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POST EVALUATION OF A CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT in the Southern Synods of Ethiopia

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Abbreviations

BN - The Norwegian Missions in Development
CBP - Capacity Building Project , also called Development Coordination Office
DASSC - Development And Social Service Commission of the EECMY
DASSC CO - DASSC Central Office
DASSC Unit - DASSC at synod level
DASSC ACBO - DASSC Area Capacity Building Office
EECMY - Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus
FGM - Female Genital Mutilation
NLM - Norwegian Lutheran Mission
NLM/E - NLM Ethiopia
NLM/N - NLM Norway
SIK - Centre for intercultural communication
TEC - Tabor Evangelical College

1. Executive summary

The impact evaluation is commissioned by the Norwegian Lutheran Mission (NLM). It is part of NLM's policy to perform external evaluations of projects around two years after the projects have phased out.

The Capacity Building Project (CBP) was implemented in 2005 and continued up to December 2007. The project was funded by NLM and Norwegian Missions in Development (BN) / Norad.

The overall aim of the project was to improve the quality of the project cycle management by building the capacity of the Southern Church Units and provide professional and technical backing to facilitate the implementation of the NLM supported projects/programmes as required by the back donors and the Ethiopian government

The project is mainly called The Capacity Building Project but it is also called the NLM Ethiopia development coordination office. The project is organised with an office in Awasa and regular visits to Addis Ababa. There is one project coordinator working fulltime in the project and he is closely collaborating with the NLM-E finance manager M Abera Tajebe at the NLM-E Central office in Addis Ababa. There is a close cooperation between these two and the NLM Country representative in Ethiopia.

The project is working closely with the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus (EECMY), the Development And Social Service Commission (DASSC) which is the development wing of the church. Especially the activities like organising seminars, work-shops etc are effectuated in cooperation with the DASSC Central Office (DASSC CO).

The project goal was to improve short term and long term competence and performance in The Southern Church Units in project planning, implementation, reporting, accounting and evaluation. The staff in the projects and in the DASSC Units are very pleased with this project both organizing seminars and more direct follow-up of the Church Units and projects.

The project has organised seminars and work-shops on different themes. Direct advising and follow up of Church Units and projects has been the methodology most used. The main reasons for this have been:

1. difference in project structures and project owner
2. a need of dealing with project coordinators or the DASSC Unit responsible on widely different level of experience and competence in reporting/budgeting/accounting and
3. a rather great difference in knowledge of English language.

Results:

- The reports are coming more and more in time and they are more correctly composed.
- Several persons quote that it had been difficult to know exactly what the donor wanted to know and before the project started they did not know how to deal with the forms.
- Several persons also quoted that it was good to have an Ethiopian to ask for advices
- The accounting is mainly presented at time – but to obtain this there is an ongoing and good communication between the CBP coordinator, NLM-E Finance manager and the projects
- There seems to be a much better understanding of the need of this timely reporting.
- There is set up a calendar for the yearly project cycle.
- Final evaluations have been run after phasing out support to the health clinics.

- There has also been set up an agreement about the handing over of a project from NLM to the church, to the Government or to a local community.
- Six new projects had been planned for in addition to a second phase for the FGM project ended 2009. These projects have been planned in cooperation between DASSC Units, local population and the project coordinator.
- If the 6 new projects that are asked for will be accepted, there are plans to sign cooperation agreements.

The project plan to get an Ethiopian with good experience from the region has been a very important choice from NLM.

The running of the projects as well as the reporting is remarkable improved by the CBP.

Challenges

The probably biggest challenge for a sustainable change is the heavy turnover in the different posts at the projects and also in some Units. The projects are mostly implemented in health institutions either owned by the Government or by the church. The level of salaries in government and in the church is one of the main reasons for this turnover. Another reason is the remote placement of some of these institutions where the projects are implemented. At one of the hospitals, the hospital manager has been changed 6 times over the last four years.

Another challenge is the education level of people working in the projects. At the project level there are administrators struggling hard with English and without experience of project managing that forces the project coordinator to work more one to one than using seminars.

The most difficult thing seems to be to follow up the calendar for reporting, changes of budget and new requests at time. There is still a need of follow up here

Continuation of the project ideas.

The ideas behind the project have been mainly carried out as planned except of not getting training for an economical expert to continue the work. The ideas of building human capacity are very central both in long term perspective of the DASSC and of the Government. DASSC CO promised to support the follow-up project that started in 2008. DASSC has now created 4 area coordination offices with the goal to build human capacity. The government has for the moment a wide range of different programs for human capacity building in hospitals, schools, development work, social service et.

An eventual further integration with the DASSC structure should be studied over the next year or two years to see how the new DASSC structure with Area Coordination Offices will find its final form

2. Introduction

The impact evaluation is commissioned by the Norwegian Lutheran Mission (NLM). It is part of NLM's policy to perform external evaluations of projects around two years after the projects have phased out. The terms of reference has been designed in cooperation with NLM's country representative in Ethiopia and the project coordinator. The evaluation is carried out by Kåre Kristensen from the Centre for Intercultural Communication in Stavanger, Norway.

The project period is from 2005 to 2007. The amount spent on the project is 1.350.000 NOK

NLM started its work in Southern Ethiopia in the late 1940s with special emphasis on health and education, and later on various community development and humanitarian activities in addition to its traditional evangelisation and church building activities. To meet the increasing demands from donors and government, NLM made an assessment of the methodologies that had been employed in the past development interventions with an aim of improving the performance to meet the present requirements.

The overall aim of the project was to improve the quality of the project cycle management by building the capacity of the Southern Church Units and provide professional and technical backing to facilitate the implementation of the NLM/Norad supported projects/programmes as required by the back donors and the Ethiopian government. A NLM/Ethiopia Development Coordination Office (NLM/E office) was established to co-ordinate and assist in the compiling of plans and reports in order to forward technically correct information to NLM and BN/Norad. In the past, each church unit with projects supported by NLM/Norad, presented and forwarded their own individual plans and reports. It has been assumed that because of its geographical closeness to the implementers, the NLM/E development office will be able to bridge the existing gaps in the planning and reporting between the church units and NLM/N.

