



Strengthening of organisational competence and skills, CBCN, Bas-Uélé, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Evaluation Report, March 2017

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Bromma in March 2017

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BUN	Baptist Union of Norway
CBCN	Communauté Baptise du Congo Nord
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
NORAD	The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
PD	Project Document – the description of the project used in the application for funding
PIADBU	Programme Intégral de Développement en Bas-Uélé
PME	Planning, monitoring, evaluation
ToR	Terms of Reference

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Communauté Baptiste du Congo Nord (CBCN) operates in the province of Bas-Uélé in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Bas-Uélé is the second largest province in DRC, situated in the northern part of the country. Weak road infrastructure makes Bas-Uélé a quite isolated province. CBCN is active in the social development in various ways; in the educational sector, in the health sector as well as with other social development issues. CBCN has a strong link with the Baptist Union of Norway (BUN).

In the late 1990's the people of Bas-Uélé experienced a time of great trial because of the war that ravaged DRC. This did of course also affect CBCN, its members and its leaders. When visiting the CBCN headquarters in Makala, staff can tell you how they had to vacate, and how the church properties were looted and destroyed. 'We were disillusioned', the President of CBCN says when sharing experiences from the troubled past, and he then explains how they had to start rebuilding CBCN, spiritually, practically, structurally. The competence building project that we now have evaluated is part of the on-going effort of strengthening the church for its mission to be a church that makes a difference in the province of Bas-Uélé.

The Competence Building Project started in 2015 as a 2-year project, that has now been extended with a 3-year project, receiving funding from Norad. The purpose of the project long term is to strengthen CBCN as a change-agent in the province of Bas-Uélé. The evaluation was initiated to inform the 3-year extension of the project, and to support capacity building within CBCN. The evaluation was carried out by a team of evaluators, using document review and small group discussions as the main methods. The evaluation team worked in close collaboration with the project's management team from CBCN.

Key findings

The evaluation process, with group discussion with different target groups, surfaced that the project has contributed to important changes within the CBCN community; awareness on issues such as church governance, anti-corruption, gender bias, human rights, behavioural change in leadership and in self-sufficiency as well as improved competence amongst project staff, church leaders and coordinators.

The key methodology of the project has been organisation of seminars and workshops. This type of activity is something that CBCN, being a church, is experienced in, and the target groups are familiar with.

The CBCN church structure, with regions, districts, sections and local churches, and departmental committees at every level, provides a useful structure for disseminating information and for mobilisation.

The project coordination in CBCN as well as in BUN experienced some challenges when the project was planned and in the early months of implementation. This caused confusion as to which Project Document was actually guiding the project. The expected change from the project activities has not been clear or specific, making it difficult for the project management team to do follow-up.

Despite these weaknesses, it is clear that the project has provided an important space for awareness building and training, for dialogue on sensitive issues and reflection on beliefs and practices. The participants in the group discussions reported on similar changes, which indicates that the changes can be linked to project activities.

Recommendations

During the evaluation process, the organisation and implementation of the project was discussed within the evaluation team, together with project management team as well as with the CBCN Project Coordinator and BUNs Mission Leader, who was present in Buta during the evaluation. These discussions have generated most of the recommendations, whereas some have surfaced as a result of the analysis and interpretation process after the field visit.

1. Focus the capacity building topics for each target group. For example: For project staff, focus the capacity building to address the weaknesses within CBCN project management, such as in the areas of planning, follow-up and reporting.
2. Introduce a system of having individual learning goals for the project staff, and that these are monitored regularly to support learning.
3. Consider introducing a system of peer support among project staff – in particular those who are involved in planning, follow-up and reporting. Peer support could mean that staff members read each other's plans and reports and provide constructive feedback to improve quality, and that they meet as peers to discuss challenges in follow-up.
4. Introduce reporting templates that support clarity and consistency in reporting.
5. Develop a realistic monitoring plan for the project, using the project indicators.
6. Provide in-service training on project management for the project's management team.
7. Continue to focus on leaders at central and district level throughout the project period, to enable consolidation of the capacity building and sustainability of project results.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This report presents results from the mid-term evaluation of the Strengthening of Organizational Competence and Skills project, Bas-Uélé (hereafter 'the Competence Building Project'), implemented by the church Communauté Baptiste du Congo Nord (CBCN) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

CBCN operates mainly in the province of Bas-Uélé in DR Congo. The church was founded by a Norwegian missionary in 1920, but is an independent Congolese denomination since 1960. CBCN has 350 churches and approximately 34.000 members. It is active in social development in various ways; in the educational sector, in the health sector as well as with other social development issues. CBCN has a strong link with the Baptist Union of Norway (BUN).

BUN is a member organisation of Digni – an umbrella organisation for Norwegian churches and Christian NGOs which are working with funding from Norad. CBCN has, through BUN and Digni, received funding for development projects from the Norwegian government/Norad ever since Norad-funding was made available. The Competence Building Project is a Norad-funded project. Digni is Norad's contractual partner, whereas BUN is accountable to Digni for quality assurance of the projects CBCN is carrying out with Norad-funding.

1.2 The Competence Building Project

Social development is part of CBCN's mission. The church is making a valuable contribution to development in the province of Bas-Uélé. Through the relationship with BUN, CBCN has been able to access funding for development projects for many years. This support was however stopped for a few years, as the quality of project applications was weak. In 2013, Digni visited for an organisational assessment. As a follow-up of Digni's assessment, a seminar was organised with consultant from Congo Brazzaville, experienced in project management within a church context. The purpose of the seminar was to train in project planning, and to develop a plan for further capacity building within CBCN. CBCN also made a survey throughout most of the 16 districts, in which district leaders (pastors, women leaders, youth leaders) were asked about their capacity building needs. The Competence Building Project is designed based on these efforts.

