

financed by

 Austrian
Development Cooperation



IMPACT EVALUATION REPORT SUMMARY

Burkina Faso

Country Strategy 2011–2015



November, 2014

INTRODUCTION

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD's strategy in Burkina Faso is to strive towards an inclusive society where people with disabilities are empowered, participate and access services in mainstream society. It tries to achieve this through a focus on 3 areas:

- Promotion of eye health and prevention of blindness
- Community based rehabilitation (CBR) of people with and inclusive education
- Fostering inclusive development and the rights of persons with disabilities

An evaluation of the country strategy was carried out by 6 external consultants between June and August 2014. The current programme strategy is largely co-financed by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) as part of a 2012–2014 Framework Agreement.



The evaluation objectives were to

- Take stock of the results of the 2011–2015 country strategy and 2012–2014 ADA Framework Programme
- Recommend changes if necessary to the current implementation
- Shape the next country strategy for 2016–2020
- Shape development of the next Framework Agreement with the ADA (2015–2017)

The evaluators focussed on 4 closely connected areas

- A. Change in systems (policy development and implementation) with inclusive education as a case study
- B. Changes at individual and community levels with CBR and Eye health services as case studies
- C. Capacity development of partners and alliance building
- D. Internal capacity and cooperation of **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD**

The methods used by the evaluators were

- 6 participatory workshops with 53 key internal and external stakeholders
- Semi-structured key informant interviews with 73 people
- 11 focus group discussions with 113 people
- Field visits to Kaya, Tenkodogo, Tangaré, Zompalé, Garango, Pissila, Korsimoro and Koupéla where either CBR, Eye Health services or Inclusive Education activities had been supported
- 1 day in the **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** Country Office for random spot checks of the finance, administration and monitoring and evaluation systems/records
- 1 day learning and action workshop on the evaluation findings and recommendations with the **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** Country Office and Vienna based staff
- Desk based document review



Key findings and recommendations of the evaluation were

ENABLING FACTORS

CHALLENGE AREAS

A	<p>LIGHT FOR THE WORLD has made a high and positive contribution to national level policy dialogue on disability.</p>	<p>There is a gap between policy and practice.</p>
B	<p>Partner services are relevant, appropriate and appreciated by beneficiaries.</p>	<p>Ownership and sustainability of services both in the communities and by partners is weak.</p>
C	<p>Partners respect and value their partnerships with LIGHT FOR THE WORLD. Its technical and administrative support is appreciated.</p>	<p>Partner organisational and strategic development is under-developed.</p>
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LIGHT FOR THE WORLD has a committed and dynamic team.• Financial and administrative systems are solid.	<p>There have been occasional gaps in communication and understanding between Vienna and the Country Office.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A 1. **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** should provide capacity building support to and advocate for the decentralisation and deconcentration of services to people with disabilities. This means while continuing to work at the macro (national) level to be more strategically engaged at meso (region/province) and micro (commune) levels in support of partners.
- A 2. **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** should maintain its own “organisational disinterestedness” and achieve influence on disability by acting as a convenor and catalyst of other actors. This should include activities that close the gap between people with disabilities, communities, policy and decision makers and insure greater accountability to and integration of the voices of people with disabilities and their perspectives into national and local government planning.
- B 1. Carry out activities that give communities a voice, identify and attribute impact for improved performance and accountability.
- B 2. Support region specific research on knowledge, attitudes and practices towards people with disabilities. Use this to shape and inform the content of strategic communication for social and behaviour change. This can be done on an inter-agency basis actively involving the key stakeholders in the research at local level.
- C 1. **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD**'s capacity building approach should become more systematic and strategic, based on the organisational development needs of partners, identified through participatory and inclusive processes. Capacity building should specifically address sustainability, ownership and responsibility for outcomes.
- C 2. **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD**'s relationship based and low profile partnership approach puts the organisation in a strong position to act as a convenor and catalyst bringing together the various stakeholders as recommended in A and B.
- D 1. Wrap up national staff Terms and Conditions (performance maintenance factors).
- D 2. Review Austria and Country Office roles and responsibilities to ensure maximum synergy.
- D 3. Fully anticipate the impact of increased restricted funding. Carefully think through its effect on organisational identity and ways of working.

