

The Lutheran World Federation, Churches and Emergencies Project (CaE), Nepal

Terms of Reference (ToR) for Project Evaluation 2020-2023

I. Background and Rationale

With the emergence of global climate change, growing conflicts and instability, natural disasters and human-made emergencies have become increasingly frequent and complex over the past decades. Covid-19 and resulting measures have further deepened the global humanitarian crisis. During the pandemic, several UN agencies have publicly affirmed the significance of local faith communities like churches in providing rapid relief and sustainable longer-term support to affected communities.

Churches can provide stability and hope in a world that changes rapidly. Local churches are present when shocks hit a certain context and remain long after the immediate impact. They are part of the social fabric of the communities affected by emergencies, are well familiar with the local context, and can take action even before national or international aid arrives. During the Covid-19 pandemic, churches have responded to the resulting needs with immediate and contextualized action, including sharing messages of hope and solidarity. Local churches have a great potential for a speedy response to emergencies as well as for local emergency preparedness systems and are capable of sustaining their diaconal work beyond the presence of international aid agencies.

While churches are able to respond to emergencies, it is also true that there is a need to further strengthen capacities on the ground. With its initiative Churches and Emergencies (CaE), the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) aims to effectively face these challenges with a new approach and methodology. The program is implemented jointly by the Department for Theology, Mission and Justice (DTMJ) and World Service (WS) in Nepal and Myanmar since early 2020. Two additional target countries were brought on board with the initiative in the course of 2022 (Venezuela and Colombia).

The Lutheran Community and Welfare Society (LCWS) implements CaE project in Nepal jointly with LWF-WS Nepal country Program. LCWS is the diaconal arm of the Nepal Evangelical Lutheran Church (NELC) and registered as a local NGO in Nepal. Implementation in Nepal started in 2020, based on a one-year project proposal and a related needs assessment carried out in the chosen pilot communities for the first phase. In early 2021, the LWF Communion Office (LWF-CO), LWF/WS Nepal and LCWS signed a tripartite agreement for a new 3-years project until 2023.

CaE in Nepal has focused strongly on work with selected pilot communities, including formation of so-called task forces in each community that have been trained on topics like first aid, search and rescue, etc. LCWS has worked closely with local authorities to establish Emergency Preparedness and Recovery (EPR) plans at the provincial levels and has supported health facilities during COVID-19. In addition, a multi-purpose evacuation center has been built in one of the communities, community grain banks have been established and hand washing facilities have been set up in the communities. Networking with other faith actors in the Nepalese context is another priority for the ongoing project.

II. Purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide an overall assessment of the project's relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability and, on that basis, to formulate recommendations for future implementation.

The evaluation also assesses the outcome of the project in relation to:

- Enhanced capacities of congregations and nearby communities in delivering effective emergency preparedness and response- to be measured in terms of the number of people (male, female) in the community that have an active role in disaster management so that the community will manage disaster risk together and will be able to face the disaster collectively as needed.
- Enhanced interfaith and ecumenical collaboration in emergency preparedness and response at local/provincial/federal levels to be measured in terms of the number of representatives (male, female) capacitated on humanitarian response and who is providing the required services
- Enhanced visibility of the program to be measured in terms of evidence of change and stories shared with the stakeholders, partners, and beneficiaries at local and national platforms.

III. Evaluation scope, objectives and questions

The evaluation will cover the duration of the project from **1st January 2020** to **31st December 2023**.

This final evaluation of the project has the following specific objectives:

1. Assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and coherence of the project considering its goals and objectives;
2. Identify good practices and lessons learned from the project and formulate action-oriented, forward-looking recommendations addressed to the implementing entities for improving future interventions.

Relevance:

1. To what extent the intervention objectives and design respond to the needs of beneficiaries (congregations, local communities, and partner/institution needs) and priorities of NELC
2. To what extent were gender and human rights perspectives integrated into the design and implementation of the project? What results can be identified from these actions? How can gender and human rights perspectives be better included in future projects design and implementation?
3. To what extent have the activities of the project considered the perspectives of vulnerable groups including minorities?

Efficiency:

4. How well coordinated was the response internally and externally? What approaches were employed to reduce administration and overhead costs during implementation? What could be improved?
5. Was the response implemented according to plan? If not, was timely corrective action taken where necessary? Was additional support identified or provided to overcome implementation challenges?

Effectiveness:

6. To what extent has the response effectively addressed the needs of vulnerable communities including congregations?
7. What were the significant results and achievements of the project at the local, provincial and national level DRR organization and networks?
8. What difference did the project make to the local governments' responses to COVID-19, flood damages, and other disasters?