The CBCN church has a headquarter in Makala, outside the city of Buta in the district of Buta. Here is situated the office of the President, the Project Coordination office, the coordination offices of the different departments of CBCN. The church operates in 16 districts that are divided into four regions: North, South, Central and East. Each district has several sections, and each section has a number of local churches. The CBCN church structure is a basis for project implementation.

The target groups for the project are: the project staff, church leaders at central and district levels (pastors, women leaders, youth leaders), the coordinators of health and education. Originally, the project also included government officials, as the need for capacity building amongst these had been identified as important for CBCN to continue working with social development projects. This category was dropped though, after a few months, as it became clear that the project's target groups were too broad for the project to manage.

The main methodology of the project is to conduct seminars – which is large group meetings with the purpose of capacity building at a general awareness building level, and to conduct workshops –

which are focused on smaller groups, with the purpose of more specific capacity building. The topics have included: The role, structure and vision of CBCN, gender issues, the fight against corruption and sexual violence, environmental issues, leadership, general administration, project management, project planning and accounting.

The long-term goal (impact) of the project is to empower CBCN as a change agent in the province as well as in the local communities.

At outcome level the goals are, in summary:

- *Administrative and managerial capacity.* To increase the administrative and managerial competence within CBCN; project staff, health staff, CBCN church leaders; pastors, women leaders, youth leaders
- *Accounting capacity.* To increase accounting capacity by introducing new account procedures and programs
- *The role of CBCN, and CBCN structure.* To further highlight the importance of the civic role of CBCN, and clarify CBCNs vision, strategy and commitment and to review and update CBCN structures.
- *Transparency and anti-corruption.* Awareness raising regarding transparency and anti-corruption
- *Strengthening women and youth voice.* Inclusion of women and youth within CBCN.

1.3 The context of the project

The Bas-Uélé province is the second largest in DRC. It is one of the new provinces created through the government's decentralization process in 2015. Bas-Uélé is isolated, with weak infrastructure at all levels; roads, electricity, water. The province has also been hard hit by war and conflict both in DRC and in neighboring countries. Some of these conflicts are still going on, and affecting part of the province.

'We are the last of everything', ('Nous sommes les derniers de tout'), said one of the pastors in a group discussion during the evaluation process. He was referring to the province of Bas-Uélé, and the self-image that the people of Bas-Uélé have, or that has been forced upon them by others. The many conflict disasters that have hit the province has affected self-image as well as the socio-economic situation. The concept of 'attentisme', waiting for someone to come and rescue you, is something that is mentioned by many respondents during the evaluation process as being something common in the province.

The level of education in the province is amongst the lowest in DRC, and the physical isolation caused by weak road infrastructure is made worse also by isolation in communication and access only to solar powered electricity. This means that external influence is limited and that there is not so much diversity of perspectives. The relationship CBCN has with BUN in Norway is an important link to perspectives from other parts of the world.

There is a good relationship between civil society organisations - including the churches - and the authorities, which provides space for organisations to work. In this situation, the churches, together with other civil society organisations, play an important part in their work for social development.

2. EVALUATION SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Evaluation purpose and scope

The evaluation is a mid-term evaluation with the purpose of providing guidance for the future of the project based on assessment of project achievements and efficiency so far. It is also a learning evaluation, with the aim of contributing to capacity building of CBCN.

The Competence Building Project was originally a 2-year project, but CBCN/BUN applied to Digni for an extension for three years, which was granted. The extension project has another project name 'Organisational Development Project'.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) presented the following areas of inquiry:

1. *Target group*
To which extent has the project successfully reached the stated target groups?
2. *Project efficiency*
Assessment of the efficiency of the resources used in the project in relation to the conducted activities.
3. *Project effectiveness*
Assessment of to which degree the project has achieved the project objectives as stated in the project plan; long-term as well as outcome and output level.
4. *Project relevance*
Assessment of the project relevance in relation to the main challenges in the project area.
5. *Project sustainability*
Assessment of the sustainability of the project. In particular regarding the possibilities that the local communities have to maintain and to continue the activities run by the project.

The ToR also requested that the evaluation make recommendations regarding the future of the project.

Parallel to the evaluation process, a limited baseline study was made for the extended Organisational Development Project. As a part of the baseline study work, the goals of the project were reviewed and adjusted, and new indicators developed.

2.2 Methodology and process

As learning was an important part of the evaluation process, the evaluation team included a staff member from CBCN, together with the Team Leader and one more external evaluator. CBCN was involved in each part of the evaluation process in order to promote capacity building and to strengthen ownership of evaluation results.

The evaluation was designed to use mixed data collection methods:

- Document review: project documents, annual plans, annual reports and organization-specific documents
- Group discussions with different target groups
- Key informant interview

The data from these different sources has provided a possibility for triangulation to verify results.

The group discussions with the different target groups that had participated in seminars and workshops focused on the experiences, relevance of topics, perceived results as well as needs for

further competence building. The group discussions lasted approximately 1,5 hours/group, and were held at the CBCN headquarters in Makala.

When the data collection process in the field had been concluded, the evaluators met with the project's management team for a joint reflection on the findings. At the end of the field work the evaluation team had a consolidation meeting to analyse the data and finally there was a feedback meeting with CBCN project coordinator and BUN, where preliminary findings were presented. A schedule of the process is provided as an Appendix.

