employment and migration hubs. However, fieldwork also identified new and changing forms of vulnerability associated with economic and industrial development.

In and around Thakhek, Chinese-invested mining and industrial activities have attracted Chinese workers and stimulated the development of restaurants, karaoke bars and massage establishments. Project field monitoring reported that the emergence of these businesses has also contributed to less visible forms of sex work. Public-health officials and NGOs have attempted to provide health education to workers in these settings, although access to industrial zones is restricted by business owners.

This finding is particularly important for assessing relevance because the risk environment is not static. Economic investment, migration and the expansion of service-sector employment are creating new spaces in which young women and other workers may be exposed to HIV, sexually transmitted infections, exploitation and trafficking. Workers in karaoke bars, restaurants and massage establishments are also highly mobile, with new workers frequently arriving from the same villages through personal and family networks. As a result, health education needs to be repeated and adapted as the workforce changes.

The project is therefore relevant not only to an existing trafficking problem but also to emerging forms of vulnerability associated with changing labour markets and local economic development.

Luang Prabang

Luang Prabang provides a different but equally relevant rationale for project intervention. Unlike Vientiane Capital and Khammouane, it is not primarily a border location. Its relevance derives instead from its role as a major tourism and service-economy centre and from the movement of young people from remote communities into urban employment.

The project document specifically identified the vulnerability of ethnic minority populations living in remote areas who migrate towards Luang Prabang in search of employment. It noted that many young women, including those below 18 years of age, were working in the city, often with limited access to basic education, and that they could be vulnerable to labour exploitation and trafficking. Fieldwork further identified trafficking cases originating from Luang Prabang, including young women from ethnic minority communities. This reinforces the relevance of prevention activities that reach young people before or during their transition from rural communities into urban employment.

The HIV situation further demonstrates why Luang Prabang should not be viewed solely as a trafficking or migration location. The estimated number of people living with HIV was approximately 1,404 in 2025, while the estimated female sex-worker population was approximately 1,069. The project therefore appropriately addresses overlapping vulnerabilities rather than treating trafficking, migration and HIV as isolated issues.

The online survey further confirms the contextual urgency. A respondent from Luang Prabang highlighted the continuing seriousness of both HIV and human trafficking risks, including an estimated 20–30 new HIV infections per month. While this figure is based on stakeholder reporting and should not be interpreted as an independently verified prevalence estimate, it reinforces the perception among local stakeholders that the need for prevention remains significant.

Across all three locations, the evidence therefore points to a changing risk context. The project has a reasonably flexible platform for responding to these changes through community outreach, school activities, volunteer networks and partnerships with health, labour, education and social-welfare authorities.

The online survey reinforces this conclusion: respondents highly rated the project's response to critical community needs, and its targeting of vulnerable groups. Respondents specifically highlighted young people from remote areas who may leave school early to seek employment and face significant risks because of limited protective knowledge.

4.1.2 Relevance of integrating HIV prevention, human trafficking prevention and a school-based approach

A major strength of the project design is its decision to address HIV prevention and human trafficking prevention together, complemented by safe-migration education.

The evaluation considers this integrated approach highly relevant because target populations frequently experience multiple and interconnected vulnerabilities. A young person preparing to migrate to Thailand, for example, may simultaneously face risks associated with unsafe recruitment, undocumented migration, labour exploitation, sexual exploitation, limited knowledge of HIV prevention and limited access to health services.

The project documentation demonstrates that NCCM's previous interventions had already developed this integrated approach. In the previous project, 2,647 people participated in HIV/AIDS health training, while 2,290 participated in anti-human-trafficking and income-generation activities within two years. The approach was therefore not an artificial combination of two unrelated themes but reflected the circumstances of the populations with whom NCCM was working.

This is particularly relevant for workers in entertainment and service-sector establishments. The integrated approach allows NCCM to use trafficking-prevention activities as an entry point for discussing health risks and, conversely, health education as an entry point for discussing exploitation, labour rights and safe migration. This cross-sectoral approach is valuable for populations that may not identify themselves as trafficking victims or as members of a conventional HIV key population.

Fieldwork also indicates that relatively few organisations provide integrated HIV prevention, human trafficking awareness and safe-migration education through schools. HIV prevention and anti-trafficking interventions are often implemented separately. The project therefore provides a bridge between these areas by preparing young people for the health, labour and protection risks that may arise after graduation. School administrators reported that no other organisation had previously provided the same type of integrated activity.

The school component is particularly relevant because it provides an opportunity for preventive intervention before young people enter potentially risky employment or migration situations. School management teams also expressed interest in incorporating HIV/AIDS and human trafficking information into school activities or curricula.

At the same time, fieldwork identified a limitation that has implications for future targeting rather than for the fundamental relevance of the approach. NCCM cannot reach all schools or all young people who may be at risk. Limited resources restrict the number and frequency of school activities, while many students move to other areas after graduation, making longer-term follow-up difficult. The project should therefore consider how school-based prevention can be connected more systematically with post-graduation and migration-stage services.

The online survey provides further confirmation that the project addresses critical needs, particularly safe migration, human trafficking prevention and HIV/AIDS awareness. Respondents also highlighted the particular vulnerability of young people and mobile populations.

4.1.3 Relevance to young people and school students

The evaluation finds that the project's focus on students and young people approaching entry into the labour market was particularly relevant. Many young Lao people view migration to Thailand as an important employment opportunity because of limited employment opportunities and economic pressures within Laos. The project proposal noted that some young people prefer to work in Thailand rather than continue into higher education because they need to generate income for their families.

This creates an important window for prevention. Young people who are still in school can be reached before entering the labour market, when they may have limited knowledge of human trafficking, HIV and STI prevention.

The need for such intervention is supported by the 2023 Lao public-health survey on HIV knowledge, which found that only 23% of young males aged 15–24 had knowledge about HIV, compared with 20% of young females.

Fieldwork strongly supports the relevance of this approach. Previous NCCM school activities were positively received by school administrators and teachers, who reported that no other organisation had previously provided the same type of integrated training. Schools also expressed interest in incorporating HIV/AIDS and human trafficking information into their educational activities. Monitoring in Khammouane further found that students approaching graduation had increased awareness of how to protect themselves when seeking employment, including knowledge concerning the legal protection of workers under 18 and the risks associated with employment in Thailand.

The online survey similarly indicated strong alignment between project activities and the needs of young people and mobile populations. Respondents noted that young people from remote areas often leave school early to seek work and may face serious risks because of limited protective knowledge.

The relevance of the intervention is therefore particularly strong because it is preventive and anticipatory. Rather than waiting until young people become migrant workers or trafficking victims, the project seeks to equip them with knowledge before they enter potentially risky environments.

4.1.4 Relevance in the context of constrained public-health resources

One of the strongest findings from the fieldwork is that the project was relevant because it helped address a significant capacity and resource gap within the public-health system.

Interviews with the HIV/AIDS Centre indicated that public-health resources for HIV prevention had become increasingly constrained. The Centre reported that its annual budget had been reduced by approximately one-third, despite continuing prevention needs. Fieldwork also indicated that resource constraints affected practical prevention activities, including outreach and distribution of prevention materials.

This context is important because it clarifies the role of NCCM. NCCM is not simply providing an alternative to government health services. Rather, it complements public-health institutions by extending outreach and prevention activities to populations and settings that government services have difficulty reaching. NCCM reported that its intervention was able to reach target groups that government programmes could not adequately support.

The relationship between NCCM and government health authorities is also institutional rather than purely informal. The project has established cooperation with health authorities in Vientiane Capital, Luang Prabang and Khammouane, while the Department of Labour and Social Welfare has collaborated with NCCM on training facilities and identifying trafficking victims. The project is therefore broadly aligned with the responsibilities and priorities of relevant Lao government institutions.

This collaboration is supported by existing government arrangements, including the Thai-Lao Border Health Care framework. Project documentation indicates that health and labour authorities have contributed training facilities, coordination, information and support for identifying trafficking victims. Cooperation with government agencies has also made it easier to reach schools and target communities and allowed NCCM to work through existing government structures rather than establishing a parallel system.

This is a significant strength because it increases the likelihood that project activities are recognised as contributing to existing institutional responsibilities rather than being perceived as externally imposed activities.

4.1.5 Relevance of NCCM's community-based and volunteer approach

The evaluation also finds that the way NCCM delivers the intervention is relevant to the target population. Government health services are often structured around formal institutions and conventional health education. In contrast, NCCM uses community volunteers, church networks and local partners to reach people in informal and difficult-to-access environments.

This is particularly important for entertainment workers and other less visible populations. Recent project reporting indicates that many target workers are migrants from other regions of Laos working in massage parlours, karaoke bars and other service venues. Their frequent movement makes it difficult to establish and maintain conventional follow-up systems.

Community-based actors can help overcome some of these barriers because they can establish relationships and communicate with people in less formal settings. Project reporting also identifies community volunteers

as an important mechanism for coordinating activities and supporting community members on health and labour-exploitation issues.

The evaluation therefore considers the volunteer-based approach appropriate, particularly for populations that may be reluctant to engage directly with government authorities. At the same time, the future relevance of this approach will depend on whether the project can broaden its community reach beyond established Catholic networks and more systematically prioritise communities according to HIV, migration and trafficking vulnerability. This issue is more directly related to future targeting and sustainability and will be considered in the relevant sections of the evaluation.

4.1.6 Overall assessment

The evaluation finds that the project is highly relevant to the needs of vulnerable and mobile populations and to the institutional context in Lao PDR. Its focus on HIV prevention, human trafficking, safe migration and young people responds to interconnected and continuing vulnerabilities, while its engagement with schools, community volunteers, Church networks and government counterparts provides appropriate channels for reaching target groups.

Table 4: Overall Assessment of Relevance

Demensions	Evaluation Findings
Geographical relevance	Vientiane Capital, Khammouane and Luang Prabang represent different but interconnected HIV, migration and trafficking-risk environments.
Target-group relevance	Young people, prospective migrants and other vulnerable groups face overlapping health, migration and protection risks that justify preventive intervention.
Thematic relevance	Integrating HIV prevention, trafficking prevention and safe migration reflects the interconnected nature of these risks and fills a relatively distinct prevention niche.
Institutional relevance	NCCM complements government services and helps address gaps created by constrained public-health resources.
Delivery relevance	Schools, volunteers, churches, government agencies and local partners provide practical channels for reaching vulnerable populations and strengthening community-level engagement.

Conclusion and Implication

Overall, the evidence supports a 5 – Excellent judgement. The project remains highly relevant to the needs and context identified across the three locations. Future relevance will depend on more precise targeting and geographic prioritisation, including clear criteria for selecting target groups and communities.

4.2 COHERENCE

To what extent was the project coherent with relevant policies, institutional priorities and the work of other actors addressing HIV, migration and human trafficking?	Good

The evaluation finds that the project demonstrates strong coherence with Lao PDR's national policy and institutional framework on HIV/AIDS and STI, migration governance, human trafficking prevention, labour migration and cross-border cooperation. The project is particularly well aligned with the National Strategic Plan (2021–2030) and Action Plan (2021–2025) on HIV/AIDS and STI, which explicitly identifies mobile populations, migrant workers, young people, people in high-risk situations and victims of human trafficking as vulnerable populations requiring targeted prevention and improved access to services.

The project is also consistent with Lao PDR's evolving migration governance framework. The country's 2026 Voluntary Review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) identifies human trafficking and international cooperation and partnerships as two national priorities, while also emphasising safe migration pathways, migrant information, labour protection, access to services, reintegration and stronger whole-of-government coordination.

This is particularly significant because the NCCM project brings together safe migration, labour rights, human trafficking prevention, HIV/AIDS prevention, access to services and partnership development rather than addressing these issues separately. These components correspond closely with the way Lao PDR's policies themselves frame migration and HIV as cross-cutting issues requiring cooperation across sectors.

The project therefore demonstrates coherence at three interconnected levels, including Policy coherence – alignment with national strategies and priorities; Institutional coherence – complementarity with government agencies and existing systems; and Cross-border and external coherence – alignment with bilateral, regional and international cooperation mechanisms concerning migration, health and trafficking.

4.2.1 Coherence with Lao PDR's national HIV/AIDS and STI Strategy

The project demonstrates strong coherence with Lao PDR's national HIV/AIDS and STI policy framework, particularly the National Strategic Plan (2021–2030) and Action Plan (2021–2025) on HIV/AIDS and STI. The national strategy seeks to improve access to quality prevention, testing, treatment and care while reducing stigma and discrimination. It explicitly identifies mobile people, migrant workers and young people aged 15–24 as populations requiring particular attention, alongside other vulnerable groups including victims of human trafficking.

The national strategy specifically calls for increased HIV/STI information and education in secondary schools, colleges and universities, workplaces, locations with young people out of school and border locations, while also calling for strengthened capacity of partners. This is strikingly close to the geographical and methodological approach adopted by NCCM that focus its intervention with school students, service workers, border communities, and other groups at-risk of human trafficking.

The project is also coherent with Strategic Intervention 2.4, which calls for expanded prevention and testing among the general population, particularly mobile people, migrants and young people. The national strategy recognises that prevention activities for mobile people and migrants remain insufficient

and specifically calls for cooperation with workplaces and local authorities, as well as information and education in communities, schools, workplaces, border locations and other locations where people may be at higher risk.

The additional HIV/AIDS policy material also reinforces this assessment. The policy framework places emphasis on participation, coordination, accessible health information, equality and non-discrimination, which is consistent with NCCM's community-based and partnership-oriented model. This is particularly important for a project implemented by a Church-based organisation: NCCM's role is not to replace public health services, but to help extend prevention information, community mobilisation and access to services among groups that may otherwise be difficult to reach.

A particularly strong area of coherence concerns cross-border HIV/AIDS, which is itself a strategic intervention under the national HIV/AIDS plan. The strategy calls for stronger cross-border information exchange, coordination and referral mechanisms for people living with HIV, and recognises that Lao migrant workers in countries such as Thailand may be missed by health monitoring and may have difficulties maintaining regular treatment.

The project, therefore, was not operating outside the national HIV/AIDS response; it was implementing activities that are explicitly anticipated within the national strategic framework, particularly in relation to mobile populations, migrant workers, young people, border communities and victims of human trafficking. More importantly, the national strategy does not merely identify these groups as vulnerable. Its proposed response closely resembles several elements of the NCCM project.

4.2.2 Coherence with Migration Governance and Labour-Migration Policies

The NCCM project is also strongly coherent with the emerging migration-governance framework of Lao PDR. Migration in Lao PDR is governed through a multi-sectoral system involving labour, public security, health, foreign affairs and other government institutions. The Lao PDR GCM Voluntary Review describes migration as a cross-cutting governance issue involving multiple laws, policies, ministries and institutional processes.

This is consistent with the project's integrated design. Rather than addressing migration solely as a labour issue, NCCM links migration with labour rights, health, human trafficking, child protection, livelihoods and social protection. The project's overall goal is to empower people, particularly those from rural areas, with information and skills to protect themselves from exploitation and improve their quality of life.

The project is particularly relevant to the government's framework for managing Lao workers who migrate abroad. The current national system includes Decree No. 245 on Placement of Lao Workers to Work Abroad (2020) and Ministerial Agreement No. 1050 on the Management of Employment Service Enterprises (2022). The government also supports prospective migrants through Integrated Migrant Assistance Centres (iMACs) and Migrant Worker Resource Centres (MRCs), operated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the Lao Federation of Trade Unions and civil-society organisations.

NCCM's work complements this architecture by providing information at the community and pre-migration level. Its training covers labour rights, recruitment risks, trafficking, health services and practical steps for safer migration. The project also uses community outreach, peer groups, bilingual materials and formal training to reach people considered at risk of exploitation.