3. Purpose and specific objectives for the final evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the long term impacts and the sustainability of the project. The findings and the process will provide useful information and experience for the planning, implementation and monitoring of other projects in Ethiopia, as well as similar projects in other countries. As a new capacity building project was initiated in 2008, the evaluation will also provide us with useful knowledge in the continuation of this project and whether the methods employed have been appropriate and successful.

4. Methods Employed

The methods used in this evaluation have been a review of existing information as project proposal, annual plans, annual reports and final report. These documents were provided prior to the evaluation to let the consultant become a little familiar with the project before arriving in Ethiopia (See appendix)

Both in-dept interviews and focus group discussions have been important tools to learn about the project, the projects to assist, relations with the EECMY and relations to the government. Most contact has been with CBP office. The DASSC staff both at head office and in the Units are central target group for the project and have been important informants together the NLM staff.

Visits have been completed to three DASSC Units and to two projects.

The project office has shown important examples of documentation as follows:

- report proposals from the project coordinators
- evaluation reports for Health clinics
- proposals for project agreements prepared to be signed if the 6 new projects requested and a second phase of the FGM project are accepted.
- other papers produced by the CBP

5. Description of the project and the church structure

The structure of the project

The project is mainly called The Capacity Building Project, but also called the NLM Ethiopia development coordination office. The project is organised with an office in Awasa and regular visits in Addis Ababa. The office itself is placed in the same building as the DASSC Unit in Awasa. There is one project coordinator working fulltime in the project and he is closely collaborating with the finance manager M Abera Tajebe at the NLM-E Central office in Addis Ababa. There is a close cooperation between these two and the NLM Country representative in Ethiopia.

The work is passed through the DASSC CO, as the activities for the Southern Units are planned in cooperation with DASSC CO who is also responsible for paying travel costs etc for the participants in seminars and work-shops.

Relation NLM Ethiopia - Norway

Still with this Capacity Building Structure in Ethiopia: the project coordinator, financial manager and the NLM country representative, all decisions on reallocation of funds and minor changing of plans must be taken in Norway by the NLM head office. This is a structure that seems to be hampering to a certain degree the activities in the CBP as well as the different projects to follow up. This process is very time consuming and is in many cases judged to be so time consuming that there is no reason to ask for reallocation because it will take too much time in the process to be able to do the changes.

This way of follow up seems to be part of the old structure with everything lead from Norway and could probably be changed.

Project - programs

It has been said that there was a discussion some time ago to make a total program for all BN supported projects in Ethiopia. A possible first step for Southern Ethiopia could have been to organize the relatively small projects, but there are a great number of them in a program where the Coordination office has power to reallocate between different projects in the Southern Units to be able to step up the activities one year where it is well working and slow down where there are challenges that year.

There might be challenges with such a structuring since the Southern Units are part of different regions, but it should be possible to try to get a better effect in the projects and to get more possibilities to follow up local initiatives. Since the project contracts are signed by DASSC CO this should be possible.

The structure church and development

The separating of the development structure from the church has many positive sides as well as challenges. There is the historical situation when the government tried to eradicate the church – in some regions more than in others and some churches were seen as more dangerous than others. It is easy to see in many countries that churches have done a marvellous job in development and emergency assistance for their population, at the same time there has been many economical challenges with difference in salary and in level of reporting bodies. We will not take all that discussion now, but it seems that the relation between the church and the DASSC could have been more open and better and that would have been an advantage for both parts.

One of the main reasons for defending this separation at DASSC level is the need of paying DASSC personnel the salary needed to get people with the necessary level to run the projects. For Southern Ethiopia quite many of the pastors do not hold a higher theological education. It seems like this difference in educational level influence the collaboration EECMY and DASSC.

The difference of level also seems to be a question visible inside the EECMY leadership on national level. The Southern church districts seem to feel a little marginalized in the central church leadership. It is quoted that all the leaders come from Western parts of Ethiopia. The reason seems to be partly because of lower academic level in Southern Ethiopia. There has not been time to study this question in depth, but it seems that theological training has been coloured by Norwegian missionaries. Consequently NLM layman thinking has coloured both needs and level for theological training as well as other education.

Gender

There is nothing mentioned on gender/women in the project document. The project has, however, in organized workshops and training, worked with NLM supported projects to get a better balance between men and women working in the NLM supported projects.

The NLM projects implemented at the hospitals aim for building capacity of the hospital personnel where there are both men and women working. The number of women working as nurses has been low in the area, but has over the last years increased. The capacity building project has been active in advising the other projects concerning women's rights to work during hiring new personal etc.

In Gidole hospital three Health Officers, nurses with additional education, have been specially trained as Emergency caesareans to assist the doctors in the hospital. One of these three is a woman

The Sinana Female Mutilation Elimination Project must be mentioned as an example. It started with most men and two women. During these years it has changed to be two men and 6 women

The DASSC Unit leaders interviewed said to be engaged in finding good women to join the projects. But there are no women engaged in the 6 Southern Synods as directors or coordinators. There is one woman at higher level at the Central Office DASSC – the Gender Officer

One special challenge in Ethiopia in general and in the Southern Regions in special is that there are very few women with required education for the different posts. In addition the government and the NGOs paying the highest wages are hiring the best educated women soon after leaving school to keep up with requirements from donor agencies. There has however been a remarkable change in Ethiopia over the last few years since the government opened for more private secondary schools and vocational training and girls are taking advantage of these opportunities in great numbers. The government is also opening new universities in different cities around the country. In the Southern Synods universities are opened in Dilla, Walayta, Awasa and Arbaminch. In Ethiopia as such, the number of Universities should expand from 3-4 to 23 which gives many more the possibility to go to a University, but it is challenging if not impossible to assure the academic level.