2.3 Limitations

The evaluation proved to be challenging, as the project documentation was weak, and there was confusion both within BUN and CBCN as to which Project Document that was actually the basis for project implementation and follow-up. This influenced how the goals were perceived, which made it difficult to assess for example effectiveness of the project. The annual reports to BUN, 2015 and 2016 (draft report) contained very little information about project results, and the information about activities was not very detailed.

To overcome these challenges and still arrive at some assessment of the project, the evaluation focused on the group discussions with the various target group representatives. Even though there might be an attribution problem with this, as the participants cannot be expected to know exactly the direct effects of a project activity, it did still provide information about change that has happened within CBCN that has a link to project activities.

The evaluation process only took place at CBCN in Makala, in the district of Buta. The participants in the group discussions with project staff, education coordinators, health coordinators, women leaders and youth leaders all came from either Makala or Buta city, which will have given a limited picture of results throughout the province. The group discussion with the district leaders – chiefs of districts - did however include pastors from six provinces. They represented more than one third of the CBCN local churches.

The interview with the CBCN President, and the discussions with the CBCN Project Coordinator, BUN representative and with the project management did provide some further data and reflection that supported the findings that came from the group discussions.

3. FINDINGS

This section presents main findings from the data collection process, one section for each question in the ToR.

3.1 Target Group

Regarding target group, the evaluation was to assess to which extent has the program successfully reached the stated target groups.

The main target groups of the project were originally:

<i>Target group</i>	<i>No of people</i>
CBCN project staff	20
CBCN health staff	20
CBCN church leaders:	
○ Pastors	100
○ Women leaders	17
○ Youth leaders	17
Representatives of sister churches	11
Local authorities	66

After the first two seminars were concluded in Buta, the strategy was changed to only include CBCN. The evaluation process has focused on the participants from CBCN. All the CBCN target groups have been invited to, and participated in project activities. The project strategy has been to reach the leaders at central and at district levels.

3.2 Project efficiency

When it comes to project efficiency, the evaluation was to assess the efficiency of the resources used in the project in relation to the conducted activities.

The project methodology is almost entirely the organisation of seminars and workshops. The project also included purchase of computers and accounting programs for the central administration, and acquiring motor cycles to enable the project management to circulate. During 2015 – 2016 the project has organised two large seminars (250 participants and 145 participants), five workshops with 30 – 60 participants per workshop as well as two youth conferences, with a total of more than 120 participants. Apart from this, the two project directors have also received computer training. Most of the workshops have been organised in Makala/Buta, but there has also been workshops in two more districts.

Each year an implementation plan has been drawn up, and also sent to BUN, and the annual report is based on this project plan. There has been adjustment to the plan each year, with less seminars being organised than what was planned.

The project directors are not experienced in project management and have had some difficulties in particular in follow-up. Planning and implementing a project of this character, which involves change that is difficult to follow-up is a challenge for any organisation. The over-ambitious, and at the same time not very defined, project goals has not made it easier in project implementation and follow-up.

The evaluation process surfaced that two different Project Documents were used, with some differences when it comes to goals. This issue was discussed at length with the CBCN Project Coordinator and the BUN Mission Leader, together with the project's management team. There were difficulties and short-comings both with BUN in Norway and with CBCN that caused the confusion with the two PDs. Neither organisation says that this is an excuse, and they acknowledge that mistakes have been made in the communication between Norway and DRC. BUN has since then employed a Mission Leader that speaks French and has more competence in project management, and CBCN has added one more person to the Project Coordination office, which is an indication that this is a situation that has been taken seriously by both organisations.

The project management systems and competence in general in CBCN have some challenges. The follow-up systems and reporting systems need to be improved, so that project reports clearly reflect what has been achieved, and so that plans can be made based on reflections on what has actually happened during implementation.

The extension project 'Organisation Development Project', is more focused than the Competence Building Project, but still had some over-ambitious goals. The goals for this project have now been revisited and adjusted, by the Project Coordinator and the BUN Mission Leader together with the project management team.

3.3 Project effectiveness

The evaluation was to assess to which degree the project has achieved the project objectives as stated in the project plan, including results at impact (long-term), outcome (specific objectives) and output (planned results for the entire period 2014 – 2018) level.

This became a difficult issue for the evaluation, as two different PDs were used for the project, with some differences in the stated goals. There was also a large number of goals with an unclear hierarchy of results. The annual reports to BUN did not offer much help in understanding the goals. The evaluation thus had to focus on what was reported by different participants from the target groups during group discussions about the project activities and results.

The goals originally also included support to capacity building for local authorities, and some efforts were made for this in 2015. To focus the project, this goal was later dropped.

The long-term goal (impact) of the project is to empower CBCN as a change agent in the province as well as in the local communities.

Goals at outcome level included:

- *Administrative and managerial capacity.* To increase the administrative and managerial competence within CBCN; project staff, health staff, CBCN church leaders; pastors, women leaders, youth leaders
- *Accounting capacity.* To increase accounting capacity by introducing new account procedures and programs
- *The role of CBCN, and CBCN structure.* To further highlight the importance of the civic role of CBCN, and clarify CBCNs vision, strategy and commitment and to review and update CBCN structures.
- *Transparency and anti-corruption.* Awareness raising regarding transparency and anti-corruption
- *Strengthening women and youth voice and participation.* Inclusion of women and youth within CBCN.

The above outcome statements do not include the exact wording in the PD, but is an abbreviated version capturing the main ideas from the PD. The ToR in Appendix 1 includes all the goals.

Education and Health leaders



The coordination of health within CBCN includes the coordination of dispensaries and other CBCN health units throughout the Bas-Uélé province. The coordination of education includes coordination of primary schools, secondary schools as well as vocational schools.