The project therefore addresses an important gap between formal migration governance mechanisms and the communities from which migrants originate. The project proposal identifies continued movement of workers and youth from remote areas towards Vientiane, Khammouane, Savannakhet and the Thai-Lao border before moving onwards to Thailand. It also recognises that, despite growing numbers of registered Lao migrant workers, undocumented migration continues.

The project is also coherent with the government's increasing emphasis on fair recruitment and protection of migrant workers. The GCM review identifies fair recruitment, irregular migration, the emigration of young people and reintegration of returnees as continuing governance challenges. These are closely related to NCCM's focus on labour rights, safe migration information and livelihood assistance for vulnerable and returning migrants, including through NGO partners such as AAT and VFI.

Therefore, the project is strongly coherent with Lao PDR's migration-governance direction and provides a complementary community-based function. Its particular added value is translating formal migration policies and labour rights into practical information and support for people before and during migration. The remaining challenge is to strengthen systematic links between NCCM's community mechanisms and existing government migration services such as MRCs, iMACs and formal referral mechanisms.

4.2.3 Coherence with Cross-Border Cooperation

Cross-border coherence is particularly important because the project addresses a population whose vulnerabilities are shaped by movement between Laos and Thailand, rather than by conditions within Laos alone.

The project has a strong basis for cross-border cooperation. Previous implementation involved Thai and Lao government agencies and used the Thai-Lao Border Health MoU as a mechanism for collaboration. NCCM reported six meetings involving Thai and Lao government and private-sector actors to discuss project progress and future activities, with 135 participants.

The project proposal also identifies cooperation with provincial health authorities in Thailand and Laos. Nong Khai and Nakhon Phanom Provincial Public Health Offices in Thailand have cooperated with NCCM on cross-border health prevention and disease control, while Lao provincial health authorities have worked with NCCM on cross-border health prevention and care.

The cross-border approach is highly consistent with the Lao national HIV/AIDS strategy. The strategy explicitly identifies international and cross-border cooperation as a strategic intervention and calls for regular information exchange, coordination and referral mechanisms for people living with HIV who cross borders. It also recognises that Lao migrant workers, particularly those working in Thailand, may be missed by health monitoring and may have difficulties maintaining treatment.

The project therefore has a clear strategic rationale for working across the border. Migrants may receive information in Laos, work in Thailand and subsequently return to Laos. Risks related to trafficking, labour exploitation and HIV/AIDS can therefore arise at different stages of this migration cycle. A purely Laos-based intervention would have limited ability to address these interconnected risks.

NCCM's partnership model also provides an important institutional bridge. The project has involved Thai provincial health authorities, Lao health authorities, labour and social welfare authorities, Church networks and anti-trafficking organisations. Talitha Kum Thailand, for example, is identified as a network

providing support for anti-trafficking work and capacity building, while the Lao Church/Caritas structure is envisaged as a future local partner and potential project owner.

However, this is also one of the areas where coherence needs to be strengthened from informal cooperation towards institutionalised cooperation. The project documentation demonstrates good relationships, meetings and collaboration, but not yet a fully institutionalised cross-border referral system covering health, trafficking and labour protection. This is significant because the national HIV strategy itself identifies weaknesses in cross-border referral and coordination.

The annual reporting also indicates that NCCM sees the establishment of a stronger border-level MOU with the Ministry of Health as a continuing need, particularly to provide health education and awareness among young people in schools and remote rural communities.

Hence, cross-border coherence is strong in terms of strategic rationale, relationships and existing collaboration, but moderate in terms of formalised systems and institutional mechanisms. The project is well positioned to complement government cross-border initiatives, but its longer-term value would be greater if existing relationships were translated into clearer referral protocols, defined institutional responsibilities and sustained information-sharing mechanisms.

4.2.4 Coherence with the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)

The project is also strongly coherent with the principles and objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and, importantly, with the priorities that Lao PDR itself has identified through its GCM implementation process.

The Lao PDR Voluntary Review for the 2026 International Migration Review Forum describes the country's approach as a whole-of-government and whole-of-society process, involving government ministries, United Nations organisations, NGOs and civil-society organisations. This approach is consistent with NCCM's partnership model, which brings together Church organisations, government agencies, NGOs, community leaders and networks supporting migrants and vulnerable populations.

The project is particularly relevant to several GCM objectives. The Lao PDR review identifies progress under Objectives 1 (data), 2 (minimising adverse drivers), 3 (information provision), 4 (legal identity and documentation), 5 (regular pathways), 6 (recruitment and decent work), 11 (manage borders), 15 (access to basic services) and 20 (remittances).

NCCM's activities correspond especially closely to Objectives 3, 4, 6, 10, 15 and 23:

- Information provision: the project provides practical migration and labour-rights information to potential and current migrants.
- Documentation and safer migration: training encourages migrants to safeguard documentation and verify recruitment information.
- Fair recruitment and decent work: labour-rights education addresses risks of exploitation and unfair employment.
- Human trafficking: trafficking prevention is an explicit component of the project.
- Access to basic services: HIV/AIDS and health education help connect migrants and vulnerable populations with public health services.

- International cooperation and partnerships: NCCM works through Thai-Lao government, Church and civil-society networks.

This alignment is particularly strong because Lao PDR has itself identified GCM Objective 10 (eradicating human trafficking) and Objective 23 (enhancing international cooperation and partnerships) as national priorities.

The project also aligns with the GCM emphasis on protecting migrants' rights throughout the migration cycle. The Lao PDR review stresses the continuing need to strengthen protection of Lao migrant workers abroad through information, labour protection mechanisms and consular assistance. NCCM's focus on pre-migration information, labour rights, health protection and support for returnees therefore fits well within this broader policy direction.

The project also contributes to the GCM's emphasis on partnership and capacity development. Its logical framework aims to strengthen the capacity of partners and establish a longer-term partnership mechanism through which more than 200 members would continue providing information and support to mobile populations beyond the project period.

There is therefore considerable normative coherence between the project and the GCM. Nevertheless, the evaluation should distinguish between alignment with the GCM framework and direct contribution to GCM implementation. NCCM is not a government actor responsible for implementing the GCM. Its contribution is indirect, through community-level implementation, awareness raising, partnership development and support to vulnerable migrants.

The project is strongly coherent with the GCM and particularly with Lao PDR's identified priorities on human trafficking and international cooperation. Its strongest contribution is translating broad migration-governance principles into practical community-level information, prevention and support. The main opportunity is to strengthen links with formal GCM coordination mechanisms and national migration-governance structures so that lessons from NCCM's community work can feed into broader policy and coordination processes.

4.2.5 Coherence with Lao PDR's Anti-Human Trafficking Framework

The project's prevention approach is consistent with the national emphasis on reducing vulnerability before trafficking occurs. NCCM provides community training, bilingual materials and peer outreach to increase awareness of trafficking and smuggling risks and help people recognise warning signs. It also provides practical safe-migration information, including measures such as maintaining copies of recruitment documentation and sharing travel information with trusted family members.

The project also contributes to the protection and assistance dimension of anti-trafficking. It provides assistance to people affected by HIV/AIDS and labour trafficking and has supported trafficking cases through its partner network. Importantly, its approach is not limited to awareness raising. It also seeks to strengthen the capacity of Church leaders, government officials, community members and other partners to identify and respond to trafficking.

This approach is consistent with the current national direction. Lao PDR's GCM review identifies eradicating human trafficking as one of the two GCM objectives prioritised nationally, supported by the National Plan of Action, COMMIT, ASEAN frameworks and cooperation among consular, immigration,

UN and other organisations. The newly endorsed Phase IV National Plan of Action covers 2026–2030 and continues to emphasise the identification and protection of migrants in vulnerable situations, including women and children affected by trafficking and exploitation.

There is also evidence of institutional complementarity. NCCM has worked with labour and social-welfare authorities, health authorities, police, Church networks and anti-trafficking organisations. These relationships provide channels for prevention, identification, referral and assistance.

However, NCCM's role remains complementary rather than substitutive. Identification, investigation, prosecution and formal victim protection remain primarily government responsibilities. NCCM's comparative contribution is at community level through prevention, awareness raising, early identification, referral, accompaniment and partnership building. The key coherence issue is therefore how effectively these community mechanisms are connected with formal government protection and referral systems.

Therefore, the project is strongly coherent with Lao PDR's anti-human trafficking priorities and adds value through community prevention, labour-rights education, early identification, support and network building. Further coherence would be strengthened by formalising referral pathways and clarifying responsibilities among NCCM, Church partners, government agencies and specialised anti-trafficking actors.

4.2.6 Overall asessment

The evaluation finds that the project demonstrates strong coherence with relevant Lao PDR policies, institutional priorities and wider initiatives addressing HIV/AIDS, migration and human trafficking. The project's integrated focus on HIV prevention, safe migration, labour rights and human trafficking is closely aligned with national priorities, while its community-based approach complements existing government services and systems. The project also has a strong strategic rationale for cross-border cooperation, supported by established relationships among Thai and Lao government authorities, Church organisations and civil-society actors.

However, the strength of coherence varies across dimensions. Policy and strategic coherence is particularly strong, while cross-border and institutional coherence are somewhat less developed in terms of formalised mechanisms. Existing relationships and coordination provide a strong foundation, but some cooperation remains dependent on individual relationships and periodic meetings rather than clearly defined and institutionalised referral, information-sharing and coordination arrangements. This represents the main area for further strengthening.

Table 5: Overall assessment of Coherence

Demensions	Evaluation Findings
HIV/AIDS policy	Strong alignment with national HIV/AIDS priorities on mobile populations, migrants, young people, prevention, access to services, stigma reduction and cross-border cooperation.
Migration governance	Complements government migration-governance mechanisms by translating labour rights and safe-migration policies into community-level information and support.
Cross-border cooperation	Strong strategic rationale and established Thai–Lao relationships, although formal cross-border referral and coordination mechanisms remain less institutionalised.
GCM	Strong alignment with GCM principles and, particularly, Lao PDR's priorities on human trafficking and international cooperation.
Anti-trafficking	Strong alignment with national anti-trafficking priorities, particularly prevention, awareness, identification, protection and partnership development.

Conclusion and Implication

Overall, the evidence supports a 4 – Good judgement. The project is well positioned within the broader policy and institutional landscape and provides a useful complementary role by connecting community-level prevention and support with government and civil-society systems. Further progress is needed to institutionalise cross-border coordination and referral mechanisms.

For the next phase, the priority should be to move from established relationships towards more institutionalised cooperation. This includes strengthening formal referral pathways, clarifying roles and responsibilities among partners, maintaining systematic information sharing, and connecting community-level mechanisms more consistently with government and cross-border systems. This would help preserve the project's existing strengths while reducing reliance on individual relationships and supporting longer-term institutional ownership.

4.3 EFFECTIVENESS

To what extent did the project achieve its intended results, and what factors influenced the achievement of these results?	Good

The project has been generally effective in delivering its planned activities and generating immediate results, particularly in increasing knowledge and awareness, developing the capacity of local stakeholders, and strengthening cooperation between government and civil society actors. The strongest evidence of effectiveness is found in the pre- and post-training results, which consistently demonstrate improvements in participants' knowledge of HIV/AIDS, human trafficking and safe migration. The project has also developed an important partnership and coordination function, particularly by connecting Thai and Lao public health authorities and by facilitating relationships between Caritas Laos and government agencies.

At the same time, the assessment identified several limitations. These include the relatively narrow geographic and institutional coverage of activities, the limited frequency of activities, the use of a population-based target-setting approach that does not sufficiently distinguish between target groups, and limited systematic follow-up to determine whether training knowledge is sustained and applied. The project is therefore assessed as effective at the output, immediate knowledge and partnership levels, but with scope to strengthen outcome-level follow-up and the strategic targeting of beneficiaries.

4.3.1 Achievement of planned outputs and target reach

The project has made good progress in achieving its planned quantitative outputs. By Quarter 3 of 2026, it had reached 1,385 participants through labour and trafficking awareness activities and 1,270 through HIV/AIDS-related activities. A further 212 stakeholders participated in training for church leaders, government agencies and village leaders, while 97 participated in collaborative advocacy and networking activities. The project also provided livelihood assistance to 15 cases. Overall, the project had reached or supported 2,979 participants and cases across the reported activities.

The pattern of implementation indicates that group-based awareness and training activities are the main mechanism through which the project has achieved scale. The project has been able to work with schools, workplaces, government institutions and community networks, and has adapted activities to different groups and contexts. For example, HIV/AIDS training has been delivered to students, government personnel and service workers, while labour and trafficking activities have included students, workersm and comunities in different settings.

The project has also demonstrated flexibility in adjusting the content and delivery of activities. Participatory approaches, including games, videos and practical exercises, were increasingly introduced to make training more engaging and understandable. Field staff also reported adapting materials and activities to the Lao context, including simplifying activities so that they could be delivered by Lao volunteers to Lao participants.

However, the assessment found that the scale of implementation remains relatively limited compared with the size of the potential target population. In Vientiane, for example, the project has a target covering nine districts/cities but has not been able to reach all of them. Stakeholders noted that only a small number of schools can be covered each year, while Vientiane alone has more than 200 secondary schools.

This is partly a resource and accessibility issue rather than simply an implementation failure. Remote schools require considerably more travel time and expenditure, and the project generally concentrates on locations that can be reached within the available budget. Stakeholders nevertheless expressed a clear preference for expansion to additional schools, districts and groups, particularly areas outside the main urban centres.

The livelihood component should be viewed separately from the project's larger-scale awareness activities. While the number of cases supported is relatively small, interviews suggest that case-based assistance can be more effective when delivered through specialised NGOs with established assessment and monitoring systems. For example, AAT undertakes case assessment, provides technical guidance and follows up cases periodically, while VFI similarly provides case support through its established livelihood and protection systems.

This suggests that, for future livelihood assistance, NCCM's comparative advantage may be greater as a referral, coordination and financing mechanism linked to specialised service providers, rather than attempting to manage all case assessment and follow-up directly through government service structures.

4.3.2 Effectiveness of training and awareness activities

The strongest evidence of project effectiveness concerns the immediate knowledge and awareness gains resulting from training.

The project staff established pre- and post-training assessment as a key means of determining whether participants increased their awareness of labour rights, migration risks, trafficking and health services. The evaluation's review of these assessments confirms that this indicator has been substantially achieved.

For HIV/AIDS, participants demonstrated improvements across the assessed knowledge areas. The 2024 assessment, for example, recorded notable improvements in understanding HIV transmission, prevention and available treatment. The 2025 assessments similarly showed positive changes in participants' knowledge, including substantial improvement in understanding that HIV cannot be transmitted through ordinary social contact and in knowledge of prevention measures.

The evidence for human trafficking awareness is particularly strong. The 2024 assessment showed substantial increases in knowledge across all assessed areas, including understanding that trafficking is not restricted to prostitution, awareness of the different stages and locations involved in trafficking, recognition that children are not the only potential victims, and understanding of common recruitment practices. Similar positive changes were found in the 2025 assessments in Khammouane and Luang Prabang.

The field interviews support these quantitative findings. An NCCM volunteer working with service workers in Vientiane reported that participants who initially had limited knowledge of HIV prevention subsequently demonstrated greater awareness of prevention measures and greater confidence in negotiating safer practices. The volunteer also described being able to provide information and referral support to people requiring HIV-related services.

The method of delivery appears to be an important factor in effectiveness. Stakeholders consistently distinguished between conventional lecture-based approaches and the more participatory approaches introduced by NCCM. Games, videos, discussion and practical exercises were viewed as more engaging and easier for participants to understand. An NCCM staff member noted that participatory activities such as the "water exchange" exercise and short videos were particularly effective, while conventional presentations by public health officials were sometimes considered too lengthy and technical.

The supplementary beneficiary survey also supports this conclusion. Respondents reported high levels of perceived improvement in knowledge, application of learning and confidence to share information, although the small sample means that these findings should be treated as supporting evidence rather than representative of all beneficiaries.