The actual trend of girls getting higher education may change the situation and give more female candidates as coordinators/advisers. The age of marriage is also going up which is positive. One of the frequent challenges in health work in the region is related to too young girls coming to give birth without the opportunity of normal delivery because of an insufficiently developed body. That again may result in the child dying, both mother and child die or a mother with future fistula problems.

6. Findings and analysis/discussion

The findings and analysis have been set up in the order mentioned in TOR under Specific objectives/Questions to be answered.

6.1 Achievements of the project against original objectives

The project does not have a revised project document taking into consideration the limitation given to the project plan presented for BN. Necessary changes made after BN reduced approval is neither commented on in the first project report, 2005. It is especially to be mentioned that

- the project was proposed for 5 years and it was financed for three years
- there has not been a three years scholarship for an economical agent that should serve in the project area for the following 6 years.
- the working budget is less than what was asked for

These reductions affect the project results described in the document and also the effect that was planned for the following years.

When the project was followed up by a new revised project this has not caused so much importance to the impact.

The rest of the report will focus on results out of what have been financed activities

The project goal was to improve short term and long term competence and performance in The Southern Church Units in project planning, implementation, reporting, accounting and evaluation.

The staff in the projects and in the DASSC Units are very pleased with this project both organizing seminars and more direct follow-up of the Church Units and projects. There have been work-shops on different themes like

- Project Cycle quality Management
- Resource utilization (Human power, money and time)
- Team building
- Project budget control and project risk management techniques
- Partner's role and responsibility in project cycle management
- Active target community participation and contribution during project implementation
- What are capacity building demands and obstacles
- Financial requirements
- Experience sharing on projects performance
- Importance of sense of ownership building
- Sustainability
- Phase-in and phase-out strategy
- Women empowerment
- HIV/AIDS prevention and control
- Concept of partnership

Direct advising and follow up of Church Units and projects has been the methodology most used. The main reason for this has firstly been difference in project structures and project ownership (a government health institution or a church owned project). Secondly a need of dealing with a project coordinator or the DASSC Unit responsible on a widely different level of experience and competence in reporting/budgeting/accounting and thirdly a rather great difference in knowledge of English language.

After the changes in DASSC's structure in 2008/2009, when DASSC created the ACBO with the goal to build Human Capacity in all the Units, CBP and ACBO has been cooperating in organizing trainings/work-shops in the Southern Units

Most Significant Impact findings

- The reports are coming more and more on time and they are more correctly composed. Several persons quote that it had been difficult to know exactly what the donor wanted to know and before the project started they did not know how to deal with the forms. Many issues that they felt were important for the people in the project area were not raised in the form and other questions seemed rather unimportant for the actual

project. In addition some quote that they will never be able to do this reporting without a regular follow up because of rapid format change.

- Several persons also quoted that it was good to have an Ethiopian to ask for advice and assistance. Getting information in e-mails from unknown people in Norway did not always help them to better understanding. Some quoted that in some cases it has even created new problems.
- The accounting is mainly presented on time – but to obtain this there is a ongoing and good communication between the CBP coordinator, NLM-E finance manager and the projects
- There seems to be a much better understanding of the need of reporting on time.
- A calendar for the yearly project cycle is set up (See Appendix).
- Final evaluations have been done after phasing out support to the health clinics. These evaluations have been commanded by the CBP and run by the government as responsible. Evaluation teams have consisted of representatives from the government and the actual DASSC Unit.
- An agreement about the handing over of a project from NLM to the church, to the Government or to a local community has also been set up. This document clearly states that the external financing is ended and who will be responsible for the project in the future
- Six new projects had been planned in addition to a second phase for the FGM project ended in 2009. These projects had been planned in cooperation between DASSC Units, local population and the project coordinator. DASSC Units and the project coordinator set up the TOR for a consultant that made the feasibility study and wrote the project proposal that was reviewed by the DASSC Unit and the Project coordinator. These projects have also been discussed with the woreda level.

Ethiopia has a federal government for 9 regions, in each region there is a zonal coordination level, then the woreda or district level and the lowest is called an administrative structure. Some woredas may have a special status. If a woreda covers an area where all the population is from one ethnic group the woreda may have its own zonal status, this is called a special woreda.

- If the 6 new projects that are asked for will be accepted, there are plans to sign cooperation agreements. They will be signed by DASSC CO, government and the NLM country representative.

This will not be done before they know exactly what is financed since the church recently has been requested from the financial department in Ethiopian government requesting reports from a project that was planned five-six years ago for 5 years with a given budget. The project was sent to NLM, but not financed by BN. The agreement for this project was signed before sending it to Norway. And now it seems to create problems. The request has been signed by the government probably to show local interest, but no one has followed up to tell the government that the project has not been accepted for financing.

Challenges

The probably biggest challenge for a sustainable change is the heavy turnover in the different posts at the projects and also in some Units. The projects are mostly implemented in health institutions either owned by the Government or by the church. The level of salaries in government and in the church is one of the main reasons for this turnover. Another reason is the remote location of some of these institutions where the projects are implemented. At one of the hospitals, the hospital manager has been changed 6 times over the last four years.

Still there are many persons staying in the Units or coming back to work in the Units because of devotion, valuing a good working relation or working in a place that makes a difference for someone.

Another challenge is the education level of people working in the projects. At the project level there are administrators struggling hard with English and without experience of project management that forces the project coordinator to work more one to one than using seminars.

The forms for project funding as well as reporting implemented by BN have been seen as a continuous headache. This challenge has the last years been overcome with the NLM/E office coordinator explaining better.

The most outspoken quoted that the BN reporting form is not telling the target group's report from the project, but the donor's way of reporting from a project. This feeling could be interesting to work more upon to see if the reporting in a form they do not understand may hamper the ownership to a project

The situation with rather low general competence in the project management might have reduced the results of the intervention, but more important - the rather low general competence make it necessary to run the project for a longer period.