Four men working with the central coordination of education and of health participated in the evaluation group discussion. Some of the topics and results they mention from the project activities are

- Leadership. 'I have learnt to relate to my staff in a different manner', says one of the participants. And he goes on by explaining that he is now using a less hierarchical approach.
- Gender. The participants mention that the topics have included gender issues. One participant remarks that there has been a change in how he relates to his wife at home; that there are now more equal discussions than they used to have, more of a dialogue.
- Project management. Information about how to manage a project.
- The guiding documents of CBCN; constitution and internal regulations. There is now more awareness of these documents. The participants mention how they now turn to the documents to solve issues.

In this group, they also mention the value and importance of the Project Coordination Office of CBCN, as a supporting structure for the development work in CBCN.

From a methodological perspective, this group points out that when learning about project planning they were all encouraged to listen to the presentation with their own context in mind, and to draw up their own annual plans. In the health care coordination, they have passed this encouragement on to the health units to promote better annual planning.

One participant mentions a certain session that made an impression on him. The topic of the presentation was 'attentisme'/waiting for hand-outs. This is a sensitive topic, and the person who mentioned it said that he felt relieved that they actually discussed it.

The group felt there was need for more training, and made mention that the project so far has reached the leaders at central or district level, and that there is a need to also reach the base – the local churches.



Woman & Family is a department within the CBCN organisational structure. The departments are all represented at central level, as well as district level and in the local churches. Woman & Family is engaged in different activities supporting the church, in fund-raising and in social outreach.

Seven women; committee leaders, deputy leaders and committee secretaries participated in the evaluation group discussion. Some of the topics and results they mention from the project activities are

- Leadership and fear. This topic was presented by the CBCN Project Coordinator
- Accounting
- Computer knowledge. That they now have some information about computers.
- The CBCN organigram. That they now understand how the different groups and committees relate to each other within CBCN.
- Rape and violence against women.

They mention that some of the topics were presented by women. This was something that they put value on, as it demonstrated that women can speak in front of men – something that did not happen often in the past.

They also point out that within CBCN they have structures that enable them to spread information to others; meaning that as district leaders of Woman & Family they are expected to share the information to others at district level.

When discussing results of the seminars and workshops some of the participants give concrete examples of activities they had engaged in having been inspired by the teaching. In one group, they had raised funds and constructed a house for the Woman & Family committee to work from.

The discussion also touches on the role of women in general in Bas-Uélé. That women should not speak in front of men and that many women lack self-confidence; which is fuelled by society in general not expecting women to contribute to much outside the home. But the participants in this group discussion also point out that they are beginning to experience some change, and that they now see more and more that women do speak in front of men.

Youth committee representatives



Youth is a department within the CBCN organisational structure. The departments are all represented at central level, as well as district level and in the local churches. Youth are engaged in different activities supporting the church but mainly in music activities. Within CBCN you are considered youth between the ages of 12 – 45.

Six men and one woman from Makala and Buta participated in the evaluation group discussion; Youth committee leaders, deputy leaders, secretary and an evangelist. Topics this group mentions from the seminars and workshops are:

- Leadership and fear. This topic has been mentioned by more than one of the interviewed groups.
- Importance of having a vision first, and then plan.

We discuss the role of youth in the church. In this group, they do not feel there is a conflict of generations in the church. But the demography of the CBCN churches they represent do not mirror the community – there are more youth in the community than in the church. The participants felt a need to attract more young people to the church.

This group points out that there has been a change in the church according to their experience, in the relationship between the pastor and youth. One participant says he feels that the pastors are making an effort to have less distance between themselves and the youth. One said he used to be afraid to approach the pastor, but that this has now changed.

An example of a concrete result from participating in the project activities was that in one church the youth raised their own funds to purchase instrument for the music in church. In the past, this would not have happened, according to the group, as they were used to waiting for others to supply the instruments.

The youth leaders suggested some themes for seminars and awareness building: youth and the church, the environment, alcohol, aids. One also mentioned the need to develop the way of working with the Sunday schools.

CBCN Project staff



CBCN project staff are employed to work full time or part time with CBCN projects. Ten staff members, five women and five men, participated in the evaluation group discussion.

Some of the topics this group mentions from the seminars and workshops are:

- Rights and corruption. A presentation made by a representative from the tribunal in Buta.
- Results-based management

- Leadership
- Accounting principles
- Gender

They have been able to apply learning in the administrative work in the projects. They mention that they have a better understanding of working with verifications for accounting, as an example. They also mention the value of understanding the organigram of CBCN; understanding the relationship between the different categories and levels within the church structure. As this group are dependent on receiving reports from others in the districts, they can also report that they have noticed that reports are now coming more on time than in the past.

District leaders

The District Leaders are pastors that oversee the pastoral work of all the local churches in the district. They also monitor CBCN projects. Six pastors, all men, from six different districts participated in the evaluation group discussion. Together they represented more than a third of CBCNs districts.



Some of the topics the district leaders mention from the project seminars and workshops are:

- Obstacles to development
- Vision and mission
- Leadership and fear

As district leaders, they are expected to share what they have learnt and heard with leaders and churches in their district, and this is also what they have done. There are district level meetings twice a year.

The leaders appreciate the project and the topics that have been included. 'We are moving away from ignorance', one of them said. The leaders report that there is a noticeable difference among church members when it comes to 'attentisme'/expecting hand-outs. There is now more mobilisation happening in the church and church members are engaging more in church life. 'It is like a revival', one said. Another mentions that women are now speaking in front of men.

The topic of leadership and fear was raised in the discussion by the participants. One mentions that he has noticed that members now approach him more openly, in the past it was like they were afraid to do so. To this, another participant adds that 'we are also no longer so fearful of approaching the authorities. We are not afraid of telling a person from the authorities who is misbehaving that this is not acceptable. This has increased the respect for the church.'

