

Lutheran World Service India Trust (LWSIT) Country Strategy Evaluation and Organisational Assessment

1. Introduction

After detailed analysis of the socio-economic and political scenario of the country, government policies and programmes and finding out the niche of the organization to work for the betterment of the poor and the disadvantaged suffering from the distress of marginalization and disaster, Lutheran World Service India Trust (LWSIT) prepared a Country Strategy Plan for the period 2010- 2015. The LWSIT implemented different projects in the country keeping the country strategy plan as the main guiding document. Now it is time for the LWSIT to review its strategy and to assess the contributions made by its projects in achieving strategic goals. Hence, the present evaluation is proposed. The proposed evaluation takes into consideration the Organisational Assessment (OA) also. The purpose and objectives of the CSE and the OA will be synchronised.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the assignment is three-fold:

- To provide a basis for accountability to stakeholders through an impartial and independent review of the work of LWSIT
- To improve the development effectiveness of future strategies and programmes of LWSIT
- To develop the organisational capacities of LWSIT by gaining an understanding of its current strengths and challenges

3. Objectives

The objectives of the assignment are:

- a. Determine the extent to which the Strategic Objectives of the LWSIT Country Strategy 2010-2015 have been met
- b. Assess the relevance of the Country Strategy to the priority focus groups and in the context of changes in the national and international context
- c. Review the on-going “Social Transformation, Economic Empowerment and Risk Reduction (STEER) Rural Program” as an integral part of the evaluation of the Country Strategy 2010-2015
- d. Assess the organisational strengths, limitations and challenges of LWSIT

4. Users of the Reviews

The main users of the reviews are:

- a. Lutheran World Service India Trust
- b. LWSIT’s Partner Communities
- c. LWSIT’s International Partners

5. Background

5.1. Overview

The Lutheran World Service India (LWSI), as a country program of Lutheran World Federation/ Department for World Service, Geneva, started its operation to respond to immediate need of the refugees of Bangladesh Independence War in the year 1974. Later on at the request of government of India it extended its area of operation in different states of the country both in the emergency and the development sectors. Since then; LWSI was implementing various projects for integrated development, disaster response and disaster preparedness projects in several states of India. These projects received strong support and cooperation from the respective state governments and international donors. In the year 2008, LWSI was got registered as Lutheran World Service India Trust (LWSIT), thus changing its identity from a country program of LWF/ DWS, Geneva to a national organization of India. From 2010 onwards the organization started functioning as local entity and now it is fully functioning as a national organization and as an Associate Program of LWF/ DWS, Geneva.

5.1. Mandate of the Organization

The mandate of the LWSIT is to bear witness to the Indian Churches' commitment to accompany the poor, the marginalized and the excluded in their quest for justice, full realisation of human rights and life with dignity.

5.2. Vision

People of India living in just, secular and peaceful societies, in communal harmony and with dignity, united in diversity and empowered to achieve their universal rights to basic needs and quality of life.

5.3. Mission

Inspired by God's love for humanity, LWSIT challenges and responds to the causes and consequences of human suffering and poverty with commitment to justice and dignity for all.

5.4. Core Values

The core values of the organisation are:

- Justice
- Democracy
- Secularism
- Accountability

5.5. Program Goal

Empower men, women and children of disadvantaged communities to enhance their quality of life, through rights based approaches for sustainable livelihood, food and human security.

6. Major Project Activities

Over these years, LWSI/LWSIT has rendered disaster relief and development assistance in the states of West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Manipur, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand. Currently the organization is implementing development projects in the rural and urban areas in the states of West Bengal, Odisha and Jharkhand; rehabilitation and livelihood rebuilding with peace and reconciliation project for the victims of ethnic riot in the state of Assam; and relief and rehabilitation program in any part of the country affected by major natural or human-made disaster based on need and availability of resources. Annexure 1 gives summary statement of all project activities. All the operations of the organisation are guided by the LWSIT Country Strategy (2010-2015) plan developed in 2009 and this strategy plan has made provision for conducting an “International Evaluation of the program ... after five years to evaluate the program in the light of organizational objectives” (CS, p 29), This evaluation will assess the program and organizational progress as well as prospect and , strength and weakness. The results of the proposed evaluation and organisational assessment will lead to deciding on the future priorities and strategies and to develop country strategy for the next phase (2017-2021)which will be to be contextualised in the contemporary situation and on the need of the poor and the marginalized.