6.2 Assess how the ideas behind the project have been carried on after the project ended

The ideas behind the project have been mainly carried out as planned except for not getting training for an economical expert to continue the work. The ideas of building human capacity are very central both in long term perspective of the DASSC and of the Government. DASSC promised to support the follow-up project that started in 2008. DASSC has now created 4 area coordination offices with the goal to build human capacity. The government has for the moment a wide range of different programs for human capacity building in hospitals, schools, development work, social service etc.

The project's plan to get an Ethiopian with good experience from the region has been a very important choice from NLM. The choice of the person also seems to be the very best possible. He is much appreciated by the target group and in addition he seems to be in a good relation with the main church structure. He is moreover experienced from 20-30 years of development work in the region.

It is not easy to say how the ideas and the input over the three years would have functioned today if there had not been a follow up. The teaching, training and follow-up from the project has had an impact, but since the first project plans were not financed as planned the new project has been very important.

6.3 Assess the role of the development office

The role of the CBP has been important for the follow up of the projects financed by NLM in Ethiopia. Placing of the NLM/E office in Awasa is good. Awasa is the former church centre of the Southern Ethiopia. Now the South is divided into 6 church synods and DASSC Units. Awasa is still the natural centre in Southern Ethiopia and it is easy for the other DASSC Units and projects coordinators to reach the CBP office

On the other hand the CBP office is not that much the actual placement in Awasa, it is more the institution mainly moving around between the projects, Units and being in Addis Ababa. It has become the facilitating centre for the other projects if not the coordinating point

To what extent has the Development Office improved the quality of the development work

The running of the projects as well as the reporting is remarkably improved by the CBP organized activities, but to have a distinct meaning on how the project has influenced the totality of the Units' work has not been possible within this evaluation. But out of what the staff at the Units says, it has been an important input for their total work.

The follow up the calendar for reporting seems to be the most difficult also in other projects. Consequently there is still a need for follow up here.

Most significant Impact findings on improved quality on development work

In the process of handing over the Gidole Hospital from NLM to the Government there seems to have been a good process with inputs from NLM, EECMY and DASSC Unit. The CBP coordinator have facilitated and been very central to keep this hospital as an important health actor in the area.

The FGM project is also an example of a project that has been working in an interesting way. How this project has managed to engage the population in the area in fighting traditional circumcision of girls is remarkable. To get religious leaders to sit down together to read the Bible and the Koran and Holy Scriptures to find out that nothing is said about circumcision of girls, only boys, and from there getting together men and women talking against this devastating practise, it nothing less then impressing.

At the same time the project is working without expensive investments in buildings etc and the knowledge built up is within the local population when it comes to phasing out. This project, who is mainly working with a process to engage the local population, should absolutely be financed for the coming years to go to new areas with the same challenges.

The process of evaluating former church health centres and writing an agreement on the further work has also been interesting to make clear the responsibility for every involved partner (NLM, church, government and local population) on future responsibility.

6.4 Assess the changes in the administration of development projects

The reporting from the projects has become better. It is easier to get the reports in time. The challenge seems more to be for the project administrators to be concrete and to the point about what the project is doing at every moment.

Improved administration

The local project administrators have been trained as well as the DASSC Unit personnel. Many of them are able to do the work.

On time and correct format

The format seems to be correct but sticking to time limits is difficult.

Phase out strategies

Phase out strategies are extremely difficult for people in need to plan and foresee before starting a needed project. But the experience from the last years has forced the population as well as the government to think about phasing out from day one. The government and the population taking over health clinics has shown them that it is possible to get support for one step, often the first step, to continue the work with own possibilities.

Phase out strategies are included in the new projects asked for, starting up from 2010 and CBP has been crucial in this process.

Participatory approach

The projects planned for from 2010 are elaborated in collaboration local population, DASSC Unit and the CBP and deal with need identified by the local population

Accountability and performance

An important change has been done, but due to the level at several project administrations, there is still a need of follow up. The project activities in all the projects seem to be carried out as planned.

Collaboration implementers/government/beneficiaries

The collaboration with the government has as said, been mainly good in Southern parts. The government has shown the will to take over health institutions from the church, previous NLM. The challenges are still there for different projects, but nevertheless the collaboration has improved and the CBP has been an important part in this collaboration if not crucial.

The NLM has been a so important partner in general development work in Southern Ethiopia that it has been rather easy to continue a good participatory work between project, local government and local population. There has been a will to search for sustainable solutions whether it is to terminate NLM financing of a clinic that has been run by NLM for decades or creating a new preventive health care project

6.5 Assess competence and performance of the Southern Church Units with regards to project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation

Several of the Southern Church Units have in general a rather good reputation in implementing smaller development projects and relief work.

It seems like these Units have got a much better competence in project planning, implementation and evaluation after these three years of ongoing training via seminars, workshops and advising/counselling on the same issues. Still there seems to be a weakness in respecting deadlines also in the DASSC structure. That is seen by the reports from the DASSC CO reporting on money spent on the CBP and one of the NLM projects passing through DASSC CO. They are mainly coming a little late. There might also be a bureaucratic reason within the DASSC CO.

On questions about the impact of this project work for reporting for other donors from the Southern Units, it does not seem to be a big change in reporting in due time for other projects from other donors. There was not sufficient time to verify this with other donors.

The conclusion then seems to be: The CBP office has managed to heighten the level of competence and performance of the Southern Church Units with regards to project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, but there has until now been a need for follow-up in reminding the responsible people to keep to the required limits.

The fact that the same situation of being late with reporting seems to continue with other reporting shows that there is still a way to go to get this competence and performance of the Southern Church Units with regards to project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation functional for all projects in the region.

6.6 Assess the relationship between the Development Office and Central DASSC

DASSC is created to take care of the development work of the EECMY. It has one central office in Addis Ababa and there is a Unit in every one of the 21 synods and one district or 22 Units in the church. This structure was partly forced on the church by the government who wanted to divide church activities as such and development work.