Overall, the evidence indicates that NCCM's training and awareness activities are effective in producing immediate knowledge and awareness gains, with participatory and context-adapted approaches appearing particularly promising. However, there is less systematic evidence concerning whether knowledge is retained over time or translated into sustained behavioural change. This should therefore be considered under the Impact criterion rather than assumed from the training results alone.

4.3.3 Capacity development and multiplier effects

The project has contributed to capacity development beyond the direct recipients of its awareness activities. This is particularly evident through its work with teachers, health workers, volunteers, church representatives and government personnel.

The project's network meetings and training activities provide an important mechanism for transferring knowledge to people who already have an institutional or community role. By September 2025, 112 stakeholders had participated in training for church leaders, government agencies and village leaders.

Interviews indicate that some trained stakeholders were interested in applying the knowledge and methods in their own work. For example, health and education stakeholders identified the potential to integrate HIV/AIDS and trafficking information into existing classroom or information sessions. The Luang Prabang network meeting also generated interest in using some of NCCM's practical tools within health-service settings. This is particularly relevant given the limited number of schools and communities that NCCM can reach directly.

However, the evidence also suggests that one-off training is insufficient to establish sustained capacity. Stakeholders recommended that the project develop a more structured TOT approach, including practice, coaching, follow-up and supporting materials. The Education Department similarly suggested creating school-based volunteers so that activities could continue even when NCCM is not present.

This is an important area for future programming. Rather than attempting to increase the number of direct training sessions indefinitely, NCCM could achieve greater effectiveness by investing more heavily in selected intermediary groups who can continue delivering the messages themselves.

4.3.4 Partnership and coordination

Partnership and coordination represent one of the project's strongest areas of effectiveness.

NCCM has developed effective working relationships with public health authorities in both Thailand and Lao PDR. These relationships have enabled the project to obtain permissions, access target groups, mobilise technical expertise and facilitate cross-border cooperation. The annual reporting confirms that NCCM worked with the Thai and Lao public health departments to develop work plans, obtain official authorisation and coordinate participation of other agencies.

The field interviews provide further evidence that NCCM has played a bridging role between Thai and Lao public health institutions. Public health officials from Nong Khai and Nakhon Phanom reported that NCCM contributed to strengthening relationships between the health authorities of the two countries.

This is an important achievement because the project's subject matter—HIV/AIDS, migration, trafficking and access to services—is inherently cross-border. NCCM's position allows it to connect institutions that would otherwise have fewer opportunities to coordinate directly.

The partnership also provides a practical complement to government services. Lao public health stakeholders acknowledged that government resources for outreach are limited and that NCCM has helped extend awareness activities, particularly among students. The project therefore fills an identified gap rather than simply duplicating government programmes.

Partnership with Caritas Laos and readiness for future implementation

NCCM has established an important institutional relationship with Caritas Laos, which is particularly relevant to the continuity of the project beyond the current implementation period. Caritas Laos has been involved in the project through coordination, participation in activities and regular communication with NCCM. The partnership has contributed not only to Caritas Laos' understanding of HIV, migration and trafficking issues, but also to its exposure to government counterparts and other stakeholders. Caritas Laos staff reported that their involvement with NCCM had increased their knowledge of migration issues and introduced them to new approaches, while also helping them establish greater contact with government agencies.

The thematic relevance of the partnership is strong. Caritas Laos has developed a three-year strategic plan in which labour migration is identified as a strategic area, while people living with HIV and other at-risk groups are also among its areas of concern. Caritas Laos therefore has a strategic basis for continuing work related to safe migration, HIV prevention and support to vulnerable groups. Its current plans include providing safe-migration education through its own staff and external resource persons, indicating that some elements of the NCCM approach are already consistent with the organisation's future direction.

Caritas Laos is also undergoing an important process of institutional development. It plans to apply for membership of Caritas Internationalis in 2027 and is currently compiling the required documentation. The Caritas Internationalis Management Standards provide a framework for organisational assessment and development and cover areas including governance, human resources, strategic planning, financial management, project management, stakeholder involvement and safeguarding.

At present, however, Caritas Laos is not yet fully ready to assume independent responsibility for the project. The organisation currently has a small core team of approximately three staff, including the Director, a finance officer and a project coordinator. Fieldwork indicated that staffing and financial resources remain limited, while the organisation is still developing its systems and institutional capacity. Caritas Laos staff themselves considered that taking over the project immediately would be difficult because of limited personnel and organisational readiness. They indicated that continued support during a transition period would be important, particularly to strengthen staff knowledge and establish practical implementation procedures.

The organisation's current stage of institutional development is also affected by its legal and administrative status. Caritas Laos has not yet completed the process of formal registration and still needs to establish the necessary relationship with the Lao authorities. Staff noted that formal registration would provide greater ability to work openly, enter communities and coordinate with government agencies, although it may also bring additional reporting and accountability requirements. This represents an important institutional condition for future implementation, particularly given the regulatory sensitivities surrounding organisations with a Catholic identity in Lao PDR.

The capacity of Caritas Laos also varies across locations. Khammouane currently appears to have the strongest foundation for continuation, supported by more established personnel and more frequent interaction with NCCM. Luang Prabang has a relatively good basis for continued engagement because its staff have been involved in project meetings and coordination, while the Vientiane structure is newer and requires more time to develop. Caritas Laos staff also noted differences in staffing stability between locations.

The evaluation also identified some challenges in the working relationship between NCCM and Caritas Laos. These appear to relate primarily to differences in expectations, communication and the degree of involvement expected from Caritas Laos in the handover process. While the issue was raised by one key staff member, it should not be interpreted as a general lack of willingness within Caritas Laos to collaborate with NCCM. Other staff expressed positive views of the partnership and recognised the value of NCCM's support. The issue nevertheless indicates that the institutional handover process has not yet developed a sufficiently shared understanding among all relevant Caritas Laos personnel regarding roles, responsibilities and expectations.

This is particularly relevant because the current financial officer plays an important role in financial management, donor communication and English-language reporting, but her current contract is expected to end in 2027. This creates a potential institutional continuity issue: the organisation will need to maintain or develop equivalent capacity for financial management, donor communication and reporting when personnel change. The Caritas Internationalis Management Standards specifically emphasise appropriate human-resource management, strategic planning, financial management and project accountability as elements of organisational development.

Despite these limitations, there are encouraging signs that Caritas Laos could assume a greater implementation role over time. Caritas Laos already has experience managing community-based projects, has an established strategic direction relevant to migration and vulnerable populations, and has access to wider Caritas support. It has also received organisational-development support from Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Caritas Italy and Caritas Asia, including support in project development, management and evaluation.

There is also evidence that some project activities could potentially be continued by Caritas Laos once an appropriate team and resources are in place. Caritas Laos staff indicated that education and awareness-raising activities could be implemented independently if sufficient staff and funding were available. At the same time, the current experience suggests that an immediate transfer of full responsibility would carry risks, particularly given the organisation's limited staffing, evolving institutional systems and incomplete formalisation of its operating arrangements.

Overall, the partnership with Caritas Laos has been effective in establishing a foundation for future continuity, particularly by increasing Caritas Laos' technical exposure, government relationships and understanding of migration-related issues. However, the evidence indicates that Caritas Laos is not yet fully operationally ready to assume the project independently. Its readiness is developing alongside the broader process of organisational formalisation, including preparation for Caritas Internationalis membership and subsequent engagement with the Lao authorities. The three-year next phase therefore represents an important transition period during which the feasibility of a full handover can be tested and progressively established, rather than assumed from the outset.

4.3.5 Strategic targeting, coverage and implementation constraints

While the project has generally delivered its planned activities effectively, the evaluation identified a weakness in the design of targets and the relationship between target size, beneficiary categories and realistic programme coverage.

The project's population-based formula provides a transparent basis for estimating the potential target population. However, it does not adequately distinguish among different groups such as students,

teachers, workers, service workers, communities and government personnel. More importantly, it does not necessarily reflect the number of people that NCCM can realistically reach through the available number of training sessions and budget.

This is particularly evident in the education component. Stakeholders noted that Vientiane has a very large number of secondary schools, while NCCM can currently reach only a small number each year. The Education Department reported that there are approximately 209 secondary schools in Vientiane, while the project has been able to cover only a small proportion.

Consequently, a population-based target can give the appearance of a large numerical gap even when the project is operating at approximately its realistic capacity. For future programming, targets should therefore be disaggregated by beneficiary category and, where appropriate, by institution or geographic area. For example: number of priority schools, number of students to be reached, number of teachers trained, number of service workers reached, number of communities covered, number of government/health personnel trainned, and number of cases referred and successful supported. This would make it possible to assess coverage and effectiveness more meaningfully, rather than comparing actual beneficiaries against a single population-derived target.

The project also faces a clear tension between need and accessibility. Activities are concentrated in towns and relatively accessible locations because remote areas require considerably more time and transport resources. Yet stakeholders identified additional high-need areas outside the current coverage, including remote districts where HIV-related vulnerabilities are perceived to be significant. The limitation is therefore not necessarily inappropriate selection of existing locations, but rather the project's constrained ability to expand geographically.

4.3.6 Overall Assessment

The evaluation finds that the project demonstrates strong effectiveness in delivering its planned activities and achieving its intended outputs. Training and awareness-raising activities generally reached or exceeded planned targets, with particularly strong participation in HIV/AIDS and human trafficking training. The project also demonstrated positive results in knowledge and awareness, with pre- and post-training assessments and survey responses indicating improvements in participants' understanding of HIV/AIDS, trafficking and safe migration-related issues.

Beyond direct training outputs, the project contributed to capacity development among local stakeholders through network meetings and training-of-trainers activities. Teachers, health workers, volunteers and other stakeholders reported increased confidence and interest in applying the knowledge and approaches gained through the project. The project also demonstrated strong partnership and coordination, particularly through its relationships with Public Health Offices in Thailand and Lao PDR and its role in connecting government and civil-society actors.

However, effectiveness was less consistent in areas requiring continued follow-up and longer-term application of project support. Livelihood case assistance, in particular, produced mixed results, with effectiveness influenced by the quality of needs assessment, technical support and monitoring provided after assistance was delivered. In addition, the project's output-oriented design and limited outcome-level monitoring make it difficult to determine the extent to which improved knowledge has translated into sustained behavioural change or broader outcomes.

Table 6: Overall assessment of Effectiveness

Demensions	Evaluation Findings
Output and target achivement	Planned training and awareness outputs were generally achieved or exceeded, particularly for HIV/AIDS and human trafficking training. Livelihood case assistance remained below its target.
Training effectiveness and knowledge change	Training was generally well received and contributed to improved knowledge and awareness. Pre- and post-training results and survey responses provide evidence of positive immediate learning, although evidence of sustained behavioural change remains limited.
Capacity development	Network meetings and TOT activities strengthened the capacity and confidence of teachers, health workers, volunteers and other stakeholders, with some participants indicating willingness to apply the learning in their own institutions and communities.
Partnership and coordination	Strong relationships with government and civil-society partners, particularly Public Health Offices in Thailand and Lao PDR, strengthened implementation, referrals and opportunities for wider capacity development.
Case and livelihood assistance	Results were mixed. Livelihood assistance was more effective when delivered through partners with established assessment and monitoring systems, while limited follow-up and technical support constrained results in some cases.
Outcome-level achievement	Evidence of immediate results is positive, but systematic evidence of sustained behaviour change, institutional change and broader outcomes remains limited because the project primarily measures outputs.

Conclusion and Implication

Overall, the evidence supports a 4 – Good judgement. The project has demonstrated a clear capacity to deliver planned activities, reach intended participants and generate immediate improvements in knowledge and awareness. Greater coverage, follow-up and outcome measurement are needed to consolidate these results.

For the next phase, the priority should be to move beyond activity and output achievement towards sustained outcomes. This requires stronger follow-up after training, more systematic monitoring of case assistance, and greater use of local trainers and partner institutions to reinforce learning and behaviour change. The project should also introduce clearer outcome indicators and baseline/endline or KAP measures to assess whether increased knowledge is translated into changes in attitudes, practices, service access and institutional capacity.

4.4 EFFICIENCY

To what extent were project resources and implementation arrangements used efficiently to achieve results?	Good

The project has been implemented with generally good efficiency, supported by experienced project staff, locally based volunteers, established partnerships and a predominantly programme-oriented budget. The approved three-year budget allocates 55.4% to project activities, 39.8% to human resources and 4.8% to administration, indicating that the majority of resources are directed towards implementation.

The project also benefits from a strong technical base. The three Thailand-based professional staff have substantial experience in HIV programming and project implementation, while three Lao-based volunteers provide local presence and facilitate community-level engagement. The combination provides appropriate technical and operational capacity for a cross-border project and has supported implementation across the three target locations.

Project management and work planning have generally been effective. Activities have been organised according to planned implementation sequences, and staff have demonstrated practical flexibility in combining activities within field missions to make efficient use of travel and staff time. Established relationships with government and NGO partners have also enabled the project to leverage existing technical and operational resources.

Financial management and accountability are strengths. The independent audit for the period reviewed found that, in all material respects, the financial statement reflected correct and proper accounting and that NCCM complied with the project contract and agreement. The audit also found the accounting and internal control procedures appropriate under the circumstances.

Efficiency is nevertheless affected by the operating costs of cross-border implementation, limited flexibility to reallocate resources between approved budget lines, uneven levels of local capacity, and weaknesses in some monitoring and follow-up systems. These factors constrain opportunities to further optimise resource use and adaptive management, but they have not substantially undermined the project's ability to deliver planned activities.

Overall, the evaluation considers the project to demonstrate good efficiency, with further opportunities to improve adaptive resource allocation, strengthen local delivery capacity, and reinforce monitoring and management information systems.

4.4.1 Human resources and partnership management

The project operates through a combination of three Thailand-based professional staff and three Lao-based field volunteers. In the project documentation and financial reporting, the latter are referred to as "Field Officers in Laos"; fieldwork confirmed that they function operationally as Lao-based volunteers. The financial statements record the three field positions as a distinct staff-cost category.

The Thailand-based team provides project coordination, financial management;, technical support, HIV training, anti-trafficking training, partner coordination, and supervision. The fieldwork found that these staff have extensive experience in HIV intervention through Welcome House and have also received anti-human-trafficking training from IOM. This provides NCCM with considerable in-house technical capacity and reduces reliance on external consultants.

At the same time, the Lao volunteers provide an important local resource through community mobilisation, communication, follow-up and support to activities. Their capacity is developing at different speeds: the Khammouane volunteer has already demonstrated the ability to conduct some activities independently, while volunteers in Vientiane and Luang Prabang require further practice and mentoring.This suggests that the project has already established the human-resource foundation for a more efficient localisation model.

The project also benefits from the use of external partners and resource persons. For example, the Lao Women's Union plays an important training role in Luang Prabang, while health personnel support HIV-related activities.

The fieldwork identified opportunities for more systematic resource sharing among organisations working in the same communities. In Khammouane, for example, COERR, Caritas Laos and NCCM operate in overlapping communities but with different thematic areas. Better stakeholder mapping could enable these organisations to share trainers, community networks, venues, materials and travel resources. It is clear that human-resource capacity is strong, but the project has not yet fully maximised

Overall, the project makes effective use of available human-resource capacity, combining Thailand-based technical expertise, Lao-based volunteers and complementary partner resources. Further strengthening the capacity of Lao-based personnel and more systematic resource sharing among partners would provide additional efficiency gains and support the transition toward greater local ownership.

4.4.2 Budget planning and financial/resource management

The approved budget provides a broadly appropriate resource structure for a people-centred project, with 55.4% allocated to activities, 39.8% to human resources and 4.8% to administration. The financial management system itself is a strength. The independent audit for the period reviewed found that, in all material respects, the financial statement reflected correct and proper accounting and that NCCM complied with the project contract and agreement. The audit also found the accounting and internal control procedures appropriate under the circumstances.