The discussion with the district leaders was the last of the group discussions, and this group conveyed the same message as the other groups of some significant changes in behaviour within the church; women speaking in front of men, youth daring to approach the pastors, pastors getting closer to the members, mobilisation instead of waiting for handouts.

Is it really possible that all this change can be attributed to a project that has been in operation for only two years? It did not seem likely, so this question was discussed with the district leaders. One of the participants says 'The soil was fertile. We have heard all the time that we (people of Bas-Uélé) are behind in everything. We want change.' The district leaders echoed this, and claimed that it was indeed so, that much had changed in a short time.

Reflection on effectiveness of the project

The project had over-ambitious goals for a two-year period, and the attribution of results to the project activities may be difficult to verify, but there are clear indications that the project has contributed to change in line with some of the expected outcomes and that there is also some unforeseen positive change. It is likely that some of these changes also should be attributed to the previous work of CBCN through projects and to advocacy by CBCN leaders, such as the Project Coordinator, Jean Bhete, who has circulated extensively in the CBCN district and inspired churches for development, and the CBCN President, Rev. Robert Kumbowo, who is consistently promoting CBCNs role both for spiritual and social development.

The methodology used, presentations in seminars and in workshops makes sense in a church context. Leaders and members are used to teaching in this format, and to learn from preaching and presentations. This can of course be both good and bad, depending on what is being preached.

The issue of leadership comes back in all the group discussions, and the topic of 'Leadership and fear' has impacted on many of the participants, with results in changed behaviour; such as less distance between the pastor and youth and other members.

3.4 Project relevance

The evaluation was to assess the project relevance in relation to the main challenges in the project area, and whether the project can be said to be highly relevant or less relevant to the need of the people in the area.

CBCN is a church that has a strong commitment to work with social development. They want to do this in a responsible and effective way. During the evaluation, the evaluation team, together with the CBCN Project Coordinator and the BUN Mission Leader made a formal visit to the Governor of Bas-Uélé. In this discussion, the Governor highlighted the importance of churches and civil society in the development of the province. Church have legitimacy and a good reputation. But the Governor also stressed the need to continue doing quality work, to be a model of good quality. Here, he was specifically referring to CBCNs initiative to start a university in Makala, to provide an opportunity for young people to remain in the district for their university studies.

The poverty level in Bas-Uélé is high, and there are many challenges for development in the province. CBCN has an important role to play, and they are willing to do this. To be the change-agent they want to be, CBCN needs to have clear organisational structures, the staff and leaders do need to improve their administrative and managerial capacity. The church needs to bring awareness about anti-corruption, violence against women, environmental issue and other important social issues. Women and youth need to be included at every level in church life.

The topics and target groups of the project are relevant in order for CBCN to be the change-agent they desire to be.

3.5 Project sustainability

The evaluation is to assess the sustainability of the project, in particular regarding the possibilities that the local communities have to maintain and to continue the activities run by the project. In assessing sustainability, the ToR suggests that a model for assessing sustainability developed by Digni be used. This model looks at *activity profile* of the project, the *organisational capacity* of the implementing organisation and *contextual factors* that impact on the function of the project.

Reflection on these three parameters has been included in the sections on efficiency, effectiveness and relevance. Below we offer some additional reflections regarding the issue of sustainability.

Activity profile

CBCN has chosen to work with seminars and workshops to build the capacity of the church, at organisational as well as at individual level. In this first phase of the project, the focus has been on leaders at central coordination level and district level. This makes sense, as these people are in a position to influence others. It also serves to strengthen and develop the existing structures within CBCN, which is one of the results the project is aiming for.

Organisational capacity

CBCN has experience in planning and carrying out development project. As a church, they also are experienced in organising seminars and meeting places. This is a strength that is useful for the project.

A competence building, and organisation development project can however present challenges when it comes to planning and follow-up. The two-year experience of the present project has shown that it has been difficult for the project management team to do the follow-up. This is partly a practical issue, as travelling in Bas-Uélé is not an easy task with the bad condition of the roads, but it is mainly an issue of what results that are expected from the project activities, and how to assess that change has happened. This is a challenge for the project management team that does not have much experience in project management. But the need for capacity building is not just with the project management team. There is awareness at the CBCN project coordination level that there is need of improvement when it comes to planning, monitoring and reporting capacity, and this is currently being developed.

The Competence Building Project was conceived to strengthen CBCN to continue building its capacity and to promote self-sustainability and a change of mentality among church members as well as in the community. It is important for the project to keep a close eye on this, so the project in its approach consistently promotes the mentality of self-sustainability, and does not increase dependency on a project.

Context

Bas-Uélé is isolated, due to poor infrastructure, and being at a distance from the larger centres of DRC. It is an area that has been hard hit also by conflict. But the province also has dedicated people at various levels; in the churches, in civil society, and amongst local authorities.

The provincial government needs to work with civil society and churches for the development of the province. For CBCN it is important to have a good relationship with the local authorities. This is often the case, but there is also an understanding within CBCN that they need to continuously develop these relationships, and clarify the role of CBCN as a civil society entity.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Target Group

The project has reached the intended target groups.

4.2 Project efficiency

The evaluation process has surfaced both strengths and challenges when it comes to project efficiency:

Strengths contributing to efficiency

- The CBCN church structure, making it possible to spread information by working through district level leaders and central coordinators.
- Experience in arranging seminars and workshops, which is the core methodology of the project.
- The CBCN project coordination office, and the structures in place within CBCN to support project planning, monitoring and implementation

Challenges and matters to improve

- The planning documents, and the reports communicated to the donor needs to be further improved, with more detail, and clarity
- The monitoring system needs to be improved, so that monitoring can support the continued development of the project.
- This type of project places demands on the project management. The present project management team does not have so much experience in project management and will need support and some in-service training.
- There is a need to focus the project goals more and develop indicators to support project follow-up and evaluation.