A. SYSTEM CHANGE

Key finding: LIGHT FOR THE WORLD has made a high and positive contribution to national level policy dialogue on disability

System change is understood to mean the role, influence and impact that **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** has had on policies passed into national law that protect the rights of people with disabilities. The organisation has been actively involved in the networks and discussions that have influenced and shaped current disability legislation in Burkina Faso. **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** has made an active and positive contribution to increasing the awareness of national actors on disability in a forward thinking and relevant way. This progress should be congratulated and represents years of hard work by everyone involved.

A good example is inclusive education.

- Key political decision makers and civil society actors including the media are generally more engaged on disability issues than before
- New laws have been passed and inclusive education is an integral part of the education policy dialogue
- A Directorate of Inclusive Education with its own budget has been established
- The Inclusive Education Pilot project in Garango supported by **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** is a model for national replication
- The development of the National Inclusive Education Strategy is being supported by **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD**

“Inclusive education is now in the discussions and in the practices.”

Multiple Key Informants

Key finding: Gap between policy and practice

While the progress at policy level is significant, the evaluation found a major gap between understanding and practice between the central, regional, provincial and commune levels. There is a widespread lack of awareness of policies and their implementation the further one travels from Ouagadougou to the realities in the provinces and communes.

A key constraint is the centralisation of decision making and control of resources in the capital. Provincial and Communal Authorities, communities, traditional and religious leaders and civil society organisations need to be empowered to put the policies into practice in a flexible and responsive way. They need to be able to do this without always relying on authorisation or a delegation coming from Ouagadougou.

Key recommendations

1. **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** should provide capacity building support to and advocate for the decentralisation and deconcentration of services to people with disabilities. This means while continuing to work at the macro (national) level to be more strategically engaged at meso (region /province) and micro (commune) levels in support of partners.
2. **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** should maintain its own “organisational disinterestedness” and achieve leadership influence on disability by acting as a convenor and catalyst of other actors. This should include activities that close the gap between people with disabilities, communities, policy and decision makers and insure greater accountability to and integration of the voices of people with disabilities and their perspectives into national and local government planning.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD is seen by its partners and other actors as an organisation that works with its partners to serve their vision and strategies. It works **with** rather than **through** partners which is an important difference.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD has a flexible and non-threatening organisational style and culture that makes it seen by others as a neutral convenor and catalyst.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD could play an important role in supporting the decentralisation of government policy. It is not necessary for every decision to be made in Ouagadougou. Government and local authority staff at region and commune level need to be empowered in their work with people with disabilities. Everyone generally knows what should be done. The challenge is how to do it.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD could facilitate more practical multi-stakeholder processes that support the integration of the voices and perspectives of people with disabilities into provincial and communal planning. The goal should be to always close the gap between people with disabilities, communities, decision and policy makers. Quick win examples might be to support region specific research on knowledge, attitudes and practices to people with disabilities.

The evaluation found that there is a lack of disaggregated qualitative and quantitative research on disability and inclusion. This could better shape and inform the content of a more strategic approach to communication for social and behaviour change on disability. Do the research on an inter-agency basis actively involving the local staff and community members from Government, Ministries of Education, Social Action, OCADES, Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPOs) and traditional and religious authorities at the commune level. This will increase collective local awareness, capacity, responsibility for action and accountability for responding.

B. INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY LEVEL CH

Key finding: Partner services are relevant, appropriate and appreciated by beneficiaries

Partner services in community based rehabilitation, eye care and inclusive education have been relevant, appropriate and highly appreciated by beneficiaries. The projects have had a considerable impact on the mobility, livelihoods and self-esteem of people with disabilities and their families.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD is viewed by partners as having a transformative impact on their understanding of CBR. These services fill an important gap that is either absent or insufficiently met by other service providers. The evaluation found that people with disabilities do not want to be different from others. They want to be independent both in terms of mobility and livelihoods and have equal access to services such as education. For people disabled as adults some have started micro-enterprises which help them to gain respect, autonomy and re-establish social relationships. For children, interventions such as rehabilitation, eye operations, awareness raising and teacher training have often resulted in their integration into mainstream education and increased social interaction with other children. People with disabilities overcoming these challenges serve as a model for others.

“Having a productive life means a lot to us. We don’t feel useless anymore or excluded.”

Key Informants living with disabilities

Communication activities through local radio, church and traditional leaders have increased community awareness of the services and there is growing demand for them. This challenge requires better joined up thinking by the actors involved to meet these demands. The lack of specialised human resources (ophthalmologists and other specialised medical staff) and funding for rehabilitation (e. g. orthopaedic surgery) and eye health are a bottleneck for the expansion of services. There appear to be limited services for people with severe mental disabilities.