9. What innovative approaches or tools, if any, were used, and what are the outcomes and lessons learnt?

10. How did the project governance and management set-up impacted the implementation and achievements of the joint engagement between NELC, LWCS and LWF-WS Nepal? What main factors have contributed to this?

Sustainability:

11. What factors contributed to sustaining some of the project results?

12. To what extent did the project capacitate and institutionalize the Disaster Management Teams (DMT), taskforce, advisory teams, inter-religious ecumenical committees, to enhance ownership and sustainability of the interventions?

Coherence:

14. How does the project fits well with other initiatives of LCWS and to what extent linkage has been created?

IV. Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation will adopt a utilization-focused approach. The evaluator is expected to use a mixed-method approach, including qualitative as well as quantitative data gathering and analysis. Methods for data gathering for this evaluation may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Desk review of project documents and relevant materials, videos, and stories
- Field observation
- focus group discussions with project participants and stakeholders;
- interviews with project teams and a balanced sample of project participants, project partners and other relevant stakeholders;
- Sample household survey of the direct beneficiaries as deemed necessary.
- Validation workshop – in presence of partners and stakeholders

The evaluator will further elaborate on the evaluation methodology in the Inception Report, determining thereby the exact focus and approach for the exercise, including selecting target areas for in-depth assessment as well as stakeholders to be involved. An evaluation report template will be provided to the consultant by the LWF-CO.

V. Management of the Evaluation

The independent final project evaluation will be led by a consultant who reports directly to the LWF-Communion office in Geneva

Consultant's role:

- Conduct, apply and suggest evaluation methodology and produce evaluation report.
- Lead evaluation, online meetings, discussions, workshops and write final draft and report.
- Create evaluation tools and framework within time and resource limits.
- Write the report independently
- Review project profile shared by the LWF-CO.
- Coordinate with LCWS and LWF Nepal on locations, stakeholders, etc.
- Send draft and final reports to LWF-CO for feedback.

LWF CO

- Select a consultant from the 3 candidates recommended by the LCWS
- Outsource the contractual signing of the service to LCWS but follow-up the progress until the task is completed
- Hold two online meetings at the start and end of the assessment (inception and validation meetings)
- Review the draft evaluation report and give constructive feedback

LCWS's responsibilities:

- Screen the applications, shortlist 3 consultants following standard procurement practices and forward them to LWF-CO for approval. Coordinate with LWF CO for the consultant's payments.
- Assist the evaluation process, by arranging the evaluators' meetings with the project's beneficiaries and other key stakeholders;
- Provide contacts, references, information about activities and logistical support to the evaluator as needed at the beginning and during the evaluation;
- Join the inception and validation meetings of the final evaluation organized by the LWF Communion Office (LWF-CO);
- Review the draft evaluation and give substantive feedback when requested by the LWF-CO
- Work closely with WS-Nepal for the effective management of the services.

LWF WS-Nepal's responsibilities:

- Participate during assessment and offer technical assessment when needed
- Join the inception and validation meetings of the final evaluation organized by the LWF Communion Office (LWF-CO);
- Review the draft evaluation report and verify its factual correctness when requested by the LWF CO
- Work closely with LCWS for the effective management of the services.

VI. Evaluation timeline

The provisional timeline of the evaluation is as follows

| Timeline | Action |
|-------------------------------|--|
| November-December 2023 | Call for expression of interest released by LCWS (open tender); shortlisted candidates submitted to LWF-CO |
| | Evaluator selected by LWF-CO; Consultant start desk review |
| | Evaluator submits inception report. LWF provides feedback within a week. |
| | Data collection and report writing |
| | Submission of draft report to LWF CO. Comments will be forwarded within a week. |
| | Evaluator submits final report 31 st December 2023 |

VII. Desired Consultant profile

Evaluators should have:

- An advanced university degree or equivalent background in evaluation
- Specialized training or good knowledge in areas such as evaluation, CSOs, role of faith actors in humanitarian and development projects
- Demonstrated relevant professional experience in design, management and conduct of evaluation processes with multiple stakeholders, project planning, monitoring and management.
- Demonstrated methodological knowledge of evaluations, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.
- Fluent in written and spoken English. Knowledge of the local language is desirable for the purpose of being able to seek inputs from beneficiaries and stakeholders in their native tongue.

VIII. Deliverables

- Inception report – within a week along with final set of questions (FGD, KII, Field visit plan), List of stakeholders and project concerned
- Draft report
- Presence in validation workshop
- Inclusion of feedback from the validation workshop and handover the final report along with case stories (related to the outcome of the project)

IX. Submission of Offers

To apply for the evaluation, interested applicants are required to send expression of interest (EOI), CV, technical and financial proposal (2-3 pages), a sample of previous work in a similar field and relevant documents and certificates to the official e-mail address of LCWS. The deadline is 15 days (about 2 weeks) from this announcement.