7. Scope of the Evaluation and Organisational Assessment

The scope is the LWSIT Country Strategy 2010-2015 and its implementation for the period January 2010 – June 2015. The assignment will cover the strategic plan (Country Program Strategy 2010 – 2015) as well as the various programmes implemented by LWSIT, with a special focus on the STEER Rural Program . The assignment will also include an assessment of the organisational structure in place to implement the Country Strategy.

8. Evaluation Criteria and Evaluation Questions

The evaluation will be based on the following criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The following questions are intended to guide the evaluation team in addressing the objectives of the evaluation.

8.1. Relevance

1. To what extent are the problems (Development Challenges) identified still valid? Have there been any major developments in the socio-political or socio-economic context influencing the Country Strategy’s relevance?
2. Do the Strategic Priorities, Objectives, Approaches and Modes of Operation correctly address the identified problems?
3. To what extent does the implementation of programmes reflect the Strategic Approaches including the Rights Based Approach?
4. Have the implemented projects been consistent with the Country Strategy?
5. Are the identified rights holders (Priority Focus Groups) appropriate in relation to the problem analysis and objectives?
6. Are the cross cutting included in the Country Strategy relevant and adequately reflected in organisational practices and programmes?

8.2. Effectiveness

1. Are the strategies, approaches and modes of operation adopted to implement planned activities relevant, well-designed and effective?
2. What internal and external factors have influenced the possibility to meet the strategic objectives?
3. What are the major short or medium term (intended or unintended) outcomes of the country programme?
4. Have there been any unintended effects?
5. To what extent have the partner communities been involved in the planning, implementation and monitoring processes?
6. Has the issue of gender been adequately recognised and addressed under the Country Strategy?

8.3. Efficiency

1. To what extent do the strategic priorities, approaches, modes of operation and cross-cutting issues build on the strengths of the organisation?
2. To what extent have resources (human, financial, administrative, time, etc.) been efficiently utilised and combined to achieve the expected results (Evidence of Change)?

8.4. Impact

1. What real difference has the work of LWSIT brought about for the rights holders (women, men, girls, and boys)?
2. What is the impact of the lobbying and advocacy work on the political level?

8.5. Sustainability

1. To what extent are the positive effects achieved through the Country Program likely to be maintained over time?
2. Which measures have been implemented in order to support sustainability of the effects?
3. To what extent has LWSIT built effective partnerships for more sustainable results?
4. To what extent has LWSIT engaged in rights based advocacy work at appropriate levels?

9. Capacity Areas and Assessment Questions

The capacity areas below are proposed with earlier assessments in mind where the focus has been on financial management and internal control areas. The questions are intended to guide the Evaluation Team in addressing the objectives of the assessment:

9.1. Governance and General Management

1. To what extent is the current organisational set-up and internal governance systems adequate and effective?
2. Does the organisation have an adequate conflict of interest policy?

3. Does the constitution of the LWSIT Trust provide for an effective, professional and independent governing body to oversee the strategy and overall vision of the organisation?
4. How effective is the governing body in guiding, supervising and supporting the management, strategic outlook and sustainability of the organisation?
5. Does the organisational structure and culture reflect the mission, vision and values of the organisation?
6. Does the organisational structure and culture promote gender equality and women's rights within the organisation?
7. Do partner communities and staff have a say in decision making and policy development?