The evaluation therefore does not identify financial accountability or compliance as a major efficiency problem. The main issue is instead how flexibly resources can be used to respond to field realities.

The Fieldwork found that activity budgets, particularly for training, have to absorb several costs associated with implementation in Lao PDR, including travel, logistics, government participation and per diem. These costs vary considerably between locations, particularly in Luang Prabang. As a result, the nominal budget assigned to an activity does not always represent the resources available for direct delivery of that activity.

The project also has limited flexibility to adjust resources between activities when implementation needs change. Field staff indicated that they would sometimes prefer to reduce the frequency or scale of network meetings and use the resources for additional training, where demand was higher. However, such adjustments were not permitted because they would alter the approved logframe. This creates a tension between maintaining accountability to the approved project design and responding adaptively to implementation realities.

This issue is particularly relevant because field demand does not always correspond to the assumptions underlying the activity budget. For example, training activities may be planned for a particular number of participants, while schools may request substantially larger sessions. Similarly, the cost of delivering activities varies considerably according to distance and location, while the activity budget is not necessarily differentiated according to geographic operating costs.

Overall, the evidence indicates that financial management and accountability are sound. The main opportunity for improvement concerns the flexibility of resource utilisation rather than financial control. Greater flexibility to adjust resources between activities, where justified by changes in demand and operating conditions, could further improve adaptive efficiency while maintaining appropriate accountability to the approved project framework.

4.4.3 Project management, work planning and monitoring

The project has a clear activity structure connecting Objective 2 and Objective 1. In practice, MOA development meetings provide an important enabling process for securing government agreement and permission before field activities can begin. This is followed by the implementation of HIV training, anti-trafficking training and case assistance, while network meetings and training-of-trainers activities support

capacity development and coordination. Project summary meetings provide an opportunity to review progress, achievements and challenges. This sequence provides a practical structure for implementation.

The project team has also demonstrated practical flexibility within this structure. For example, when travelling to Luang Prabang, staff try to combine several activities within a single field mission, including training, network meetings and MOA-related meetings. This reduces the cost per field mission and demonstrates practical operational planning.

The project team also demonstrates effective day-to-day work planning and scheduling. Activities are organised in a clear sequence, with government engagement and permissions undertaken before implementation, followed by training, coordination and case-related activities as appropriate. Staff adjust the timing and combination of activities within available resources and operational constraints, demonstrating practical adaptive management.

With regard to activity-level implementation, the online survey provides additional evidence that the organisation and management of training activities were generally perceived positively. This indicates that, from participants' perspectives, training activities were generally well organised and delivered. However, qualitative responses also identified several operational constraints. Some participants considered the training duration too short to absorb all the information, while scheduling activities around examinations and school holidays can make it difficult to reach the intended student population. Respondents also considered the current frequency of activities insufficient to achieve broader community coverage.

These findings suggest that the efficiency of training delivery is influenced not only by the budget available, but also by the timing, duration and frequency of activities in relation to the operating environment of schools and communities. Thus, while the organisation and delivery of individual training activities are generally efficient, this positive performance at the activity level does not necessarily translate into optimal efficiency at the overall project-management level.

At the project-management level, the evaluation found constraints in resource deployment and adaptive management. The relatively rigid activity structure limits the ability of field staff to adjust the balance between coordination activities and direct implementation when actual demand changes. This is particularly evident in the tension between network meetings and training activities, where field staff identified stronger demand for training but had limited flexibility to reallocate resources within the approved activity structure.

Monitoring is another area for improvement within project management. The fieldwork found that monitoring is particularly limited for livelihood assistance cases, where NCCM relies substantially on partner organisations for follow-up. The project therefore has stronger systems for delivering planned activities than for systematically tracking what happens after activities and assistance are delivered. This limits the extent to which monitoring information can be used for management decision-making, learning and timely adjustment of interventions.

Overall, project planning and activity delivery are generally well organised and supported by practical management arrangements. Monitoring and follow-up systems are less developed, particularly for livelihood assistance, and strengthening these systems would improve the use of management information for timely adjustment, learning and more efficient resource allocation.

Monitoring

Monitoring is an area for improvement within project management. The fieldwork found that monitoring is particularly limited for livelihood assistance cases, where NCCM relies substantially on partner organisations such as health authorities for follow-up. The project therefore has stronger systems for delivering activities than for systematically tracking what happens after activities and assistance are delivered. This limits the extent to which monitoring information can be used for management decisions and learning.

The weakness is particularly relevant for livelihood assistance because the effectiveness and sustainability of support can vary considerably between cases. Without systematic follow-up, NCCM has limited information to assess whether assistance remains appropriate, identify emerging problems or facilitate additional technical support.

Overall, project planning and activity delivery are generally well organised, but adaptive management and monitoring systems are less developed than the mechanisms for delivering planned activities.

4.4.4 Operational inputs and implementation conditions

The efficiency of project implementation is also influenced by several external and operational factors. The most significant is the cost and difficulty of cross-border travel. Rising fuel and transport costs have increased the cost of field implementation, particularly for activities requiring travel from Thailand to Lao PDR. These pressures are especially significant for Luang Prabang because of its distance from the Thailand-based team.

These costs are largely structural features of the cross-border operating model rather than evidence of poor resource management by NCCM. The project has responded pragmatically by combining several activities within individual field missions. While this approach reduces the cost per visit, it also means that engagement in more distant locations may be less frequent and less flexible.

Other operational requirements include obtaining permission from local authorities and ensuring that relevant government or health personnel accompany project activities. These requirements are necessary for implementation but create additional time and cost requirements that are not always fully visible within individual activity budgets.

The evaluation also identified gaps in staff safety and communication arrangements. Thailand-based staff travelling to Lao PDR do not currently have a comprehensive project-specific safety and security protocol or dedicated communication arrangements. Although this has not prevented implementation, it represents an operational weakness in the management of cross-border fieldwork.

Language is another operational consideration. Although Thai and Lao are closely related, the use of Lao-speaking trainers and facilitators may improve communication and contextual relevance, particularly for community-level activities. Overall, the implementation arrangements are functional, but cross-border travel requirements, communication, safety arrangements and the degree of localisation influence the cost and flexibility of implementation.

4.4.5 Overall Assessment

The evaluation finds that the project demonstrates good efficiency overall. NCCM staff have made effective and practical use of available human and financial resources, including through clear work planning, timely organisation of activities, combining activities during field missions, and leveraging established relationships with government and NGO partners. The project benefits from experienced technical staff, local volunteers and complementary partner resources, while financial management and accountability are supported by appropriate systems and independent audit assurance.

The project has also demonstrated the ability to operate pragmatically within a complex cross-border environment. Travel distances, fuel and transportation costs, government permissions and other operational requirements increase the cost of implementation, particularly in Luang Prabang. However, the team has adopted practical measures, such as combining several activities within field missions, to manage these constraints.

The main opportunities for improvement relate to optimisation rather than fundamental efficiency weaknesses. These include greater flexibility in resource allocation when implementation needs change, stronger use of local capacity, more systematic monitoring and follow-up, and further integration and resource sharing with partners. The current activity and budget structure can limit adaptive resource deployment, while monitoring systems do not yet provide sufficient information for all types of case follow-up and management decisions.

Overall, these constraints have limited opportunities to maximise efficiency but have not substantially undermined the project's delivery of planned activities. The evidence therefore supports a 4 – Good judgement, with further improvements focused on adaptive resource management, localisation and outcome-oriented monitoring.

Table 7: Overall assesment of Efficiency

Demensions	Evaluation Findings
Human resource use and management	Staff expertise, volunteers and partner resources are used effectively to support implementation, with further potential to strengthen local capacity and resource sharing.
Budget planning and management	Financial management and accountability are sound; greater flexibility in resource allocation could further improve adaptive efficiency and responsiveness to field needs.
Project management and work planning	Work planning and implementation are generally well organised, with staff combining activities and adjusting schedules pragmatically within the approved framework.
Monitoring and management information	Monitoring and reporting systems are functional, but stronger case follow-up and management information would improve adaptive decision-making and resource optimisation.
Partnership and resource sharing	Partnerships effectively leverage technical expertise and existing resources, with further opportunities for systematic resource sharing and joint delivery.
Operational and contextual efficiency	Cross-border travel, geographic distance and administrative requirements increase implementation costs, but these are managed pragmatically through field planning and combined missions; safety and security arrangements should be strengthened.

Conclusion and Implication

Overall, the evidence supports a 4 – Good judgement for Efficiency. The project demonstrates effective work planning, generally timely implementation, sound financial management, appropriate use of technical and field resources, and effective leveraging of government, Church and NGO partnerships. Staff have also demonstrated practical resourcefulness in managing the additional costs and operational requirements associated with cross-border implementation.

Opportunities remain to further optimise efficiency through greater flexibility in resource allocation, stronger localisation of implementation capacity, more systematic partner resource sharing, and improved monitoring and case follow-up. These areas represent opportunities to strengthen an already functional implementation model rather than fundamental weaknesses in project management.

For the next phase, NCCM should build on these strengths while progressively shifting toward a more locally led and adaptive implementation model. Resource planning should allow reasonable flexibility to respond to geographic and operational differences, while strengthened M&E and joint planning with Caritas Laos and local partners can improve both efficiency and sustainability.

4.5 IMPACT

What significant changes has the project contributed to, including intended and unintended effects?	Adequate

The evaluation finds emerging positive impacts from the project, primarily at individual, household and community-network levels, but there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the project has generated broad, long-term or population-level impacts. This finding should be interpreted in light of the project's output-oriented design. Most indicators focus on the number of people trained, activities conducted and stakeholders engaged. Although the intervention logic assumes that increased knowledge, capacity and access to services will contribute to reduced vulnerability to HIV, trafficking and labour exploitation, the project has relatively limited outcome- and impact-level indicators to systematically measure these longer-term changes.

The available evidence nevertheless points to several meaningful changes. These include improved access to HIV-related services, increased confidence and application of knowledge among some beneficiaries, strengthened individual capacity to manage migration and labour-related risks, livelihood improvements in some cases, and the emergence of peer and cross-border support networks. These changes are particularly visible among individuals and groups who have maintained contact with NCCM or its partner networks.

At the same time, the evaluation has not found sufficient evidence to attribute changes in HIV treatment uptake, migration behaviour, trafficking incidence or broader institutional performance solely to NCCM. These outcomes are influenced by government services, other NGOs, public health programmes, migration patterns and wider socioeconomic conditions. The impact findings should therefore be understood primarily as contribution evidence rather than attribution evidence.

The beneficiary survey provides additional supporting evidence of perceived positive changes resulting from the project. Respondents generally reported positive views regarding the project's contribution to their lives and communities. They also identified socio-economic benefits for some people living with HIV and recognised the project's contribution to cross-sector networking and coordination. Given the small survey sample, these findings should be interpreted as supporting perceptions of change rather than representative evidence of impact across the full target population.

4.5.1 Emerging changes in health knowledge, service access and health-seeking behaviour

The clearest evidence of change beyond immediate training results concerns individual knowledge, confidence and access to health services.

The beneficiary survey provides supporting evidence of perceived changes, particularly in knowledge gains, application of learning and confidence to share knowledge. These findings are consistent with qualitative evidence from the field. Participants described gaining information that they had previously been unable or uncomfortable to obtain elsewhere, particularly concerning HIV prevention, testing and available services. One project story describes a young participant who initially regarded HIV/AIDS and sexual health as irrelevant to her life but subsequently actively sought information about testing, prevention and access to health services. Another participant reported an intention to share the knowledge with peers.

There is also some evidence of a change in health-seeking behaviour and access to treatment. The Khammouane Public Health Office reported that during the period of close collaboration with NCCM's HIV education activities, the number of patients receiving antiretroviral treatment increased from approximately 300 to approximately 700. This represents an important positive change in access to treatment. However, the evaluation cannot establish that this increase was caused by NCCM alone. The change may also reflect improvements in government health services, testing and referral mechanisms, broader HIV programmes and increased awareness generated by other actors.

The more defensible conclusion is therefore that NCCM appears to have contributed to creating conditions that support increased health-seeking behaviour and access to HIV services, particularly through its collaboration with public health authorities. This contribution is particularly relevant for mobile populations, as Lao migrants may move between Laos and Thailand and face difficulties maintaining continuity of HIV treatment. Cross-border health cooperation provides an additional mechanism through which people can receive information and be referred to appropriate services.

The project has also generated some evidence of continued knowledge application. Field interviews found that volunteers continue to provide information and referrals after training, including through informal communication channels. This suggests that the project's influence can extend beyond the immediate training event when participants remain connected to the project network.

However, long-term behavioural change cannot yet be demonstrated systematically. The project does not have longitudinal monitoring of individual beneficiaries, and many target groups are highly mobile. As a result, it is difficult to determine whether participants continue to apply HIV prevention knowledge, maintain safer practices or continue using health services over time.

4.5.2 Changes in individual resilience and protection from exploitation

The project also appears to have contributed to greater individual awareness and preparedness to manage risks associated with migration, trafficking and labour exploitation.

The Phase II experience provides useful evidence of this emerging change. Over the three-year period, the project reached 3,748 participants through human trafficking and safe migration training, exceeding the planned target. Pre- and post-training assessments showed increased knowledge of basic labour rights and trafficking risks. More importantly for the Impact criterion, field evidence suggests that some participants subsequently used and shared this knowledge outside the training environment. Some trained participants were able to provide informal human trafficking information to small groups in their communities.

The 2025 project story provides another example of this potential multiplier effect. A young participant reported that the knowledge gained could be shared with friends, while the project team observed that the training created a safe environment for young people to ask questions about issues that they would normally find difficult to discuss.

The beneficiary survey provides further, although perception-based, support for this finding. Respondents generally perceived that the project contributed to benefits at the community level, particularly by helping to reduce vulnerability to exploitation. This suggests that participants perceived benefits extending beyond individual knowledge to a broader sense of protection within their communities. However, because the survey sample was small and relies on participant perceptions, these findings should not be interpreted as evidence of a measurable reduction in trafficking or exploitation at the population level.

There are also examples of direct protection. Project volunteers reported supporting individuals who had experienced exploitation, including helping some people leave exploitative situations and connecting them with vocational or other assistance. Such cases demonstrate potentially significant individual-level effects, although they are isolated cases and cannot be generalised to the wider target population.

The impact is therefore best understood as increased individual resilience and protective capacity, rather than evidence of a measurable reduction in trafficking or labour exploitation at population level. The continuing mobility of the target population remains a major limitation, as many trained young people subsequently migrate elsewhere or to Thailand, making follow-up difficult.

4.5.3 Livelihood outcomes and economic self-reliance

The livelihood component demonstrates mixed but potentially meaningful individual-level impacts.

The evaluation found that livelihood assistance does not produce uniform results. Some cases have developed viable income-generating activities, while others have encountered difficulties and failed to achieve the intended results. This variation reflects differences in the type of livelihood activity, individual capacity, market conditions and the availability of technical and follow-up support.

The 2025 livelihood records provide examples of emerging economic benefits. Several beneficiaries supported through mushroom cultivation reported that production could be used for household consumption, sold to generate income for daily expenses and partially retained for further cultivation. Similarly, chicken-raising cases reported that chickens were consumed by households and sold to generate income and continue the activity.

The strongest evidence of longer-term livelihood impact comes from earlier cases supported through AAT. One beneficiary who received support to raise ducks subsequently sold the ducks, used the proceeds as start-up capital and established a small grilled-duck restaurant. The reported outcome included increased daily income and reduced household burden, as well as the ability to remain with her family rather than migrate elsewhere for employment.

The evaluation found that livelihood support delivered through specialised NGOs such as AAT and VFI appears more likely to generate sustained outcomes than assistance managed primarily through public health structures. NGO partners undertake case assessment, provide technical guidance and maintain

follow-up mechanisms. AAT, for example, assesses the risks and needs of individual cases, provides technical advice and reports on progress periodically.