This evaluation has been mainly working with the Southern Units and discussing with DASSC CO. There has not been time to study the organisation in all details, but since it is the closest cooperating partner it has been important to try to see how the NLM financed CBP finds its place and how it eventually can be a closer cooperation or integration.

Ethiopia is a federal state. EECMY is also a kind of federal church with rather great independence for the synods. DASSC is also a structure with rather great independence for the Units. There seems however to be big differences between the Units. Some Units have been operating as centres for development work for a long time while other Units are more recently created by division of synods; they are weaker, lacking personnel and equipment and are probably more dependent on DASSC CO.

Some of the Units are dealing directly with donors or funding partners for financing and reporting directly with a copy to the DASSC CO.

All DASSC Units in the South quote that they are very thankful for the support and training offered by the NLM financed project.

The DASSC CO very much appreciates the work of the CBP in the Southern Synods. DASSC considers the Capacity Building as extremely important and thanks NLM for taking this initiative and has followed up.

DASSC CO has created 4 Area Capacity Building Offices (ACBO), for Central Units, Western Units, Northern Units and Southern Units with the coordinator for the Southern Units placed in Awasa. These started up about the first half of 2009. I have not visited the four offices, but for the Southern Units it is a question if the structure has become functional yet and what will finally be the structure. For the moment it seems to be quite much a name, not a functional structure.

There seems to be a certain dispute for power both at the DASSC CO and in the DASSC Units. The DASSC CO wants to keep control, but the DASSC Units want to be more in charge. Also for the DASSC Area Capacity Building offices it will be interesting to see the final structure. Now they seem to be floating a little. DASSC CO says that the ACBO is a

prolonged arm of the DASSC CO. DASSC CO sign contracts, but several of the Units take the rest of the responsibility with copy to DASSC CO, but there is no delegation of power as far as seen, either to the Units or to the ACBO.

DASSC CO Director underlined that they hoped for a good cooperation with the NLM financed project and the ACBO in the Southern Units with the project coordinators placed in the same building in Awasa. In our meeting it was rather clearly said that DASSC CO would prefer to have these two structures built together.

When the second phase of this NLM capacity building Project for the Southern Synods was planned, DASSC CO was asked how they could collaborate and DASSC director promised to participate with 900.000 Birr. In 2008 there was no contribution, but it was said there is a contribution for 2009, but the financial report was not ready by the time the fieldwork was ended.

At an earlier stage one idea was to incorporate the CBP this with Tabor Evangelical College (TEC). TEC is a former school created by NLM and transferred to EECMY Southern Synods, situated in Awasa. There were plans some years ago to establish a Human recourse development department at this school. There were some disputes about that and the director at that time left. TEC is now run by EECMY and is one of the best secondary schools in the area. In addition, TEC is giving theological education. Since the change in direction to develop TEC the idea to incorporate CBP with this institution has not been so central.

What effects does the Capacity building project have for Central DASSC?

We have to take into consideration that the DASSC Units are reporting to a wide range of international donors and the NLM projects are between the smaller ones economically seen. A clear sign is not found that reporting is getting better for other donors, but this evaluation has not had the scoop to visit other donors. DASSC Units personnel quote that they have been made capable for a better job in general

The DASSC CO has created the Area Capacity Building Offices. This might be seen as if the CBP has been promoting this creation

Is there a Risk for double structure?

There are from May 2009 two structures at the same office of DASSC Unit in Awasa that are both working for Capacity Building in the 6 Southern Units. The goal of capacity building for the two structures is double in one way.

At the same time the CBP has a much wider responsibility than the DASSC ACBO. The CBP has the responsibility of following up the different projects and the Units. That will mean that CBP with the coordinator and the finance manager, is responsible for sending the money to the projects and coordinating project reports to NLM Norway both from the projects and the DASSC CO. If the projects are not reporting in due time and in due format the NLM CBP has the power to stop further funding. On the other hand the DASSC ACBO coordinator has no responsibility for transferring funds to the Southern Units or projects. The Units are mainly reporting directly to the donor with a copy to the DASSC CO and interacting directly with the DASSC CO. The ACBO coordinator can be asked to assist the Units by themselves if they need help or they may ask the DASSC CO. If the Units are not reporting in due time the area development coordinator DASSC may be asked to interact with the Unit in question on behalf of DASSC CO. The DASSC CO talk about the ACBO coordinator as their prolonged arm, but

it seems to be only by Central request and it seems that the ACBO Coordinator has no power to interact with the Units to enhance their capacity.

When it comes to training and building capacity the DASSC ACBO coordinator has no proper working budget and no position to organize trainings of any kind. He is supposed to make a annual plan for what he wants to do, but without a working budget it becomes difficult. He can ask for a budget for training, a work-shop or a seminar, but rather often it will then be ordered from the Central level and he will be in charge of the practical organizing and some teaching.

There is an open and good dialog between the DASSC ACBO Coordinator for the Southern Units and the NLM CBP Coordinator. They have over the last months cooperated on some training and they want to continue cooperating in building capacity in the Southern Units, in spite some challenging structures as mentioned.

Further formalizing of cooperation

The CBP number 2 is planned for five years. It will probably be wise to wait and see what will be the final structure of the ACBO. The actual dialogue between the project and the DASSC CO is open and good and it might be possible to find good solutions for anintegration, but not now.

6.7 Lessons learned to be seen out of the new Capacity Building Project

We had an open and good dialogue while arriving in Ethiopia, but on return back to Addis the DASSC director was not available. The dialogue between DASSC and the CBP seems to much more open and constructive then in the beginning where it seems to have been more coloured by a certain scepticism against this project and both EECMY and DASSC tried to get control. This openness is important now in the second phase to get cooperation as good as possible.

In light of the new DASSC structure

It still seems to be a question how the new DASSC structure will function. If the ACBO coordinator should continue without any power to do his job it is difficult to see how this ACBO structure can function.