9.2. External Relations and Partnerships

1. Does the organisation have the capacity and strategies for engaging in rights based advocacy work with policy makers at appropriate levels? * To refer FCRA recent regulation and practicability of keeping this?
 - a. Does the organisation systematically seek active membership in relevant coalitions, networks and alliances, and play leadership role as appropriate?
2. Does the organisation have a strategy for external communication and visibility?
3. Does the organisation have working relations with relevant departments/agencies of national or local authorities?
4. To assess if the statutory & legal compliances & bye-laws of the project partner are in adherence to various laws of country (FCRA, Income Tax Act, Societies Registration Act, etc.) and in adherence with BfdW-EED, CoS and ELCA requirements. (Who are the three major donor partners of the core project) and in case of bilateral project of Normisjion criteria.
5. To assess the role played by the donor partner's beyond fund support. Visiting the projects , sharing views on their findings and suggestions, involvement in developing organizational policies, systems and procedures with sharing of views, suggestion.

9.3. Human Resource Management

1. Does the organisation have adequate number and quality of staff to successfully complete tasks and programmes and achieve the organisation's mission?
2. Are there adequate human resource management policies and systems in place?
3. Are there adequate strategies for staff development?
4. Is the recruitment process gender sensitive, documented, transparent and competitive?
5. Is the compensation and benefits package consistent with provisions of national labour law?

9.4. Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning

1. Does the organisation have a well-designed participatory and gender sensitive system for planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER)?
2. Does the organisation's system for PMER adequately capture and account for outcomes and impacts?
3. To what extent does the organisation incorporate learning from evaluations into organisational practices and programme activities?

4. To what extent do the staff and management reflect upon and analyse experiences and data for decision making relating to management practices and programming?

9.5. Sustainability

1. To what extent are the organisation management systems and structures flexible and adaptive to programme scale and changes in strategic direction?
2. Does the organisation have policies, strategies and mechanisms to ensure financial sustainability of the organisation?

10. Methodology and Approach

The assignment is a comprehensive and fairly complex process spanning over a period of six months with peaks and lows in terms of expected work input from the team leader and the team members. It is important to have a holistic approach to the assignment based on a thorough understanding of how the different parts interrelate and contribute to the fulfillment of the purpose of the assignment.

The assignment will be transparent, inclusive, and participatory, as well as gender and human rights responsive. Stakeholder involvement is an essential part of the assignment. The evaluation team should ensure that all major stakeholders - such as for example partner communities, local government officials, LWSIT staff and management, Board members and international partners - are identified and mobilised to give their views. Heed should be taken that women and men as well as girls and boys are fairly represented among the interviewees.

The reviews should be based on a clearly outlined methodology adapted to the double focus of the assignment on evaluation of the Country Strategy and on assessment of the Organisation. The team is free to choose whatever methods that are necessary to fulfill the assignment objectives. The assignment shall make use of mixed methods and draw on quantitative and qualitative data.

11. Assignment process

Preparatory Phase

As soon as the team leader and the team members are identified and contracted, the team leader shall take the initiative to meet with the team members in order to establish roles and responsibilities and to produce a provisional work plan. LWSIT task force shall make all relevant documents available to the team for review in good time before the actual evaluation and assessment.

Evaluation and Assessment Phase

Based on the ToR and the submitted proposal the team and the LWSIT task force should agree on a timetable of the assignment process and a mechanism for reporting. The methodology and the work plan shall be discussed and agreed upon between the team and the task force. LWSIT shall brief the team on the Country Strategy and the LWSIT organisation.

To assess the current organisational capacities of LWSIT the **team shall meet regularly over a period of four months** with the Board, Management Team and staff at the National Office in Kolkata and at the Unit Offices. Five to six short interim reports and feedback meetings shall be provided.

The team shall conduct field visits to agreed project areas and have meetings and workshops with partner communities, LWSIT staff and, to the extent possible, with local government and other stakeholders. LWSIT shall provide a comprehensive brief on the projects and be responsible for facilitating the co-ordination of meetings and workshops. Prior to commencing the evaluation at each project location, the team shall meet with the project staff for a briefing.