By contrast, the current NCCM model does not consistently include systematic case assessment, technical training or longer-term monitoring. Consequently, the evaluation cannot determine whether all supported cases have become economically self-reliant. The livelihood evidence therefore demonstrates potential impact at individual household level, but inconsistent outcomes and limited evidence of scale.

4.5.4 Emerging community and cross-border networks

One of the more significant but less easily measurable impacts of the project is the emergence of social support and peer networks that continue beyond individual training events.

This is particularly important because the project works with highly mobile populations. A conventional training model assumes that beneficiaries remain in the same community, whereas Lao migrant workers frequently move between Laos and Thailand. The project has nevertheless succeeded in establishing a youth network among Lao workers in Thailand. The Phase II report describes how trained Catholic youth who subsequently migrated to Thailand formed a group to exchange information and support one another. The group meets regularly and aims to support Lao workers who experience problems in Thailand. At the time of reporting, approximately 15 members were involved.

This represents an important potential impact because it demonstrates that project benefits can continue after participants leave their original communities and migrate to another country. The network provides a peer-based mechanism for exchanging information, sharing experiences and supporting workers facing labour-related problems.

However, the network remains relatively small and fragile. Members frequently change jobs and locations, and the project has limited capacity to maintain systematic contact with mobile workers. Therefore, this should be considered an emerging impact rather than an established or institutionalised mechanism.

4.5.5 Institutional and system-level contribution

Evidence of impact at institutional and policy levels is more limited than at the individual level. Nevertheless, the evaluation identified several changes that may contribute to longer-term institutional development.

First, NCCM has strengthened relationships between Thai and Lao public health institutions. The project has helped facilitate communication between provincial health authorities and provided a platform for joint discussions around HIV prevention and health services for migrant populations. The project documentation describes a joint Thai–Lao effort to develop a health-service referral pathway for migrant workers and students, with both sides recognising shared responsibility for migrant health.

Second, NCCM has contributed to increasing the capacity and visibility of Caritas Laos. Caritas Laos reported that its involvement in the project increased its knowledge of migration issues and helped it establish more contact with government authorities. This is potentially important for the future

continuation of project-related activities, although Caritas Laos remains at a developing stage of institutional readiness.

Third, the project has contributed to a wider network involving public health, education, labour, NGOs, the Lao Women's Union, VFI, AAT and other stakeholders. NCCM has played a bridging and coordination role, helping strengthen communication, coordination and case-referral mechanisms among organisations supporting Lao migrants and people affected by trafficking and labour exploitation. The evaluation also found that NCCM established links with the Lawyers Association to facilitate access to legal assistance for cases requiring legal support.

These changes are potentially important for future sustainability and system strengthening. However, they should not yet be described as policy-level impact. The evaluation found no strong evidence that NCCM has directly influenced national policy, changed institutional mandates or produced measurable changes in government policy implementation.

The more appropriate judgement is that NCCM has made a contributory institutional impact by strengthening relationships, referral mechanisms and stakeholder capacity, particularly at provincial and cross-border levels.

4.5.6 Overall Assessment

The evaluation finds that the project has generated adequate positive impact, particularly at the individual and community levels and in the short- to medium-term. Evidence indicates improvements in knowledge and awareness, continued peer support among trained youth, improved access to HIV-related services, livelihood benefits for some vulnerable individuals, and stronger communication and referral mechanisms for trafficking and other protection cases. The project has also contributed to stronger relationships and coordination among government, Church and civil-society actors, including cross-border cooperation between Thailand and Lao PDR.

However, the evidence of longer-term and broader systemic impact remains limited. The results of livelihood assistance vary considerably between cases, while evidence of sustained behavioural change, reduced trafficking or exploitation, and broader institutional or policy-level change is not sufficiently systematic to establish population-level impact. In addition, the project's predominantly output-oriented design, absence of baseline and endline measures, and limited case follow-up constrain the ability to demonstrate attribution. The evaluation therefore considers the identified changes as plausible contributions of the project, while recognising that other actors and contextual factors have also influenced these outcomes.

Table 8: Overall assessment of Impact

Demensions	Evaluation Findings
Individual knowledge and awareness	The project contributed to improved knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS, human trafficking and safe migration among participants, with some evidence that learning continued to influence participants after training.
Access to services and protection	The project contributed to improved access to HIV-related services and strengthened communication, referral and case-assistance mechanisms for trafficking and other vulnerable cases.
Livelihood and socio-economic benefits	Some vulnerable individuals, particularly those receiving appropriate livelihood support and follow-up, experienced positive socio-economic benefits; however, results varied considerably across cases.

Demensions	Evaluation Findings
Community and peer-level effects	Some trained youth and community actors continued to communicate, support one another and share information, including across the Thailand–Lao border, suggesting emerging effects beyond individual training participants.
Institutional and partnership effects	The project strengthened relationships and coordination among government, Church and NGO actors, including cross-border public-health cooperation and improved referral linkages.
Longer-term and systemic impact	Evidence of sustained behavioural change, reduced trafficking or exploitation, and broader institutional or policy-level change remains limited. The project cannot establish direct attribution for broader changes.

Conclusion and Implication

Overall, the evidence supports a 3 – Adequate judgement. The project has contributed to meaningful short- and medium-term changes, particularly in knowledge, access to services, peer support, case referral and coordination. These contributions remain more evident at individual and community levels than at institutional, policy or population levels.

For the next phase, NCCM should strengthen the pathway from training and awareness to sustained behaviour change and longer-term outcomes. This requires baseline and endline or KAP measurement, follow-up with selected participants and cases, stronger documentation of referral and service outcomes, and systematic tracking of changes among local trainers and partner institutions. The project should also use field evidence and case experience to identify emerging trends and inform advocacy and policy dialogue, while maintaining a cautious contribution-based interpretation of broader changes.

4.6 SUSTAINABILITY

To what extent are project results, capacities, partnerships and benefits likely to continue beyond external funding?	Adequate

The project has established several foundations for sustainability, particularly through its relationships with government agencies, development of local volunteers, capacity building of teachers and other stakeholders, and collaboration with Caritas Laos. The project has also demonstrated that knowledge and networks generated through the intervention can continue beyond individual training events.

However, the current implementation model is only partially sustainable. Much of the project delivery still depends on NCCM staff travelling from Thailand to Laos to conduct training and other activities. This creates recurring costs and limits the frequency and geographic coverage of activities. It also means that activities such as school-based HIV and anti-trafficking education need to be repeated when new cohorts of students enter school.

The evaluation therefore finds that the main opportunity for the next phase is to shift from direct implementation towards localisation, institutionalisation and multiplier-based approaches. Rather than continuing to train large numbers of students directly, NCCM could increasingly invest in teachers, nursing students, volunteers, school-based peer educators, government counterparts and Caritas Laos so that these actors can continue delivering activities within their existing roles.

This direction is broadly consistent with the project's own experience. Earlier project reporting already recognised that knowledge-based outcomes are more likely to be sustained where they are

institutionalised in schools and communities and where local leaders and volunteers have sufficient capacity.

4.6.1 Sustainability of knowledge and behaviour change

Knowledge generated through HIV/AIDS, trafficking and safe-migration training has relatively high potential for sustainability because it remains with individuals after the project activity ends. However, the current model of repeatedly training students limits the longer-term value of this investment. High-school students receive the training and subsequently graduate, requiring NCCM to return and train new cohorts. This creates a recurring cycle that produces immediate results but remains resource-intensive.

Stakeholders consistently identified teachers and other school personnel as more sustainable multipliers. Teachers remain within schools while student cohorts change each year, allowing knowledge to be transferred continuously. The project has already demonstrated some potential for this approach, with teachers, school administrators and education officials participating in project activities and knowledge on human trafficking prevention being incorporated into classroom teaching in Khammouane and Vientiane Capital.

The fieldwork also suggests that sustainability does not necessarily depend on formally incorporating additional HIV or trafficking content into the school curriculum. The Vientiane Education Department considered practical activities, games and interactive approaches more appropriate for students than adding further lecture-based content. A combination of teacher TOT, practical activity packages, student volunteers and periodic technical support may therefore provide a more sustainable mechanism for maintaining awareness.

The nursing school in Khammouane provides another promising institutional pathway. Nursing students suggested receiving TOT during their final year before beginning internships and community placements, while the school leadership proposed incorporating HIV-related knowledge into examination or assessment criteria. This would embed project knowledge within an existing professional education system rather than treating it as a stand-alone training activity.

The online survey provides additional evidence that the knowledge and life skills generated by the project are perceived to have lasting value. These findings support the view that knowledge acquired through the project can remain useful beyond the immediate training period. At the same time, respondents expressed concerns about shrinking budgets and the lack of continuous public-awareness activities. This suggests an important distinction: the knowledge retained by individuals may be relatively sustainable, while continued outreach to new beneficiaries remains dependent on institutional capacity and resources.

4.6.2 Community ownership and geographic targeting

Sustainability also depends on whether local communities have both ownership of activities and a continuing need for them. Currently, NCCM's community activities are concentrated largely within Catholic communities because these communities provide an established network through which activities can be organised. However, fieldwork indicates that this does not always correspond to areas with the highest HIV, trafficking or migration vulnerabilities.

For example, the evaluation visited a Catholic community in Khammouane where NCCM had provided HIV and trafficking training, but relatively few residents had migrated to Thailand. In contrast, public health stakeholders identified other communities with higher HIV prevalence, greater migration to Thailand, closer proximity to the border, weaker access to health services and greater vulnerability to trafficking and exploitation.

The evaluation therefore considers that future community selection should be guided by clear and transparent selection criteria that link the characteristics and needs of each community to the specific intervention being implemented. Such criteria could consider factors such as HIV prevalence or vulnerability, migration patterns, proximity to border areas, trafficking and labour-exploitation risks, access to health and protection services, and the presence of existing local partners or community structures. This would help ensure that project resources are directed towards communities where the proposed intervention is most relevant and where it has a reasonable potential to generate meaningful and sustainable benefits.

This does not necessarily require NCCM to abandon the Catholic network. Rather, the Catholic network can remain an important entry point and implementation channel while community selection is increasingly informed by need, vulnerability and programme relevance. Local volunteers, village health workers, village leaders, teachers and other community-based actors can then be engaged according to the needs and context of each selected community.

4.6.3 Sustainability of tools, networks and referral mechanisms

The project has developed useful relationships and networks, but their sustainability depends partly on whether they are supported by practical tools and systems. One example is anti-human trafficking education. NCCM currently does not consistently provide participants with IEC materials that they can take away after training. This creates a simple but important sustainability problem: participants may remember the general messages but forget critical information such as emergency telephone numbers, referral contacts or where to seek assistance.

The evaluation therefore recommends that every relevant training package include a small set of locally appropriate IEC materials containing: key trafficking warning signs, labour rights information, emergency/contact numbers, referral organisations, health service information, HIV prevention messages, and information on where to seek legal or psychosocial support, for example.

Importantly, NCCM does not necessarily need to develop these materials itself. Existing materials and technical resources are already available through partner organisations working on trafficking and migration. NCCM could adapt and translate appropriate materials for local use. This would make each training event leave behind a permanent resource, rather than only a temporary learning experience.

The same principle applies to the referral mechanism developed through the project. The project has strengthened communication and referrals among health offices, NGOs, legal actors and other service providers. For this to remain functional after NCCM's direct involvement decreases, referral contacts and procedures should be documented and incorporated into local partner systems.

4.6.4 Financial and operational sustainability

Financial sustainability remains one of the project's more significant challenges. The current implementation model requires NCCM staff based in Thailand to travel to Laos, which is particularly costly for Luang Prabang and remote communities. Travel costs, government participation costs and other operational requirements reduce the number of activities that can be delivered within the available budget.

The current model would therefore be difficult to maintain indefinitely without external funding. However, the evaluation identified several potential mechanisms for changing the cost structure of implementation. These include greater use of local trainers, teachers, health professionals and volunteers; sharing resources with partner organisations; and supporting locally managed activities.

The Vientiane Capital Public Health Office provides a particularly relevant example. It indicated that its own staff could organise HIV training if NCCM provided financial support and that it could potentially expand activities to additional locations more easily because its personnel are already embedded within the Lao health system. Any future financial support to local organisations or government agencies would nevertheless require appropriate risk assessment and accountability mechanisms.

The issue is therefore not simply to reduce expenditure, but to shift from NCCM-funded direct delivery towards locally owned delivery supported by technical assistance and targeted resources.

4.6.5 Exit strategy, transition and localisation through Caritas Laos

The planned handover to Caritas Laos represents the most important institutional pathway for the longer-term sustainability of the project. However, the evaluation finds that Caritas Laos is not yet fully prepared to assume all project functions independently. Key constraints include limited personnel, financial resources, developing organisational systems, and technical capacity in some areas. The organisation also needs to further strengthen its relationships with government agencies in some locations.

At the same time, the evaluation found several factors that provide a positive foundation for future ownership. The project is broadly consistent with Caritas Laos's strategic priorities, including its focus on labour migration and vulnerable groups, and the organisation has already developed relationships with NCCM and other stakeholders. NCCM's engagement has also helped Caritas Laos become more familiar with migration-related issues and establish or strengthen contacts with government counterparts. However, the strength of these relationships varies across locations, and some institutional linkages remain at an early stage.

The capacity to sustain the project therefore depends not only on Caritas Laos's strategic relevance, but also on whether it has the human resources, technical expertise, management systems, financial capacity and institutional relationships required to take on the full range of project functions. At present, these capacities are still developing.

The evaluation identified several areas that are particularly relevant to Caritas Laos's readiness for future implementation:

1. Human resources and technical capacity – Caritas Laos has a small core team, which limits its capacity to manage the full scope of the programme. Further capacity is needed in areas

including HIV and anti-trafficking programming, training and TOT, case management, monitoring and reporting.

2. Government and stakeholder relationships – Caritas Laos has made progress in developing relationships with government agencies, but the strength of these relationships differs by location. In some areas, continued engagement and trust-building are needed for Caritas Laos to operate independently of NCCM's established relationships.
3. Financial and administrative capacity – The organisation is still developing the systems and resources required for independent programme management, including budgeting, financial administration, grant management and donor reporting.
4. Programme systems and tools – A number of systems currently used by NCCM, including training materials, IEC resources, case-assessment tools, referral mechanisms, monitoring forms and reporting templates, will need to be accessible to and usable by local implementing partners.
5. Institutional ownership and implementation capacity – Caritas Laos has a strategic rationale for continuing work in this area, but its current staffing and organisational capacity remain insufficient to independently manage the full programme. The evaluation therefore finds that institutional ownership is emerging rather than fully established.

The evaluation also identified institutional and interpersonal factors that may affect the transition. While relationships between NCCM and most Caritas Laos staff are generally constructive, differences in expectations and communication have affected collaboration in some areas. This indicates that the transition requires clear communication, shared planning and active engagement between the two organisations rather than relying solely on a formal handover of responsibilities.

Overall, the evidence suggests that Caritas Laos provides a relevant and potentially viable institutional home for the project's future, but its readiness for full ownership remains incomplete. The sustainability of the project will therefore depend on whether the remaining organisational, technical, financial and partnership capacities can be sufficiently strengthened before NCCM withdraws from direct implementation.

4.6.6 Overall assessment

The evaluation finds that the project has established important foundations for sustainability, particularly through its partnerships with government agencies, Church organisations, NGOs and community actors, as well as through capacity development and the development of local networks. Some trained teachers, health workers, volunteers and other stakeholders have expressed willingness to continue applying the knowledge and approaches gained through the project. The project's relationships with public health authorities and other partners also provide opportunities for activities and referral mechanisms to continue beyond direct NCCM implementation.