Passing all reporting through DASSC seems for the moment difficult because of rather slow going bureaucracy in a huge organisation

NLM's role DASSC's role

The NLM financed CBP is serving two needs for NLM. One is to build capacity that is imperative for a good and credible project management for projects financed by NLM/BN/Norad. This function is in one way rather easy to incorporate with the DASSC on Central or Area level. The second is to take care of directing NLM funds sent to the projects and follow up that every project has reported for the last quarter. This second part could be done by the NLM finance office. The challenge here is that the person at NLM finance office then has to wait for DASSC to confirm that they have got the reports or wait for Norway to get the last report and that would mainly be when all the actual projects has sent their report. It is obviously much more efficient to have one person being in charge of receiving the reports and directly inform the financial office that this and that project can get the financing for next quarter.

Relations with other projects financed through BN

We visited the Norwegian Mission Society country representative to hear a little about experiences of cooperating with the DASSC structure in general, how the ACBO functioned in West and experiences with reporting. He was rather new and had not much experience with the DASSC structure in West. The reports had arrived at the time we were there and he was happy with the reporting. In West there is a lady in charge of reporting.

There was also an orientation about different projects run in the different areas. Especially they talked about how to work with gender issues. The FGM project was presented and experiences from that. Perhaps there might be good ideas on how the religious leaders work together. In West there is a Women empowerment project. This is run by the church structure and not the DASSC structure. There is no project in Southern Units on women empowerment.

7. Lessons learned more generally

- There is no updated project document. That makes it difficult to evaluate.

8. Conclusions

The Capacity building project has achieved its goal when it comes to a better understanding about reporting, both financial and on project activities.

There is a better understanding of accounting

The challenge is to follow up reporting on time and to be concrete about what is done and what is not done and if it is not done be concrete in explanation.

The project has also been crucial for a good and viable handing over of Gidole hospital to the government.

The project has managed to give the responsible for reporting a better understanding of the formats for reporting and request for financing of project ideas.

The project has been central in preparing evaluations of projects handed over to the government and dialogue with local populations and government in how to continue eventual collaborations with Norwegian financing. Further with elaborating future collaboration contracts etc.

The collaboration with the DASSC at different level has become much better from the starting in 2005 up till now. There is a close collaboration concerning the NLM financed activities in the 6 Southern Units. The CBP is not yet ready to be completely integrated in the DASSC structure. Partly the reason here is that the recently established structure for ACBO in DASSC not seems to have found a good structure yet.

The DASSC has created a structure for capacity building in all its Units. This might be seen as a result of our project.

9. Recommendations

Continue the work in the close cooperation with DASSC.

See during the coming year what will be the final structure for DASSC Area capacity building before taking a decision on a complete integration in the DASSC structure

Study further possibilities for transferring a lot of small projects in Southern Ethiopia into one program.

Transfer more power to Ethiopia from Norway when it comes to accepting smaller budget reallocations etc.

Continue the process with final evaluation in collaboration between NLM-project, local government, local church and local structures with phasing out projects to assure that all questions about financing and responsibility are clear for all partners to avoid future problems

Continue close collaboration with government about the projects.

Invite more local government representatives for seminars etc

There is no project in Southern Units on women empowerment. That is most needed, even if the FGM project is central in heightening women's living condition.

10. Other things seen and realized during the evaluation visit

a. Education work

NLM started education work in Southern Ethiopia in the 1940ies. These primary schools were the only schools in the area. This work was most seen as a duty to give children the opportunity for training and serving their people and their country. These kids had the right to education.

It is very interesting today to meet church leaders and DASSC leaders who quote that without this opportunity to go to school given by NLM they could never have been where they are today. In addition we find people from the South in all levels of government posts and leaders in the society – they have all their background in NLM. Official schools started later and then first in central towns.

The support from NLM for these schools stopped in 2000. Most of these schools continue today run by the EECMY as parents paid. Some of them are the best schools in their town or area. Last year several of them had close to 100% of their pupils that passed their exam. The schools in central areas are running better than those in countryside. That also shows how important it has been to support for a so long period to change the way the population in general sees the need of training and that their children have the right to education

The government also now says that the children have the right to go to school and the parents are no longer allowed to use their small kids to keep the animals.

Perhaps it could have been a good idea for a long time effect evaluation to have a more detailed work done on the impact of NLM school work in Southern Ethiopia during 50

years. This could include primary schools as well as secondary schools and vocational training in different areas.

b. Problems with using mother tongue to get jobs in other regions

Actually schools in several of the regions are teaching the locally used language. This has over years been a goal that children may use their mother tongue in school.

There is however a challenge here – it becomes more and more difficult for a person mainly speaking his mother tongue and having been to school using his mother tongue to get a job in another area. If he is not able to use that language he is blocked.

11. Appendixes

11.1 Ex evaluation - Terms of Reference

General information

BN no.: 10535
Project name: Capacity Building Project
Country: Ethiopia

Background

Norwegian Lutheran Mission (NLM) started its work in South Ethiopia in the late 1940s with special emphasis on health and education, and later on various community development and humanitarian activities in addition to its traditional church related activities. To meet the increasing demands from donors and government, NLM made an assessment of the methodologies that had been employed in the past development interventions with an aim at improving the performance to meet the present requirements.

The Capacity Building Project was implemented in 2005 and continued up to December 2007. The project was funded by NLM and Norad.

The overall aim of the project was to improve the quality of the project cycle management by building the capacity of the Southern Church Units and provide professional and technical backing to facilitate the implementation of the NLM/Norad supported projects/programmes as required by the back donors and the Ethiopian government. A NLM/Ethiopia Development Coordination Office was established to co-ordinate and assist in the compiling of plans and reports in order to forward technically correct information to NLM/BN (Norwegian Missions in Development) & Norad. In the past, each church unit with project supported by NLM/Norad, presented and forwarded their own individual plans and reports. The NLM/Ethiopia Development Program Coordination Office that was established is supposed to coordinate and assist in the compiling of plans and reports (both financial and narrative), in order to forward technically correct information to NLM/BN & Norad on time. It has been assumed that because of its geographical closeness to the implementers, the NLM/E office will be able to bridge the existing gaps in the planning and reporting between the church units and NLM/N.