4.3 Project effectiveness

Even though the project has had weaknesses in project planning, follow-up and reporting, the experiences shared by the leaders that participated in the evaluation group discussions convey that the project has contributed to important change both at individual, organizational and community level.

4.4 Project relevance

The strategy has been to work with leaders at district level and coordinators at central level, as well as with project staff. Part of the project has been general awareness, and part has been training on topics related to administration. Both these levels are important and relevant when it comes to strengthening CBCN as a change-agent.

The evaluation respondents referred to various topics that had been treated, and made references to the value of these topics, and change that it had contributed to. Leadership behavior, gender issues and learning to become self-sufficient were topics that several of the group discussions highlighted.

4.5 Project sustainability

The project's long-term objective is for CBCN to be a strong change-agent, and the project activities are intended to support self-sufficiency. The activities of the project are relevant for the changes that CBCN wishes to contribute to. CBCN has organisational capacity, but it needs to develop the planning, monitoring and reporting skills and systems. The project management team is not so experienced, and needs support and in-service training as the level of difficulty in this type of project is quite high.

The socio-economic situation of Bas-Uélé is such that the local government needs to work together with civil society and the churches for the development of the province, and there is a keen interest from the provincial authorities to support this relationship.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

During the evaluation process, the organisation and implementation of the project was discussed within the evaluation team, together with project management team as well as with the CBCN Project Coordinator and BUNs Mission Leader, who was present in Buta during the evaluation. These discussions have generated most of the recommendations, whereas some have surfaced as a result of the analysis and interpretation process after the field visit.

1. Focus the capacity building topics for each target group. For example: For project staff, focus the capacity building to address the weaknesses within CBCN project management, such as in the areas of planning, follow-up and reporting.
2. Introduce a system of having individual learning goals for the project staff, and that these are monitored regularly to support learning.
3. Consider introducing a system of peer support among project staff – in particular those who are involved in planning, follow-up and reporting. Peer support could mean that staff members read each other's plans and reports and provide constructive feedback to improve quality, and that they meet as peers to discuss challenges in follow-up.
4. Introduce reporting templates that support clarity and consistency in reporting.
5. Develop a realistic monitoring plan for the project, using the project indicators.
6. Provide in-service training on project management for the project's management team.
7. Continue to focus on leaders at central and district level throughout the project period, to enable consolidation of the capacity building and sustainability of project results.

Appendix 1 Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE - Mid-term evaluation 2017, Strengthening of organizational competence and skills/Organizational development, Bas-Uélé

1. Introduction

The Baptist Union of Norway (BUN) has initiated a mid-term evaluation of the competence and skills/organizational development project that is run by BUNs partnering church, Communauté Baptiste du Congo Nord (CBCN) in DR Congo. The first project period was two years, 2015-2016, and the second period is three years, 2017 – 2019.

The budget for 2016 is approximately 27.700 USD to be spent in DR Congo.

The evaluation will be carried out alongside with a baseline study in February 2017, by a team of two external evaluators and one CBCN representative. It will be done in close collaboration with the program staff and a representative from The Baptist Union of Norway.

In addition to the assessment of the project's achievements and eventual proposals for improvements, the evaluation shall contribute to the learning process within the CBCN.

Representatives from CBCN and BUN shall therefore be entitled to observe and to participate in the evaluation in order to learn from it, but they shall in no way interfere in the professional judgment of the evaluation team.

2. Background information

CBCN is situated in the northern part of DR Congo, in an area called Bas-Uélé. The church was founded by a Norwegian Baptist missionary in 1920 and became an independent denomination in 1960. Today they count 350 churches and around 30.000 members.

Until 1997, Norwegian Baptist missionaries were stationed in Bas-Uélé. There were missions in Buta, Likati, Bondo, Monga and Bili. After the civil war, that started in 1996, the BUN decided to not send missionaries there anymore.

Ever since the Norwegian government started to provide support through NORAD, the BUN has channelized money and personnel (personnel until 1997) to Bas-Uélé in different areas of work. CBCN is a significant contributor to the civil society, running primary, secondary and vocationally schools, several health centers and a hospital. They also engage in different kind of development work.

At some stage, from 2011 and onward, Digni rejected several applications from CBCN. A prerequisite for the continuation of discussion on these projects was a visit to Bas-Uélé, to clarify the weaknesses in the applications and project documents submitted.

After this visit, that took place in April 2013, an appeal was made to a consultant from Brazzaville, to participate in a seminar reinforcing the capacities of operators of the CBCN in Buta. The mission had two aspects: To train the participants to elaborate projects, and to elaborate a plan for the reinforcement of competences of the staff members of the CBCN.

A project document for two years (2015 – 2016) was elaborated based on the findings and recommendations, and an extension of the project has been approved by Digni for another three years (2017 – 2019)

When the project started in 2015, one realized that it was too large. The number of participants and activities have been reduced, and the focus has been kept on capacity building among CBCNs leaders and project staff. Reports and annual plans explain the changes in the project according to the planned activities in the project document.

2.1 Long term goals of the project.

- On a central and local level: to strengthen the vision and strategy of CBCN though a systematic focus on structure and enhanced skills.
- Assisting CBCN in developing strong and functional organizational structures
- Empowering CBCN personnel to implement the CBCN vision and strategy.
- Empowering CBCN to become an even stronger change agent in the region as well as

- in the local communities.