However, the sustainability of project results remains uncertain in several important areas. Many activities continue to depend on NCCM's financial resources, technical capacity and direct involvement, while local trainer systems and institutional mechanisms are not yet sufficiently established to ensure continuity at scale. Livelihood assistance also requires stronger follow-up and linkages with technical service providers to increase the likelihood of sustained benefits. In addition, the capacity of Caritas Laos to assume full responsibility remains under development. Although its strategic priorities are aligned with the project and it provides a potentially appropriate institutional home for future

implementation, limitations in staffing, technical capacity, organisational systems, financial resources and government relationships mean that full ownership has not yet been achieved.

Table: 9: Overall assessment of Sustainability

Demensions	Evaluation Findings
Continuation of knowledge and behaviour change	Training has increased knowledge and awareness among participants, and some trained stakeholders have shown willingness to continue sharing and applying what they learned. However, mechanisms for systematically reinforcing these changes remain limited.
Local capacity and ownership	Teachers, health workers, volunteers and community actors have developed relevant knowledge and skills, but local trainer and institutional mechanisms are not yet sufficiently established to sustain activities independently and at scale.
Partnerships and coordination	Relationships with government, Church and NGO partners provide a strong foundation for continuation. However, the strength and institutionalisation of these relationships vary across locations.
Livelihood and case assistance	Some cases have generated positive benefits, but sustainability varies by case. Limited follow-up and technical support reduce the likelihood of sustained livelihood outcomes in some cases.
Institutional sustainability through Caritas Laos	Caritas Laos provides a potential pathway for local ownership, but its organisational and technical capacity is still developing and requires further strengthening for a gradual transfer of responsibilities.
Financial and operational sustainability	Continued activities remain partly dependent on external funding and NCCM's resources. Existing resource-sharing and integration opportunities could support continuation, but sustainable financing mechanisms are not yet sufficiently established.

Conclusion and Implication

Overall, the evidence supports a 3 – Adequate judgement. The project has created useful foundations for continuation through local capacity development, partnerships and coordination, but these have not yet been sufficiently institutionalised to ensure independent continuation of activities and benefits at scale.

The most important issue for the next phase is therefore the transition from project-supported activities to locally owned systems and capacities. This includes strengthening local trainers and institutional mechanisms, improving the sustainability of case and livelihood support, and building the organisational and operational capacity required for Caritas Laos to assume greater responsibility. The continuation of the project will also depend on maintaining government and stakeholder relationships and identifying opportunities to integrate activities and resources into existing systems and programmes.

5.PROJECT CHALLENGES

The evaluation identified several external and structural challenges that affected the implementation environment of the NCCM project across the three locations. These factors were largely outside NCCM's direct control, but influenced the project's ability to maintain regular engagement, reach vulnerable populations, operate efficiently and sustain results.

These challenges should be understood as contextual conditions rather than weaknesses in project commitment or technical capacity. NCCM demonstrated considerable adaptation in responding to these constraints.

5.1 Cross-border and administrative environment

Operating from Thailand while implementing activities in Lao PDR creates additional administrative and logistical requirements. Government approvals, changes in government personnel and requirements for coordination with local authorities can delay activities; the project SWOT identified delays of approximately 3–4 weeks following changes in government personnel.

The cross-border operating model also increases travel time, transaction costs and dependence on local administrative arrangements. These constraints are particularly significant in geographically distant locations and affect the frequency with which NCCM can conduct activities.

5.2 Resource-constrained operating environment

The project operates within a wider environment of limited public and external resources for HIV prevention and social protection. The HIV/AIDS Centre reported that its annual budget had declined by approximately one-third, despite continuing prevention needs. At the same time, transportation and field implementation costs remain relatively high, particularly for cross-border and remote activities.

This creates a structural tension between the scale of need and the resources available to respond. Stakeholders expressed demand for more frequent activities and wider geographic coverage, while available resources constrain the number of locations that can be reached.

5.3 Changing migration patterns and vulnerability

The project operates in a rapidly changing migration environment. Economic pressures, limited employment opportunities and debt continue to drive migration, while new forms of recruitment and exploitation are emerging, including deception through social media and less visible forms of commercial sex work.

The mobility of workers also creates challenges for maintaining contact and continuity of HIV prevention, treatment and referral. Public-health stakeholders reported difficulties in maintaining continuity of HIV treatment among migrant workers moving between Lao PDR and Thailand.

These changes mean that the project is operating in a context where risk profiles and target populations can change faster than conventional project cycles.

5.4 Regulatory and social sensitivity

Implementation also takes place within a politically and socially sensitive operating environment. Regulations, changing border controls and differences in local government practice can affect how activities are organised. The operating space for Catholic organisations also varies across locations, requiring careful management of relationships and visibility with government and communities.

The evaluation identified one isolated example illustrating this sensitivity. Following an HIV training for restaurant service workers in Vientiane Capital, a police visit to the establishment was reportedly associated by the restaurant owner with NCCM's training. There was no evidence that NCCM caused

or requested the police intervention, but the incident demonstrates how activities involving potentially stigmatised or sensitive groups can generate unintended perceptions and affect trust.

This highlights the importance of context and conflict sensitivity when implementing activities with vulnerable groups.

5.5 Overall Cross-Cutting Challenge

Taken together, the challenges indicate that the project operates within a complex and resource-constrained cross-border environment, characterised by administrative requirements, difficult geography, limited resources, mobile populations, rapidly changing vulnerabilities and social sensitivities.

The central challenge is therefore not the absence of technical capacity or stakeholder commitment, but the difficulty of translating these strengths into consistent and wider coverage within a changing operating environment.

Table: 10: Key Contextual Challenges and Implications for Project Delivery

Challenges	Main contextual factors	Effects on the project
Cross-border operations	Administrative procedures, approvals and geographic distance	Delays, travelling costs and limited frequency of activities
Resource constraints	Limited public funding and high field/travel costs	Limits scale and geographic coverage
Changing vulnerabilities	Evolving migration patterns and forms of exploitation	Requires continual adaptation of prevention approaches
Mobility of target groups	Frequent movement of migrants and workers	Requires continual adaptation of prevention approaches
Regulatory and social sensitivity	Changing regulations and varying local operating environments	Requires careful stakeholder engagement and conflict-sensitive implementation

The project's main challenges are predominantly structural and contextual. NCCM has demonstrated technical capacity and practical adaptability, but cross-border administrative requirements, resource constraints, changing migration patterns and social sensitivities have limited the scale, continuity and predictability of implementation.

6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

6.1 Gender Equality and Gender Responsiveness

Gender is a particularly relevant cross-cutting issue for the NCCM programme because women and girls constitute a substantial proportion of the project's direct participants and several of the groups facing heightened risks of trafficking, exploitation and HIV-related vulnerability. The evaluation found that women were consistently well represented among project participants across the implementation period.

The available participation data provide a clear pattern. In the previous three-year project, women accounted for 2,603 of 3,638 participants in labour, trafficking and migration-related activities, and 3,220 of 4,472 participants in HIV-related activities. This represents approximately 72% female participation in

both areas. More recent Phase III data show a similar pattern, although the gender balance varies by activity and location. From the reported September 2025 results, women represented 856 of 1,384 participants (approximately 62%) across labour and trafficking awareness, HIV prevention activities and livelihood support. Women accounted for 438 of 739 participants in HIV-related activities and 7 of 10 reported livelihood beneficiaries.

The gender pattern is particularly visible in activities targeting workers and young people. For example, between June and August 2025, women represented 96 of 134 restaurant service workers trained in Vientiane and 137 of 178 participants in training in Khammouane. In HIV-related training during the same reporting period, women also represented the majority of participants in Vientiane and Luang Prabang, although Khammouane showed a more balanced participation.

This strong participation of women is consistent with the vulnerability profile identified through the evaluation. Project evidence identifies young women, including women working in entertainment and service-sector environments, as particularly exposed to overlapping risks of HIV, sexual exploitation, labour exploitation and trafficking. In Luang Prabang, for example, the evaluation identified young women from remote and ethnic minority communities among groups vulnerable to exploitation when moving into urban employment. In Vientiane, NCCM's cooperation with health authorities has specifically included HIV prevention and health services for young women working in the entertainment sector.

There is also evidence that the project has provided gender-responsive livelihood support, although the number of cases is relatively small. Recent reporting shows that women represented 7 of 10 reported livelihood beneficiaries, while earlier project implementation included livelihood assistance for people affected by exploitation and trafficking.

However, the evaluation also finds that high female participation should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of a fully gender-responsive programme. The project has been effective in reaching women, but there is less systematic evidence that gender differences in needs, decision-making power, economic vulnerability, safety, mobility, access to services or barriers to behaviour change are consistently incorporated into programme design and monitoring.

This is particularly important because the project's gender profile is not simply a matter of participation numbers. Women may experience different pathways into migration, exploitation, HIV risk and economic vulnerability than men. At the same time, men and boys can also experience trafficking and labour exploitation, and the evaluation should avoid treating trafficking as exclusively a women's issue. Current external evidence also indicates that male victims can be under-identified, while women and girls remain particularly exposed to some forms of sexual exploitation and trafficking.

The evaluation therefore considers that gender responsiveness is a significant strength in terms of reach, but an area where the programme could become more systematic in terms of analysis and measurement. Future monitoring should continue to disaggregate participation and results by sex and, where appropriate and ethically feasible, examine whether women and men experience different outcomes from training, service access, livelihood assistance and follow-up.

6.2 Conflict Sensitivity and Unintended Consequences

The evaluation also identified conflict sensitivity and unintended consequences as relevant cross-cutting considerations, particularly because NCCM operates in a sensitive environment involving HIV, trafficking, migrant workers, employers, government authorities and vulnerable populations.

One field example illustrates this issue. Following an HIV training for restaurant service workers in Vientiane Capital, police subsequently visited and questioned staff at the establishment. There was no evidence that NCCM caused or requested the police intervention, but the restaurant owner reportedly associated the incident with NCCM's involvement. The case demonstrates how activities involving sensitive groups can sometimes generate unintended perceptions or affect relationships with employers and communities. This does not constitute evidence of a systematic negative effect. Rather, it highlights the importance of conflict-sensitive and risk-aware implementation, particularly when working with people involved in potentially stigmatised occupations or sensitive health and protection issues.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation concludes that NCCM has made a meaningful and relevant contribution to reducing vulnerabilities faced by mobile populations in Lao PDR. Its integrated work on HIV/AIDS, human trafficking, safe migration, labour rights and community protection is well suited to the interconnected risks faced by target groups. The programme is strongest in relevance, coherence, immediate effectiveness and partnership development, while evidence of longer-term impact and sustainability is less developed.

7.1 Strong immediate results and effective approaches

The clearest evidence of effectiveness is in knowledge and awareness. Pre- and post-training evidence demonstrates improved understanding of HIV/AIDS, human trafficking, labour rights and safe migration. Participatory methods—such as games, videos, discussion and practical exercises—were particularly well received and adapted to different target groups. The main limitation is not the quality of the intervention but its scale, frequency and continuity; repeated engagement and stronger follow-up are needed to translate immediate learning into sustained change.

7.2 Contribution beyond direct beneficiaries

NCCM has generated potential multiplier effects through teachers, health workers, volunteers, Church representatives and government personnel who can continue sharing knowledge through their existing roles. However, these mechanisms are not yet sufficiently systematic to guarantee continued coverage. Future effectiveness will therefore depend increasingly on strengthening local trainers and institutions rather than expanding direct NCCM delivery alone.

7.3 Emerging but not yet fully demonstrated longer-term impact

The programme has contributed to encouraging changes at individual, household and community-network levels, including improved awareness, access to HIV-related services, selected livelihood benefits and peer-support networks. However, evidence remains insufficient to demonstrate sustained behavioural change, reduced trafficking or exploitation, or population-level and policy impact. The evaluation therefore treats broader changes as plausible contributions rather than direct attribution to NCCM.

7.4 Partnerships are a major programme asset

Partnership and coordination are among the programme's strongest achievements. NCCM has built relationships with government, Church, community and civil-society actors and has helped connect community-level prevention and support with formal services. Cross-border cooperation is particularly valuable. The next step is to convert successful relationships into more institutionalised referral pathways, clearer roles and sustainable coordination mechanisms.

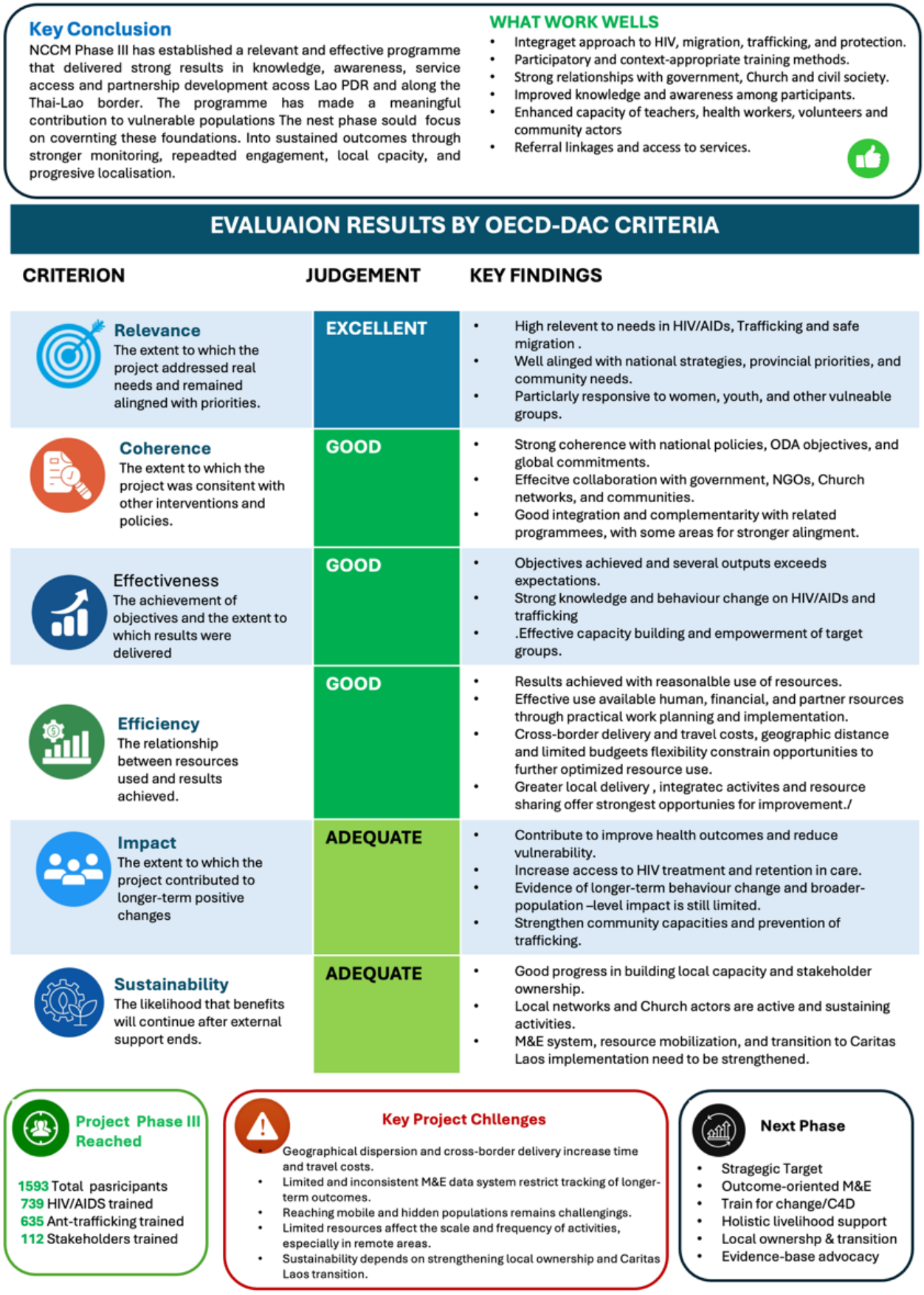
7.5 Efficiency is good, with opportunities to optimise the implementation model

Efficiency is assessed as 4 – Good. Financial management and accountability are sound, and the project makes practical use of available resources and partnerships. Cross-border travel, geographic distance and limited budget flexibility create some efficiency constraints, but these have been managed pragmatically. Greater use of Lao-based trainers and partners, integrated activities and resource sharing could further improve efficiency in the next phase.

