

## **External Evaluation Report**

### **LO-Norway's Programme of Cooperation with BWI and OATUU**

#### **General Introduction**

The external evaluation took place over the period October –December 2011. A field mission was conducted from November 9<sup>th</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup>. The evaluator also met headquarters staff at the BWI, and interviewed by skype the BWI regional coordinator and regional secretary. The evaluator also interviewed Alice Siame from LO-Norway. In addition, all past and current project partners were asked to complete a questionnaire about the project. All BWI partners and OATUU current partners and TUCTA Tanzania sent back the questionnaire. BFTU Botswana, MCTU, Malawi , NOTU Uganda and ZATUC, Zanzibar, organisations which had participated in the first phase of the OATUU project, did not reply despite various requests.

The evaluator also had access to all financial reports to the donor, all narrative reports to the donor, some additional field narrative reports and union internal documents. She was also able to view a range of training materials, policy documents, research reports and baseline surveys. The evaluation has not reviewed the financial aspects of the project beyond the financial management systems and procedures.

The evaluator has sought to carry out a collaborative evaluation, which could as far as possible, act as a learning experience for project managers and partners – and definitely for the evaluator! All the recommendations concerning the future design of the project have been discussed with some or all of the project partners during the field mission. With few exceptions, the recommendations have come directly from project participants or union organisers and leaders.

In terms of LO cooperation, both BWI and OATUU expressed their appreciation of a close working relationship with LO-Norway Headquarters and field staff. Project cooperation has been smooth: transfer of funds has been prompt, financial reporting requirements are considered fair and not unduly onerous. There were some comments to the effect that the reporting format could be reviewed, as particularly the general questions tended to invite repetition from one year to the next.

There was also a generalised comment about the project planning process, which may refer both to the global unions and OATUU as much as the donors. "Donors come with what is good for the country. There should be more listening about our priority issues."

The evaluator found that in both the BWI and the OATUU projects, the overall objectives and expected results had been pitched quite high. Relatively modest programme budgets were expected to achieve a lot over a wide range of issues. Targeted interventions, with clear, achievable results - even though modest- can empower unionists and strengthen leadership capacity. Project planners should not be discouraged from moving forward close to the ground.

In both projects, there is an urgent need to improve campaigning and ICT skills in the unions participating in both programmes. If unions are to remain relevant and a voice for economic and social justice in sub-Saharan Africa , they have to strengthen their strategic campaigning skills.

Both OATUU and BWI are spending over 30% of the budget on administrative and coordination costs and yet at the same time, causing considerable delays in programme scheduling. Programme management could be made more efficient and costs reduced, without jeopardising accountability. The evaluator has put forward some recommendations concerning how the two, very distinct, management systems could be streamlined to improve implementation rates.

OATUU's implementation rate is considerably poorer than that of BWI. Here, the role of the BWI East Africa project coordinator has been crucial in keeping unions focused on completion of agreed work plans. It is also true that national centres are subject to many more demands and conflicting priorities than a sectorally based union. However, the extent to which a trade union centre is best placed to organise shop steward training should also be considered. Trade union centres and their regional organisations have a strategic role in advocacy, campaign coordination and policy development. LO-Norway cooperation with trade union centres could usefully focus more on these areas, with the understanding that shop steward and organising is more relevant to the role of the sectoral unions.

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