2.2 Short term goals of the project.

- To increase the level competence and managerial skills with the CBCN church structure: on individual as well as on its organizational level.
- To introduce new accounting procedures and programs.
- To improve managerial skills and general competence among - regional – local governmental staff members.
- To further highlight the importance of the civic role of the CBCN.

2.3 Specific goals of the project.

- Clarify CBCN future vision, strategy and commitment
- Implementation of vision, strategy and commitment, define conclusions as well as consequences.
- Review – update of CBCN structures
- Enhancing the general level of competence among the members of the target group
- Ensuring a higher level of administrative awareness and managerial skills. Highlighting on administrative transparency, raising anti-corruption awareness
- To provide data resources to a defined number of CBCN activities.
- Accounting, budgeting development projects: introduce, implement and make use of a computerized accounting system.
- To include women and young adults as participants in the project in the CBCN administration.
- To provide data resources to a defined number of CBCN activities.
- Highlighted awareness: administrative transparency, anti-corruption awareness
- Participation in the project of local/regional government officials, providing an educational opportunity
- Building trust and improved personal/structural relationship between CBCN and local/regional officials.

2.4 Target groups

- Development project personnel
- CBCN health work personnel
- CBCN church leaders – pastors, evangelists, CBCN women and youth departments
- Representatives of sister churches
- Local authorities – administrative personnel and officers

2.5 Planned results for the entire period 2015 - 2019

On a central and local level: to strengthen the vision and strategy of CBCN through a systematic focus on structure and enhanced skills.

- The service and administrative management capacities (management of staff, resources and finances) of project employees, the church and the administration are reinforced.
- At least 80% of church leaders, 50% of administration managers and the managers working at the projects are trained and their managerial skills are reinforced
- A new generation of prospective leaders is given managerial impulses and skills, with special emphasis on the youth and the women's departments.
- A defined number of the activities are provided with administrative, financial and IT management tools
- Development projects: computerized accounting reporting system to be introduced and put to use.
- Transparency and corruption. Awareness as a moral based attitude to be addressed, attitudes to be changed.

- Improved relations between CBCN and the governmental environment, enhancing the advocacy role of CBCN towards the official establishments
- The gender perspective is taken into account in the implementation of projects (from elaboration through execution to evaluation).

2.6 Project activities

2.6.1 Training in general subjects: The CBCN vision, structure, roles, challenges:

The CBCN church vision

Roles and functions of the CBCN leadership structure

Role, function, responsibility and authority of annual assembly

Roles and responsibilities of department leaders their staffs

Roles and responsibilities of the different CBCN departments

Role and responsibilities between central leadership, local churches and local structures

Role and responsibilities to external partners

Administration of the church and the society

The equilateral triangle of development (Religion-Society-Politics)

Specific project information (definition, stakeholders, roles of particular stakeholders, roles of women and young people)

The civic society: its partners and role

Gender: civic control and civic participation of women

Christian responsibility of society

The environment: how to use, protect and manage it

The fight against anti-values: corruption and sexual violence

2.6.2 Training in specific subjects

General management

Reporting – documentation procedures and responsibilities

Gender

Transparency, corruption

Computer: General knowledge – practical application

Accounting – participles – methods – formal responsibilities

Cash management

Budgeting

2.6.3 Project management

Project life cycle – project principles and requirements – the project document

General management: responsibility, authority, personnel management, project committee

Reporting, project committees

Risks

Gender issues

Accounting – participles – methods – formal responsibilities

Local, external audit

Transparency, corruption

Budgeting: Lecturer

Computer: general knowledge – practical application

2.6.4 Accounting system

Training and implementation of new accounting system

3. The evaluation team

The evaluation team consists of:

Team leader

Evaluator

CBCNs representative

The team leader is responsible for the presentation of a draft evaluation plan, to lead the team and to write the evaluation report. It's her responsibility to communicate the report to the other members of the team for comments and suggestions.

The evaluator shall participate at all stages of the evaluation process – the planning, the implementation and the reporting. The participation in planning and reporting will be via e-mail or telephone.

CBCN's representative is responsible for all practical arrangements related to the evaluation. He shall also participate in the implementation of the evaluation, and contribute to the report.

4. Purpose of the evaluation

To make an assessment of the project's achievements in relation to the objectives stated in the project document and annual plans, and to present recommendations for the future of the project as well as for the sustainability of the activities.

An additional and important aim of the evaluation is to use it as a learning opportunity and process for CBCNs leaders and project staff.

5. Specific assessments to be carried out

5.1 Target group

To which extent has the project successfully reached the stated target groups?

5.2 Project efficiency

Make an assessment about the efficiency of the resources used in the project in relation to the conducted activities.

5.3 Project effectiveness

Make an assessment to which degree the project has achieved the project objective as stated in the project plan:

Long-term overarching development goals, described in point 2.1.

Outcome/immediate objective of the project for the entire period, described in point 2.2 and 2.3

Anticipated results (outputs) for the entire period, described in point 2.5

5.4 Project relevance

Make an assessment of the project relevance in relation to the main challenges in the project area.

Can the project be said to be highly relevant or less relevant in relation to the need of the people in the area?

5.5 Project sustainability

Make an assessment of the sustainability of the project. In particular, give an opinion regarding the possibilities that the local communities have, to maintain and to continue the activities run by the organizational project.

Preferably the sustainability model developed by Digni should be applied in evaluating the sustainability in relation to the following three factors:

- Activity profile
- Organizational capacity
- Context

6. Future development of the project

Make a specific recommendation in relation to the future project. The recommendation should preferably be based on the same sustainability model developed by Digni.
Should the activities have been carried out in another manner?

7. Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation will be a participatory and a learning evaluation.

Data collection will be done through:

- Desk review of project documents and reports
- Focus groups / questionnaire
- Field visits and interviews of beneficiaries and stakeholders
- Direct observations

By the end of the field visit the evaluation team should present the main findings and preliminary recommendations in a half day workshop where CBCN leaders, project staff and partners are present to discuss and comment on the findings. This is to secure the dialogue and the participatory process of the evaluation, and to strengthen the learning process for all parties.

8. Time frame

The evaluation and the baseline study shall be carried out in February 2017

Appendix 2 Process – evaluation schedule

The evaluation process was combined with an evaluation of another CBCN project and a baseline study for the CBCN Organisation Development project, which is a continuation of the Competence building project.

PLANNING – PREPARATORY WORK	
January	Desk Review Preparation of Evaluation Plan Preparation for field work
DATA GATHERING – Buta, Bas-Uélé	
Monday 6 February	Welcome ceremony at CBCN in Buta Planning meeting with CBCN Project Coordination and BUN
Thursday 9 February	Afternoon: Interview with CBCN President
Friday 10 February	Morning: Indicator and goal workshop with CBCN project staff
Saturday 11 February	Meeting with project management team and CBCN Project Coordination and BUN Group discussion with representatives from CBCN Health department and CBCN Education department
Sunday 12 February	Church service CBCN Amadi Afternoon: documentation work
Monday 13 February	Group discussion with representatives from CBCN Femme & Famille department Group discussion with representatives from CBCN Youth department Group discussion with CBCN project staff
Tuesday 14 February	Group discussion with CBCN district leaders/pastors Feedback and consolidation with Competence project management team OD Baseline work with project management team, CBCN Project Coordination and representatives from CBCN; goals and indicators
Wednesday 15 February	Morning: OD Baseline work, continued from Tuesday Afternoon: Consolidation meeting with evaluation team
Thursday 16 February	OD Baseline work Feedback meeting with CBCN Project Coordination and BUN
REPORT WRITING	
February – March	Report writing
Monday 13 March	Pre-draft for translation to French, 21 March to eval team
Tuesday 28 March	Draft report submitted to BUN and CBCN
Friday 31 March	Feedback on report submitted to evaluator
Thursday 6 April	Final report submitted to BUN and CBCN

Appendix 3 People and groups consulted

Rev. Robert Kumbowo, CBCN President
Jean Bhete Osito, CBCN Project Coordinator
Lise Kyllingstad, BUN Mission Leader

The Competence building project team

Francis Ngengo Kola, Director
Trésor Bhete, Deputy Project Director
Gumenyesi Mukisi, Follow-up Manager and CBCN Vice President

Representatives from CBCN Health Department and Education Department

Jean-Louis Nzelo Bolila, Education Department
Bati Amboliko, Education Department
Dukpa Mongogume, Education Department
Pierre Nzaba Bali, Health Department

Representatives from CBCN Women & Family Department (Femme & Famille)

Bazibalay, Community Deputy President, Femme & Famille
Veleamiso Caroline, Secretary, Femme & Famille
Bosale Bakaba, District Deputy President, Femme & Famille
Anibieke Jeanne, Section President, Femme & Famille
Kinamboli Lanza, Community President, Femme & Famille
Mbudie Bako, District President, Femme & Famille
Siligbibbi, Advisor, Femme & Famille

Representatives from CBCN Youth Department

Theo Tokpolo, Youth Representative, Amadi
Sagi, Youth Secretary, Amadi
Trésor Nzewa, Youth President, Amadi
Augustin Mange, Youth President, Buta Gare
Lakya Salingi, Evangelist, Makala
Tangazo Patrick, Youth President, Makala
Mabengi Celestine, Deputy Youth President, Buta Gare

CBCN District leaders - Pastors

Simon Nobuko Kunzi, District Buta
Edouard Ndiata, District Aketi
Desire Ndakpa, District Dingila
Baudouin Ambalu, District Koteli
Crispin Sende, District Bondo
André Mbiame, District Likati

CBCN project staff

Kinamboli Lanza, Follow-up Manager PIADBU

Dagbinza Galia, Head of Savings Unit, PIADBU

Kumboti, Pierre, Project Director, Educational Project

Ndiate Eduard, Head of Civic Education Unit, PIADBU

Mogboa Gerard, Deputy Accountant, PIADBU

Tokpolo Theo, Logistics Manager, PIADBU

Ndingila Henry, Follow-up Manager, Educational Project

Mbele Feza Jeanne, Head of Literacy Unit, PIADBU

Mawala Miwaka Chantal, Follow-up Manager, Literacy Unit, PIADBU

Mbudie Madeleine, Follow-up Manager, Savings Unit, PIADBU

Appendix 4 Documents reviewed

Project documents

Project Document 2015 – 2016
Annual Plan 2015
Annual report 2015
Annual plan 2016
Financial report 2015
Annual plan 2016
Draft annual report 2016
Annual plan 2017

CBCN documents

Les outils de gestion from 2013
Report from CBCN questionnaire on competence building needs within CBCN church, from March 2013
(Résultats de dépouillement d'enquêtes organisés par la 14e CBCN dans ses seize districts ecclésiastiques en Mars 2013)

Report on the mission related to the reinforcement of capacities within CBCN, by Daniel Miakayizila

BUN policy for international development cooperation (DNB policy for bystand)

Digni documents

Criteria for supporting interventions, from 2014
Sustainability and Risk Analysis

Digni documents

Criteria for supporting interventions, from 2014
Sustainability and Risk analysis from 2014