7.6 Sustainability: important foundations, but the final phase is critical

Sustainability is assessed as 3 – Adequate. The programme has established useful foundations through local capacity, partnerships, volunteers, referral networks and cross-border cooperation. However, continued activities remain dependent on external funding and NCCM's direct involvement, while Caritas Laos is not yet fully ready to assume all functions independently. The next phase should therefore be used deliberately to strengthen local systems, transfer responsibilities and establish practical conditions for continued implementation beyond NCCM support.

Figure 2: Conclusion summary



8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation findings indicate that NCCM has established a strong foundation through its integrated work on HIV/AIDS, human trafficking, safe migration and protection. For the next phase, the priority should be to strengthen the quality and sustainability of this model rather than simply expand the volume of activities.

The recommendations therefore focus on five strategic areas: strategic targeting and adaptive management; outcome-oriented M&E; behaviour change and integrated support; partnership and resource sharing; and transition to local ownership through Caritas Laos. The recommendations are designed to address the main gaps identified across the OECD-DAC criteria while building on approaches that have already demonstrated potential during the three phases.

8.1 Strengthen Strategic Targeting, Project Management and Adaptive Planning

The evaluation found that NCCM operates across locations with different needs, institutional environments, geographic characteristics and levels of partner capacity. At the same time, available financial and human resources are limited. A more systematic approach to targeting and planning would help ensure that resources are concentrated where they are most needed and where NCCM can generate the greatest contribution.

Recommendation

NCCM should move towards a more needs-based, risk-informed and adaptive project management approach for the next phase. This should include:

- conducting stakeholder mapping and analysis at the beginning of the project;
- defining clear target groups and selection criteria for target communities, based on vulnerability, HIV and trafficking risks, migration patterns, service gaps, accessibility and implementation feasibility;
- conducting a comparative assessment of current and potential project locations before making decisions on geographic expansion or withdrawal;
- developing a project-level risk analysis and risk-management framework;
- allowing sufficient flexibility in annual work planning and resource allocation to respond to changes in needs and the operating environment; and
- developing context-specific implementation modalities rather than applying the same approach uniformly across locations.

In considering future geographic coverage, NCCM should assess the relative advantages of strengthening existing locations against establishing new operations. Savannakhet as a new target option, may offer strategic potential because of its border location and Catholic connections, but establishing new government and stakeholder relationships would require additional investment. Luang Prabang should not be discontinued solely because it is not a border province; its continuing relevance to HIV, migration and trafficking should be considered alongside cost and implementation feasibility. Lessons from the three phases should be used to develop appropriate implementation models for different contexts.

8.2 Establish a Stronger Outcome-Oriented M&E and Learning System

The evaluation found that NCCM's existing monitoring system provides useful information on activities and outputs but is less effective in demonstrating what changed as a result of the intervention. This limits the project's ability to assess behavioural change, longer-term case outcomes and institutional effects, and makes evidence-based resource decisions more difficult.

Recommendation

NCCM should establish a more systematic, outcome-oriented M&E system for the next phase. Priority actions should include:

- developing a results framework with more outcome-level indicators, alongside output indicators;
- conducting an appropriate baseline assessment at the beginning of the next phase and an endline assessment where feasible;
- considering KAP surveys for selected target groups to measure changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices;
- developing standard monitoring guidelines and reporting templates for partners, particularly for case assistance and livelihood support;
- revising livelihood case-reporting formats so that they document not only assistance provided but also needs, intended results, progress, challenges and follow-up status;
- establishing systematic follow-up for selected cases;
- exploring joint monitoring among NCCM, PHO-Thailand, Lao PDR health authorities and relevant partners, where appropriate; and
- conducting periodic learning reviews to use monitoring evidence to adjust implementation.

The strengthened M&E system should enable NCCM to move from primarily reporting “what was delivered” towards demonstrating “what changed, for whom, and under what conditions.”

8.3 Strengthen Behaviour Change, Livelihood Support and Integrated Service Delivery

Training has been an important and generally effective project tool, but the evaluation suggests that one-off training is unlikely to be sufficient to sustain changes in attitudes, behaviour and practice. Continued reinforcement through multiple communication channels and local actors is needed to increase the likelihood that knowledge is translated into sustained practice.

The evaluation also found that NCCM's current model relies considerably on Thailand-based staff travelling to Lao PDR to deliver activities. While this provides technical quality and direct support, it is resource-intensive and limits the frequency and scale of engagement. A stronger multiplier model, supported by trained local trainers, could improve both effectiveness and sustainability.

At the same time, awareness and prevention activities should be complemented by livelihood and economic empowerment support for vulnerable groups, particularly where economic vulnerability contributes to migration, exploitation or other risks.

Recommendation

NCCM should strengthen its training and support model by moving from predominantly direct delivery towards a structured local multiplier model, supported by Communication for Development (C4D), repeated community engagement and stronger linkages to livelihood services. NCCM should:

- develop a standardised TOT package covering core content on HIV/AIDS prevention, human trafficking, safe migration and other relevant topics, together with facilitation guidance, communication techniques, session plans and appropriate IEC materials;
- establish a sustainable local training pool in each province, drawing on suitable teachers, health workers, community volunteers, Church actors and other local stakeholders;
- provide TOT and periodic refresher support to local trainers and establish mechanisms for maintaining the quality and consistency of training;
- progressively shift routine training delivery from Thailand-based NCCM staff to trained Lao-based trainers and partners, while NCCM retains a role in technical support, quality assurance and mentoring;
- integrate principles of Communication for Development (C4D) so that training is complemented by peer education, community discussions, social media and digital communication, school and Church activities, IEC materials and follow-up engagement;
- use existing community and institutional platforms to reinforce messages rather than relying primarily on stand-alone training events;
- provide or facilitate vocational training and economic empowerment opportunities for vulnerable youth and people living with HIV, where appropriate to their needs and circumstances;
- strengthen referral to government, NGO and technical livelihood services so that beneficiaries can access skills development, technical assistance, employment or income-generating opportunities beyond the project's direct support; and
- monitor whether local trainers continue to deliver activities and whether participants demonstrate changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices.

This approach would create a multiplier effect, whereby NCCM's technical investment in a smaller number of local trainers can reach a larger number of community members over time. It would also reduce dependence on frequent cross-border travel and create a more sustainable mechanism for continuing prevention activities after NCCM reduces its direct implementation role.

NCCM should also explore opportunities to institutionalise HIV prevention within existing professional and educational systems. For example, nursing students could receive appropriate TOT or HIV prevention training and apply their knowledge during their final-year community and hospital internships. This could create a longer-term pool of health professionals able to reinforce HIV prevention messages beyond the project period.

For livelihood support, assistance should be based on individual needs and realistic livelihood opportunities, rather than being treated primarily as one-off assistance. Stronger assessment, referral and follow-up would help ensure that livelihood interventions contribute to longer-term resilience and reduce vulnerability.

8.4 Strengthen Partnership, Integration and Resource Sharing

NCCM has established a wide network of government, Church, NGO and other partners. However, there is further potential to use these relationships not only for coordination but also for joint implementation, resource sharing and integration of activities.

Recommendation

NCCM should position itself increasingly as a technical and coordination resource within a wider network, rather than relying primarily on direct delivery of activities. The project should actively explore:

- joint HIV and anti-trafficking activities with organisations such as AAT and VFI;
- opportunities to integrate HIV prevention into existing anti-trafficking activities;
- use of existing IEC materials and technical resource persons from NGOs and UN agencies, including IOM;
- collaboration with Public Health Offices and other government services;
- integration with activities of Catholic organisations working in the same communities;
- collaboration with nursing schools and other training institutions;
- use of existing Church activities, such as youth camps, as platforms for HIV and trafficking awareness; and
- integration with existing community structures and programmes where appropriate.

For example, where Caritas Laos works with communities on the sustainable clean water management project, NCCM could explore whether water-management committees or water-user groups provide appropriate platforms for health, HIV or trafficking awareness. Existing community income-generating mechanisms could also potentially be linked to livelihood support for vulnerable cases, subject to appropriate assessment and safeguards. These approaches could increase reach, reduce duplication and travel costs, and strengthen continuity after NCCM reduces direct implementation.

8.5 Prepare Caritas Laos for Transition and Strengthen Local Ownership

Caritas Laos provides a potentially appropriate institutional pathway for continuation because the project's thematic areas are relevant to its strategic priorities. However, the evaluation found that its organisational, technical and operational capacity is still developing, and it is not yet fully ready to assume all project functions independently.

Recommendation

NCCM and Caritas Laos should develop a clear transition and exit-readiness framework for the next phase, with measurable milestones for increasing local responsibility. The framework should address:

- staffing and technical capacity;
- HIV and anti-trafficking programming;
- training and TOT;
- case management;
- M&E and reporting;
- financial and administrative systems;
- donor communication and reporting in English;

- government and stakeholder relationships;
- referral mechanisms; and
- access to NCCM's training curricula, IEC materials, tools and other programme resources.

The transition should be based on demonstrated institutional readiness rather than simply the end of the funding period. NCCM and Caritas Laos should progressively share implementation responsibilities, with NCCM moving increasingly towards mentoring, technical support, quality assurance and strategic coordination. The organisations should also establish clear communication and decision-making arrangements early in the transition process to address differences in expectations and reduce dependence on individual relationships.

Caritas Laos's planned registration with Caritas International, followed by the necessary engagement with the Lao government, should be incorporated into the transition risk assessment and planning process. At the same time, NCCM should use the final phase to document and transfer the lessons learned from all three phases, including different implementation modalities that may be appropriate in different locations.

8.6 Strengthen Evidence-Based Advocacy and Policy Engagement

Although advocacy is not NCCM's primary implementation function, the evaluation found that NCCM has an important field-level source of information and practical experience that could be used more strategically. The project generates information through community activities, case assistance, stakeholder engagement and its relationships with government and civil-society actors. This provides an opportunity to translate field experience into evidence that can contribute to wider advocacy and policy discussions.

Recommendation

NCCM should systematically document emerging issues, anonymised case experiences and lessons from implementation and use them, where appropriate, through:

- short learning or policy briefs;
- publications and social media;
- case stories illustrating broader systemic issues;
- stakeholder and government dialogue; and
- relevant national and cross-border coordination mechanisms.

NCCM should also connect its field evidence with existing advocacy networks and platforms, including those of government, NGOs, Church organisations, UN agencies and other relevant actors. Rather than establishing separate advocacy structures, NCCM can use these existing networks to share evidence, identify emerging issues and contribute to collective advocacy on HIV prevention, migrant protection, human trafficking and access to services.

Individual cases should not only be presented as success stories but, where appropriate, used to illustrate wider structural issues and support evidence-based advocacy. This would enable NCCM to build on its comparative advantage as a field-based organisation and ensure that lessons from implementation contribute to wider policy and practice.

8.7 Strengthen Safety, Safeguarding and Conflict-Sensitive Implementation

Given the sensitive nature of the project, NCCM should strengthen protocols for confidentiality, safeguarding, staff and volunteer safety, engagement with authorities, and management of potentially sensitive activities.

The reported incident involving an HIV training for restaurant service workers in Vientiane Capital illustrates the importance of this issue. Although there was no evidence that NCCM caused or requested the subsequent police intervention, the incident demonstrates how activities involving sensitive groups can be misunderstood and affect trust.

Risk and conflict-sensitivity considerations should therefore be incorporated into activity planning, particularly when working with employers, service establishments, vulnerable populations or other groups where activities may carry social or regulatory sensitivities.

8.8 Priority Implementation Matrix

The following matrix translates the strategic recommendations into priority actions for the next phase.

Table 11: Priority Recommendations and Implementation Framework

Recommendation	Priority	Key Actions	Expected Result	Lead Responsibility	Timing
1. Strategic targeting, project management and adaptive planning	**High**	Stakeholder mapping; target-group and community selection criteria; geographic assessment; risk analysis; adaptive annual planning	Resources are concentrated on priority populations and communities and can be adjusted as needs change	NCCM management / Programme team	Start-up and annual review
2. Outcome-oriented M&E and learning	**Critical**	Results framework; baseline/KAP; outcome indicators; partner monitoring guidelines; case follow-up; joint monitoring; learning reviews	NCCM can demonstrate outcomes beyond outputs and use evidence to improve implementation and resource allocation	NCCM M&E / Programme team + partners	Start-up and throughout
3. Behaviour change, livelihood and integrated support	**High**	Develop a standardised TOT package; establish a local training pool in each province; apply a multiplier/C4D model; integrate training with existing institutional and community platforms; provide or facilitate vocational and economic empowerment opportunities; strengthen referral to government, NGO and technical livelihood services; and follow up on livelihood outcomes.	ncreased reach and continuity of prevention activities, stronger potential for sustained behaviour change, and improved livelihood resilience among vulnerable groups, with reduced reliance on Thailand-based staff for routine delivery.	NCCM + local trainers, and technical partners	Start-up and throughout
4. Partnership, integration and resource sharing	**High**	Joint activities; shared IEC and technical resources; integration with NGO, Church, government and UN programmes; use of existing community platforms	Increased reach and technical capacity with reduced duplication and implementation costs	NCCM + partners	Throughout
5. Caritas Laos transition and local ownership	**Critical**	Capacity assessment; transition milestones; joint implementation; progressive transfer; systems strengthening; exit readiness	Caritas Laos develops the capacity and ownership required to assume increasing responsibility	NCCM + Caritas Laos + donor	Start immediately and throughout

Recommendation	Priority	Key Actions	Expected Result	Lead Responsibility	Timing
6. Evidence-based advocacy and policy engagement	**Medium**	Document field evidence; develop case stories and learning briefs; connect evidence with existing advocacy networks and policy platforms; use partnerships for policy dialogue	Field-level evidence and experience contribute more systematically to wider advocacy, learning and policy discussions.	NCCM management / Programme team, NGOs partners	Years 2–3
7. Safety, safeguarding and conflict sensitivity	**High**	Develop protocols; activity-level risk assessment; confidentiality and safeguarding guidance; staff/partner orientation	Sensitive activities are implemented more safely and unintended consequences are better managed	NCCM + partners	Start-up and throughout

8.9 Overall Strategic Direction

The overarching direction for the next phase should be a transition from direct delivery towards locally owned, outcome-oriented and network-based implementation.

NCCM should retain its comparative advantages in technical expertise, coordination, cross-border relationships and access to vulnerable populations, while progressively enabling Lao-based partners and institutions to take greater responsibility for implementation. This would allow the next phase to build on what has worked across the three phases while addressing the main constraints identified by the evaluation—particularly limited coverage, high implementation costs, weak longer-term measurement and dependence on direct project delivery.

9.DONOR CONSIDERATIONS

Enabling effective and sustainable implementation in the next phase

The evaluation finds that NCCM has demonstrated sound financial management, practical resource management and the ability to operate effectively in a complex cross-border environment**.** The main constraints identified are largely structural and contextual. The next phase would benefit from a funding framework that provides sufficient flexibility to respond to field realities while maintaining appropriate accountability**.**

1. Align Funding with Field Realities and Allow Reasonable Budget Flexibility

Implementation in Lao PDR involves variable travel, logistics, government participation and other operational costs, particularly in geographically distant locations such as Luang Prabang. Field demand also does not always correspond to the assumptions made when activity budgets are established. As NCCM's financial management and accountability are sound, the key consideration is to allow realistic Lao PDR-based cost assumptions and reasonable flexibility to reallocate resources among approved activities, where justified by changing needs and documented through agreed reporting mechanisms.