Prior to departure from the project sites, opportunities shall be sought to debrief project staff on the team's key local project findings. At the end of the country strategy evaluation phase, a debriefing workshop shall be conducted to discuss the preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations. The purpose is to inform LWSIT, international partners and other stakeholders of the team's observations, and to gather feedback to improve the final report. The organisational assessment continues alongside with and after the completion of the evaluation phase. Ample time is set aside for feedback meetings, analysis and reflection together with LWSIT staff, management team and Board. Towards the end of the assessment a debriefing workshop shall be conducted to discuss findings, conclusions and recommendations. The purpose is to inform LWSIT, international partners and other stakeholders of the team's observations, and to gather feedback to improve the final report.

Completion Phases

The country strategy evaluation ends when the final report has been delivered and the LWSIT management has given their response to the recommendations in writing. LWSIT shall also develop an Action Plan to implement the recommendations as appropriate. The organisational assessment will continue alongside with and after the completion of the country strategy evaluation to allow for an in-depth and shared understanding of the organisational strengths, limitations and challenges to develop. The extended time period will also allow the team and LWSIT to begin a conversation around and planning of alternative organisational change processes in response to the findings and conclusions.

12. Reporting

It is the responsibility of the team leader to compile the reports based on input from the other team members. The final reports should be produced after incorporating feedback from LWSIT and international partners. The reports should not exceed 45 pages (excluding annexes) each. A draft report should be sent to LWSIT and international partners by e-mail for comments within ten days after the debriefing workshops. Then fourteen days will be given for feedbacks. The final reports should be delivered to LWSIT and international partners, both as a hard copy and as a PDF file.

The linkages between findings, conclusions and recommendations in the reports should be clear and transparent. The recommendations should refer back to the ToR, be clear and actionable, explicitly linked to the conclusions, clustered, prioritised (very high/high/medium) and with an identified addressee.

The report should be written in English and should be as per the template provided as annexure

13. Indicative Timetable

The evaluation process shall start in October 2015 and shall get concluded in January 2016, but the Organizational Assessment shall continue till March, 2016. Keeping this time line in view, the evaluator has to develop detailed schedule for the evaluation.

14. The Evaluation Team

The evaluation team is expected to be composed of four members, each member with a specific role and responsibility to be clearly defined in the proposal:

- Two senior consultants (one team leader and one additional consultant), if possible one woman and one man, to be selected through a tender process. One consultant should have competence in the field of development cooperation and programmatic evaluation. The team leader should be an experienced professional consultant with considerable previous experience in facilitating organisational development processes, preferably including with churches or church-related organisations, and in leading evaluation teams and processes. Together, the consultants should possess a sound level of knowledge and experience in Organisational Development, Strategic Planning, Community Based Empowerment Programmes, Gender, Evaluation Methods and Techniques, Facilitation, Communication, Report Writing, and the Indian context. Fluency in English and in Hindi/Bengali/or Oriya (one of the consultants) is required.
- Two assistant consultants (team members), one woman and one man with in-depth knowledge of key areas of the evaluation/assessment. The assistant consultants will be hired for the required number of days.
- if would also be preferred if any one of the team members have knowledge on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

15. Specification of tender, contract and payment modalities

In responding to the Terms of Reference, the bidder should submit a proposal containing the following:

- The proposal prepared in English and as per the template provided along with this. After deadline the applicants may be contacted for additional questions. LWSIT reserves the right not to accept the lowest financial proposal and to reject any or all proposals.
- The proposal should include a detailed breakdown of costs. The budget should include a specification of VAT and all other taxes or fees, if any. LWSIT will provide and pay for travel, food and accommodation in Kolkata and when visiting the Unit offices and project sites.

Annexure

1. Strategy Plan of LWSIT for the period of 2010-2015
2. Note- in -brief of the major activities of undertaken by the LWSIT
3. Template for submitting the proposal
4. Template for submitting the final report on evaluation