When the first project was phasing out in 2007, a need for a continuation of the capacity building became clear. The review of the first phase indicated that there was a need for restructuring the Development and Social Service Commission (DASSC) at all levels and the envisaged capacity building of the Church Units DASSC had not been achieved as expected. A new *SCU Capacity Building Project* was started in 2008 and will run up till 2012. This new project will include the implementation of an Area Capacity Building Office. The overall aim of this office is to build the capacity of the five synods in Southern Ethiopia where NLM work, and enable them to run their development and social services efficiently and effectively.

Initiative

The ex-post evaluation has been initiated by NLM/N as part of the NLM/N evaluation strategy where projects are evaluated approximately 2 years after they have been phased out. The evaluation process will be led by an external consultant/team leader.

Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the long term impacts and the sustainability of the project. The findings and the process will provide useful information and experience that will be useful in the planning, implementation and monitoring of other projects in Ethiopia, as well as similar projects in other countries. As a new capacity building project was initiated in 2008, the evaluation will also provide us with useful knowledge in the continuation of this project. The evaluation will also provide us with information on whether the methods employed have been appropriate and successful.

Expected results and utilization of the results

The evaluation team will write a written report based on the ToR. The team leader is responsible for the written final evaluation report as well as presenting the findings to the relevant stakeholders. The consultant should also facilitate an internal dialogue between NLM/E and DASSC.

The results and the lessons learned from the evaluation will be presented to NLM/E. There should be a main focus on the lessons learned. A summary of the evaluation should also be presented to relevant partners. The Norwegian consultant will also present the evaluation to the Development Section and the Regional Director for Ethiopia and Eastern-Africa at the Head office in Oslo.

The knowledge and experiences gained from the evaluation will be used in NLM's future work. The findings will be of particular relevance for the continuation of the Capacity Building Project that was initiated in 2008. It will also give us a chance to assess some of the methods applied in NLM's development projects.

Specific objectives/Questions to be answered

1. To assess achievements of the project against the original objectives, outputs and activities as stated in the project document
 - What are the results of the project?
 - What about unforeseen results or consequences of the project?
 - Are there factors that might have reduced the results/output of the intervention?
2. To assess how the ideas behind the project has been carried on after the project period ended
3. To assess the continuation of the capacity building process after the project ended
4. To assess the role of the Development Office
 - What is the role of the Development Office?

- To what extent has the Development Office improve the quality of the development work?
5. To assess the changes in the administration of the development projects
 - To what extent has the administration of the development projects been improved?
 - To what extent are the required reports submitted on time and in correct formats? What are the reasons for a possible lack of timely reporting?
 - Have phase-out strategies been included in all projects already at the planning stage?
 - Has a participatory approach been employed in the project planning processes?
 - Assess the accountability and integrity of the partners and projects
 - To what extent does collaboration between implementers, government officials and beneficiaries exist and work
 6. To assess the competence and performance of the Southern Church Units with regards to project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
 - Assess the competences within development related issues?
 7. To assess the relationship between the Development Office and Central DASSC
 - What effects have the Capacity building project has for the Central DASSC?
 - Is there a risk that two parallel structures are about to be/has been constructed?
 8. To identify lessons learned to be used in future work (look specifically into the new Capacity Building Project)
 - Should be seen in light of the new DASSC structure
 - What is NLM's role, and what is DASSC's role?
 - Assess the results and relevance of the capacity building activities that has taken place (also seen in light of the new planned activities)

Methods that may be included in the evaluation

- Review of existing information and secondary data. This will include review of project proposal, evaluation reports, annual and final reports and project agreements. These documents will be provided prior to the evaluation to allow the team members to become familiar with the project.
- Focus group discussion. May be used to gather information and experiences from project staff, EECMY-DASSC, staff at the NLM/E development office, NLM/N staff.
- In-depth interviews with staff at NLM/E and Church units DASSC.
- Questionnaires; NLM/E, DASSC, project staff in DASSC implemented projects
- Visit to Church units

Evaluation team

The evaluation team will be elected according to professional expertise, experience, suitability and independence. A gender balance will also be ensured.

External Consultant(s):

Competencies include experience from organizational development. She/he has extensive experience in implementing evaluations on organizational development and the religious institutions role in development work. She/he is also elected on the basis of experience and independence.

She/he is responsible for the overall implementation of the evaluation. This includes review of project documents, development of adequate evaluation tools, training/supervision of other team members, data collection, data analysis and report writing (including recommendations and lessons learned).

Facilitator(s):

The Development Advisor at the NLM/E office will be responsible for facilitating the process, including the logistics.

Schedule

The evaluation will be divided into three steps:

1. Planning (rework the plan for the evaluation and the methodology) and review existing documents
2. Approximately one week of fieldwork
3. Approximately one week report writing (including presentation of the results)

Reporting

A first draft of the report should be submitted electronically within 10 days after the consultant return from the field. The draft will be sent to the partners (NLM Norway and NLM Ethiopia) who will have 5 days to make their comments. A final report should be given to the NLM Norway office 10 days after the consultant receives the comments from the partners.