2. Support Progressive Localisation Through Appropriate Funding

The current Thailand–Lao delivery model provides important technical expertise and cross-border relationships, but travel and administrative requirements make direct delivery relatively costly. The next phase could therefore benefit from funding arrangements that support a gradual shift towards Lao-based implementation, including the capacity-building and operational costs required to increase the role of Lao-based trainers, health professionals, volunteers and partner organisations. This would strengthen both efficiency and local ownership.

3. Fund the Transition — Not Only Programme Activities

Caritas Laos provides a potentially appropriate pathway for future local ownership, but its organisational, technical and operational capacity is still developing. The next phase should therefore be recognised as a transition and capacity-investment period, with adequate resources and time for organisational strengthening, mentoring, systems development and progressive transfer of responsibilities. Importantly, transition should be based on demonstrated readiness rather than simply the end of the funding period**.**

4. Provide Space for Adaptive Programming and Proportionate M&E

The three project locations differ considerably in needs, costs, institutional environments and implementation feasibility, while migration patterns and vulnerabilities continue to change. Population-based targets do not always reflect realistic coverage within available resources, while stronger outcome-level evidence will be needed to demonstrate sustained change. Donor funding should therefore allow adaptive adjustments to geographic focus, target groups, activity intensity and implementation modalities, together with proportionate resources for outcome-oriented M&E, learning and case follow-up.

The objective is not less accountability, but greater flexibility within accountability — enabling donor resources to respond to field realities, support local ownership and achieve more sustainable results.

Annex 1: Evaluation Matrix

OECD-DAC Criteria	Key evaluation Questions	Assessment dimensions/key change pathways	Methods & Data sources
RELEVANCE	**1.1** To what extent did the project respond to the needs and priorities of target groups and the changing context? **1.2** To what extent were the project strategies, target groups, locations and delivery approaches appropriate to the identified needs?	**Knowledge & Awareness:** relevance of information and training to identified knowledge gaps. **Access to Services:** relevance of addressing barriers to HIV, protection and welfare services. **Resilience & Self-Reliance:** relevance of livelihood support to vulnerability and household needs. **Geographical and Target-Group Relevance:** appropriateness of locations and beneficiary selection. **Contextual Adaptation:** responsiveness to changing migration, economic and social conditions.	Document review; contextual analysis; KIIs; FGDs; field visits; beneficiary consultations; online survey as supplementary evidence.
COHERENCE	**2.1** To what extent was the project aligned with relevant policies, institutional mandates and broader responses? **2.2** To what extent did the project complement existing services and initiatives?	**Partnership & Coordination:** complementarity among NCCM, government, Church, NGOs and other actors. **Access to Services:** linkages with existing health, protection, labour and referral systems. **Capacity Development:** complementarity with government and partner capacity-building efforts. **Institutional Coherence:** alignment with national and local priorities. **Cross-Border Coherence:** complementarity between Thai and Lao systems and actors.	Policy/document review; KIIs; stakeholder consultations; partner interviews; field visits; referral/coordination records.
EFFECTIVENESS	**3.1** To what extent did the project achieve its intended outputs and emerging outcomes? **3.2** Which implementation approaches were most effective, and what factors influenced achievement?	**Knowledge & Awareness:** changes demonstrated through pre/post assessments and qualitative evidence. **Behaviour & Practice:** reported application of knowledge and safer practices. **Access to Services:** referrals, HIV testing/treatment and access to support. **Capacity Development:** strengthened knowledge and skills among partners and local actors. **Partnership & Coordination:** functioning networks, referrals and collaborative implementation. **Reach, Quality and Continuity:** coverage, frequency, appropriateness and follow-up of activities. **Output Achievement:** planned versus achieved activities and targets.	Financial records; audit reports; budgets; work plans; progress reports; KIIs with management/staff; partner consultations; field observations.

OECD-DAC Criteria	Key evaluation Questions	Assessment dimensions/key change pathways	Methods & Data sources
EFFICIENCY	**4.1** To what extent were financial, human and technical resources used efficiently to achieve results? **4.2** Were implementation and management arrangements timely, proportionate and responsive?	**Partnership & Coordination:** efficiency gains through coordination, resource sharing and joint implementation. **Capacity Development:** use of local versus external technical capacity. **Implementation Model:** travel, cross-border delivery and deployment of staff/resources. **Management & M&E:** planning, monitoring, reporting and decision-making efficiency. **Financial Management:** budget utilisation, expenditure and accountability. **Timeliness:** implementation against work plans and schedules.	Financial records; audit reports; budgets; work plans; progress reports; KIIs with management/staff; partner consultations; field observations.
IMPACT	**5.1** What significant intended and unintended changes has the project contributed to? **5.2** To what extent has the project contributed to changes in vulnerability, behaviour, service access and resilience? **5.3** What broader institutional or systems-level changes can reasonably be associated with the project?	**Behaviour & Practice:** sustained or emerging changes in behaviour and protective practices. **Knowledge & Awareness:** contribution of increased knowledge to subsequent change. **Access to Services:** changes in access to HIV, health, protection and livelihood services. **Resilience & Self-Reliance:** household and individual livelihood outcomes. **Capacity Development:** institutional and community-level changes. **Partnership & Coordination:** longer-term changes in networks, referrals and institutional relationships. **Unintended Effects:** positive and negative consequences. **Contribution:** plausible contribution versus direct attribution.	Project documents; KIIs; FGDs; capacity/transition assessment; partner consultations; field visits; organisational and programme systems review.
SUSTAINABILITY	**6.1** To what extent are project results, capacities and benefits likely to continue beyond external funding? **6.2** To what extent have local partners and institutions developed the capacity and ownership needed to sustain results? **6.3** What factors support or constrain continuation?	**Knowledge & Awareness:** retention and continued dissemination of knowledge. **Behaviour & Practice:** likelihood that positive practices will continue. **Resilience & Self-Reliance:** sustainability of livelihood benefits and reduced vulnerability. **Capacity Development:** local technical and organisational capacity. **Partnership & Coordination:** sustainability of networks, referral mechanisms and institutional relationships. **Local Ownership:** role and readiness of Caritas Laos, Church, government, NGO and community actors. **Financial/Institutional Sustainability:** resources, systems and organisational arrangements for continuation. **Transition:** readiness for progressive transfer of implementation responsibility.	Project documents; KIIs; FGDs; capacity/transition assessment; partner consultations; field visits; organisational and programme systems review.

Annex 2: Summary of Key Quantitative Evidence Used in the Evaluation

Evidence Area	Key Figure/Findings	Use in Evaluation
Phase III reported reach	1,593 participants	Evidence of output achievement and reach
Labour/trafficking awareness	635 participants	Evidence of activity implementation
HIV/AIDS activities	739 participants	Evidence of activity implementation
Stakeholder training	112 participants	Evidence of capacity development
Advocacy/network activities	97 participants	Evidence of partnership/coordination
Female participation – previous project	Around 72%	Evidence of strong gender reach
Female participation – reported Phase III period	Around 62%	Evidence of continued female reach
Survey perceived change	Positive overall pattern	Supplementary evidence of perceived change
Survey project performance	Positive overall pattern	Supplementary evidence of participant perceptions
HIV treatment access in Khammouane	Reported increase from approximately 300 to 700 people receiving ART during the period of close collaboration	Evidence of plausible contribution to service access; not attributable solely to NCCM
Youth peer network in Thailand	Approximately 15 members reported in earlier project evidence	Emerging evidence of continued peer-level effects

Annex 3: List of Document Reviewed

No.	Documents	Period/Year	Sources
1	Project Proposal Phase 1 – 3	2018 – 2027	NCCM
2	Annual Report Phase 1	2018 - 2021	NCCM
3	Annual Report Phase 2	2021 - 2024	NCCM
4	Annual Report Phase 3: Year 1	2024 - 2025	NCCM
5	Quarterly Report Phase 3: Year 2	2025 - 2026	NCCM
6	Pre-Post Test of HIV/Human trafficking	2024 - 2025	NCCM
7	SWOT analysis documents	2024 – 2025	NCCM
8	Case stories	2025	NCCM
9	Livelihood case assistance report	2025	NCCM
10	Progress livelihood case assistance report	2020	AAT
11	MOA-Vientiane Capital, Khammoune, Luang Prabang	2025	NCCM
12	Audit Report	September 2024 – February 2025	NCCM
13	Audit Report	March – August 2025	NCCM
14	Audit Report	September 2025 – February 2026	NCCM
15	Question response to donors	2025	NCCM
16	Meeting minutes-cross border HIV prevention project	2018	NCCM
17	Information for Misereor's partner organisations on commissioning external evaluations locally	2024	NCCM
18	MOU between NCCM and Catholic Church	2018	NCCM
19	Project Budget Sheet	2024-2027	NCCM
20	Power Point Presentation (PPT) – HIV strategic plan and action plans	2026	Center of HIV/AIDs and STI, Laos
21	PPT- HIV situations and prevention updates	2026	Center of HIV/AIDs and STI, Laos
22	Caritas Internationalis Management Standards	2021	Caritas International
23	Lao National Strategic Plan (2021-2030) and Action Plan (2021-2025) on HIV/AIDs and STIs	2020	Department of Communicable Disease Control Center for HIV/AIDS and STI
24	Voluntary Review Report on the status of implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) in Laos	2026	International Migration Review Forum
25	National Plan of Action on Anti-Human Trafficking in Person Phase 3 (2021-2025)	2022	IOM

Annex 4: List of Stakeholder Consulted

Location	Stakeholder groups	Organization	Methods
Vientiane Capital	• Head of Center of HIV/AIDs • Head of Disease Control Department, Public Health Office	Ministry of Public Health, Lao PDR.	KII
	• Project staff • Head of the office	AAT VFI	KII, FGD
	• Project volunteers	NCCM	KII
	• Head of Education and Sport Department	Ministry of Educaiton and Sport	KII
Khammoune	• Deputy of Khammoune PHO • Head of Nursing school	Ministry of Public Health, Lao PDR	KII
	• Head of Education and Sport Department	Ministry of Education and Sport	KII
	• Nursing students	Nursing school	FGD
	• Project coordinator • Finance officer	Caritas Laos	KII
	• Project volunteer	NCCM	KII
	• Community members at Ban Don Don village	Ban Don Don Village	FGD
Luang Prabang	• Head of Disease Control Department, Public Health Office	Ministry of Public Health	KII (Online Interview)
	• Project volunteer	NCCM/Caritas Laos	KII (Online Interview)
Nakhon Panom	• Project Coordinator, Disease Control Department	Nakhon Panom Provincial Health Office	KII
Nong Khai	• Head of Disease Control, Provincial Health Office	Nong Khan Province Health Office	KII
NCCM	• Project Coordinator • 3 Project field officers • 1 Project Volunteer	NCCM Sakonnakhon Diocease	FGD

Annex 5: Key Informant Interview (KII) Guide

Target groups	Question Guidelines
NCCM Management and Project team	**Project Relevance** • How were project priorities identified? • How well do the project activities respond to current needs? • Have community needs changed during implementation? **Project Implementation** • Which activities have been implemented most successfully? • Which activities were more difficult to implement? • What factors contributed to success? • What major challenges were encountered? • How were these challenges addressed? **Results and Changes** • What significant changes have you observed? • Which target groups benefited the most? • Which expected results were not fully achieved? Please give examples **Partnership and coordination** • How effective has collaboration been with GO, NGOs, Church networks, Communities? • What worked well? What could be improved? **Project management and Efficiency** • Were resources sufficient? • Was implementation timely? Were activities implemented according to the plan? Were there any overspent and underspent budgets? Why? • Was monitoring information useful for decision-making? • Were there activites that could have been implemented more efficiently? • Were there any obstacles that delayed the activities? **Sustainability** • Which project results are most likely to continute? • What mechanisms have been established? • What remaining risks exist? What additional support is needed? **Lesson Learned** • What are the biggest lessons? • What innovative approaches emerged? • What recommendations would you make for future programming?
Government Officials, NGOs ,and relevant partner organizations	• What has been your involvement with the project? • What role has your organisation played? • How did you communicate between NCCM and among other organizations? • How relevant is the project to local priorities? Does the project addrss priority issues in your province/areas? Does it complement government programes? • Which interventions are most relevant and successful? Which group benefited most? • How effective has collaboration with NCCM been? • Were there duplication or gabs? • How has the project supported government/NGOs work? • What strengths of the partnership have you observed? • Have you observed changes among beneficiaries or communities? • Has the project strengthened local/government capacity? What challenges remain? Which capacities have improved? • How can collaboration be improved? • What should future projects focus on? What further support is needed? What roles should you play or can contribute for future projects?

Target groups	Question Guidelines
Community leaders, Church leaders, community volunteers , school teachers	• What are the major issue affective your community/school? How relevant has the project been? • What has been your involvement in project activities? • How has the project benefited your community/school? • How did you contribute or support to this project? • Which activities have been most useful? • Have you observed changes in community/student's knowledge or behaviour? • Has community/school awareness and participation increased? Were vulnerable groups included? • How have vulnerable people benefited? • What challenges remain? • Can community/school activities continue after the project? • What factors or obstacles that resulted in your participation/contribution? • Were there any unintended consequences? • Can activities continue without external funding? What support is still needed? • What should NCCM continue?
School students, service workers, livelihood assistance beneficiaries	• Please describe the support you received. • How useful was the support? • Have you been able to apply what you learned? • What changes have you experienced since participating? Has it helped you improve your livelihood or wellbeing? • What challenges do you still face? • Which aspects of the support were most valuable? • What additional support would help? What challenges do you still face? • Would you recommend this support to others? • What suggestions do you have for improvement?

Annex 6: Online Survey Questionnaire

Section A : RESPONDENT PROFILE

1. Province
   - ☐ Vientiane Capital
   - ☐ Khammoune
   - ☐ Luang Prabang
2. Sex
   - ☐ Male
   - ☐ Female
   - ☐ Prefer not to say
3. Age
   - ☐ > 18
   - ☐ 19-24
   - ☐ 25-39
   - ☐ 40-59
   - ☐ > 60
4. Respondent category
   - ☐ School students
   - ☐ Service workers, please specify……
   - ☐ Church member
   - ☐ Government officials, please specify……
   - ☐ Others……
5. Which project activites have you participated in?
   - ☐ Safe migration/Anti-human trafficking training
   - ☐ HIV/AIDS awareness training
   - ☐ Liveihood assistance
   - ☐ Child Safeguarding/Child Protection training
   - ☐ Coordination/stakeholder meeting
   - ☐ Others…….
6. How long have you participated in the most recent activities?
   - ☐ Less than 6 months
   - ☐ 6-12 months
   - ☐ 1-2 years
   - ☐ More than 2 years

Section B: PERCIEVED CHANGES

Scale: 1 = Strongly aree ,2 = Disagree ,3 = Neutral ,4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly aree, N/A = Not applicable

7. Please rate the following statement

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
7.1 I gained useful knowledge from the initiative.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.2 I believe that this initative benefited my community.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.3 I have applied/used some of the knowledge/skills I learned.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.4 I am confident in sharing information I learned with others.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.5 The information and benefits. I received from this project will be useful for me in the long term.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section C: PROJECT PERFORMANCE

8. Please rate the following statement

	Statement	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
8.1	The project addressed important issues affecting my community.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.2	The project activities were relevant to my needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.3	The activities were properly arranged and managed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.4	I would recommend NCCM's activities to others.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.5	The benefits of this project will continue after the project ends.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section D: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

9. What do you think has been the most valuable benefit of this project?
   _____
10. What challenges or barriers did you face when participating in the project activities?
    _____
11. What challenges do people in your community still face?
    _____
12. What could NCCM do better in future projects?
    _____
13. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?
    _____

Annex 7 : Proposed TOC for the next phase