Report format

The final report should include the following sections:

- Cover page
- Table of content
- Executive summary
- Body of the report:
 - Introduction
 - Purpose and specific objectives for the final evaluation
 - Methodology employed
 - Findings
 - Analysis/discussions
 - Conclusion and recommendations

Supporting data should be included in appendices. The appendices should include, among other, pertinent technical or supporting documentation:

- The evaluation team's Terms of Reference
- Data collection instruments
- List of places visited
- List of documents reviewed
- List of persons interviewed

11.2 List of places visited / programme

Travel and Meeting Schedule for External Consultant to execute NLM Technical Capacity Building post project Evaluation 9-20February 2010

No.	Month/date	Planned activity	Remarks
1	February/09	Consultant arrival to Addis Ababa	Evening
2	10	Meeting with NLM/E senior staff	Morning
		Meeting with Central DASSC senior staff	Afternoon
3	11	To South West synod -Arba Minch	Whole day
4	12	Meet SWS-DASSC	Morning
		To Gidole and meet GH administrator	Afternoon
5	13	Travel to Hawassa	Morning
		Meet ACBO Coordinator- Hawassa	Afternoon
6	14	Meet South Central Ethiopia Synod DASSC Director , Hawassa	Afternoon
7	15	Travel from Hawassa to Dodola and meet WBS-DASSC Director	Morning
		Travel from Dodola to Bale-Robe	Afternoon
8	16	Meeting with FGMP coordinator and back to Hawassa	
9	17	To Addis Ababa	
10	18	Meet NLM/E for debriefing & discussion on related issues	Morning
		Meet EECMY Central Office DASSC CB Program coordinator	Afternoon
11	19	Meet NMS/E office responsible person	Morning
12	20	Open for any CBP ex post evaluation remaining discussions	Morning
		Preparation for departure	Afternoon-evening

Distance (one way drive)

- 1) Addis Ababa to Arba Minch: 505 km
- 2) Arba Minch to Gidole 56km
- 3) Arba Minch to Hawassa: 275 km
- 4) Hawassa to Dodola 110k
- 5) Dodola to Robe 110k
- 6) Hawassa to Addis Ababa 275km

Total 1.700 km

11.3 List of persons interviewed

M Argachew Wondimu, project coordinator

M Tore Vågen, NLM representative

M Deed Jaldesca, DASSC Director

Dr. Hunduma Kumeva, DASSC Health and HIV/AIDS coordinator

M Berhanu Berhe, Capacity building advisor

Dr. Abeya Wakwoya, CB and PME coordinator

M Galunde Waketa, SWS DASSC Director

M Banga Balta, SWS DASSC Health Program coordinator

M Orkaido Olte, SWS DASSC Program coordinator

M Tesfaye Mamo, Hospital administrator Gidole Hospital

Mrs Dagemawit Kugna Trained for emergency caesareans together with two others from the hospital

M Gollo Huka Liben, DASSC coordination office for the 6 Southern Units the last year,
Before that Director DASSC South Ethiopia Unit

Dr. Tilahun Dafurso, DASSC Director CE Unit

M Zerfu Berisu, DASSC Director Dodolla

M Belaye Guluma Yimer, FGM Project Coordinator, Robe

M Abera Tajebe, NLM Finance Manager

M Klaus-Christian Küspert, Country representative Norwegian Mission Society

11.4 List of document reviewed

Southern Church Units Capacity Building Project Proposal Document 2005-2009

NLM Annual Plan Ethiopia 2005 “Capacity Building Project”. Project presentation

NLM ÅRLIG PLAN 2005 ETIOPIA ”CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT”

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2005

PROSJEKTREGNSKAP 2005

ANNUAL PLAN FOR NEW PROJECT/PROJECT WITH NEW PERIOD 2006

BNs uttalelese 2006

Norsk Misjons Bistandsnemnd: Capacity Building Project. Annual Report 2006

PROSJEKTREGNSKAP 2006

The Southern Church UNITs (synods) CAPACITY Building Program (2008-2012)

NLM PLAN FOR PROJECT 10535 CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT 2007-2011

BNs uttalelse støtte 2007

Norsk Misjons Bistandsnemnd: Capacity Building Project. Annual Report 2007.

ANNUAL REPORT 2007

PROSJEKTREGNSKAP 2007

ANNUAL PLAN FOR NEW PROJECT 2008

Documents presented in Ethiopia

Ginir, Rayitu, Sawena and Sennana Woredas. Field Trip Report, April 02-5, 2009.

To: Mr Tore Vagen, Representative NLM/E From: Argachew Wondimu, Devt. Coordinator,

Workshop Report on Project Cycle Management for the Southern Church units’ Senior Staff. 12-13 october 2006. Compiled by Abera Tajebe and Argachew Wondimu. October 32, 2006. Awassa.

Project Agreement between The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus Development and Social Services Commision (EECMY-DASSC) and Norwegian Lutheran Mission (NLM). January 2009.

Contribution of Sinana Female Genital Mutilation Elimination Project.

Major roles of project stakeholders. Action plan (2006-2009)

11.5 Project reporting calendar

NLM/NORAD Supported Projects/Program Important Deadlines

S/N	NLM/Ethiopia		NLM/Norway	
	Activity	Date	Activity	Date
A	Annual report 2009			
	Narrative	February 28,10	Narrative	March 01,10
	Financial	February 28, 10	Financial	March 01,10
	Audit	February 28 , 10	Audit	March 01, 10
B	Application For Over Expenditure 2009			
	Application for 10% over expenditure	April 28,10	Application for 10% over expenditure	April 01,10
C	Biannual Report 2010			
	Biannual narrative report	July 25	Biannual narrative report	August 01
D	Budget Revision/Reallocation 2010			
	1 st budget reallocation	January 25	Budget reallocation	February 01
	2 nd budget Reallocation	July 25	Budget Reallocation	August 01
E	Quarterly Fund Transfer 2010			
	25% Advance transfer	February 20	25% Advance transfer	February 15
	2 nd quarter transfer 25%	April 25	2 nd quarter transfer 25%	April 20
	3 rd quarter transfer 25%	July 25	3 rd quarter transfer 25%	July 20
	4 th quarter transfer25%	October 25	4 th quarter transfer25%	October 20
F	Quarterly financial report 2010			
	1 st quarter	April 07	1 st quarter	May 01
	2 nd quarter	July 25	2 nd quarter	August 01
	3 rd quarter	October 07	3 rd quarter	November 01
G	Annual Plan/budget 2011			
	Annual plan/budget	April 25,10	Annual plan/budget	May 01,10