Key finding: Lack of ownership and sustainability of services both by communities and partners

Frequently community level collaboration stops and responsibility and ownership decline once a referral of people with disabilities takes place. The evaluation found that there were variable degrees of community ownership and responsibility for people with disabilities. It is important to design programmes based on what changes different social groups would like to see for people with disabilities in their communities and how they believe those changes can be brought about. External support is most effective when it links into and builds onto the dynamics and capacities already present at the community level. With leadership and social unity there are many things that communities can do themselves to support the inclusion of people with disabilities.

Key recommendations

1. Carry out activities that give people with disabilities and communities a voice, identify and attribute impact for improved performance and accountability.
2. Support region specific research on knowledge, attitudes and practices towards people with disabilities. Use this to shape and inform the content of strategic communication for social and behaviour change. This can be done on an inter-agency basis actively involving the key stakeholders in the research at local level.

While positive impact on individuals is high, partners' programmes do not seem to be having an impact on wider social change related to disability at community level. The voices of people with disabilities and their communities seem to be missing.

Where people exist there is capacity.

When given the opportunity to express themselves freely, people with disabilities and communities have excellent ideas on what they can do locally to improve the situation of people with disabilities. This requires community engagement exercises that put the emphasis on greater listening to people and communities. Partner focus has been on service provision rather than social change. Prevalent social norms and taboos in Burkinabe culture (e. g. superstition and false beliefs such as bad spirits and witchcraft related to disability) and society are barriers to social inclusion. Without full social acceptance discrimination persists. This results in further difficulties for people with disabilities at an economic, social, cultural and psychological level. Communication channel mapping, identification of more positive social behaviours and strategic communication for social and behaviour change could be a key area in which **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** capacity building support to partners could be provided.

This is why the proposed research on knowledge, attitudes and practices in the different regions was felt to be important. The findings could form the basis of a more strategic and systematic approach to communication for social and behaviour change on disability.

“Other people don’t see us as people with capacities. We don’t mean anything for other people because we are not productive. We are invisible and not seen by others.”

Respondents with disabilities



C. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND ALLIANCE

Key finding: Partners respect and value their partnerships with LIGHT FOR THE WORLD. Its technical and administrative support is appreciated.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD works strategically with national level policy actors and at the local level with service delivery partners. **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** is playing a leading role in alliance and network building at national level with government, international organisations and other stakeholders active in the field of disability. The organisation itself has built alliances with relevant organisations and networks for the successful implementation of the country strategy. At the national level **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** has partnered with the Ministries of Health, Basic Education and Social Action and participates actively in various advocacy and awareness raising networks. These include the CCI Handicap network, the COMUD (Multi-Sectorial National Council for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities), and also the monitoring committee of the Government's "Vision 2020 Plan".

These activities have contributed to the collective influence on government to adopt policies and laws that promote of the rights of people with disabilities. In terms of practically meeting the needs and rights of people with disabilities, **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** supports:

- Government ministries
- Networks and Coalitions
- Umbrella organisations
- DPOs
- The Directorate for Inclusive Education (DEI)
- Diocesan Social and Development Offices (OCADES)
- Hospitals and Clinics
- Schools

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD's provides capacity building to the partners according to their needs and requirements. Mutual trust and openness play an essential role. This support has largely focussed on technical competency in:

- Community Based Rehabilitation
- Eye care
- Inclusive education
- Finance and administration

Partners have greatly appreciated this support which is characterised by:

- Building on partner experience and contextual knowledge
- Capacity building before embarking on an action or a project
- Development of support networks and a culture of openness and exchange
- Team flexibility and availability
- Freedom in how partners deliver
- International exchanges, training and technical assistance

Key recommendations

1. **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD's capacity building approach should become more systematic and strategic, based on the organisational development needs of partners, identified through participatory and inclusive processes. Capacity building should specifically address sustainability, ownership and responsibility for outcomes.**

Partner capacity building has focused on technical support. There is a risk that **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** and partners continue business as usual and continue doing what they have always done in terms of capacity building. There needs to be a greater level of challenge that takes partners out of their comfort zones as the basis for new learning and ways of doing things. The organisational and strategic development of partners needs to be addressed in order to increase their viability, sustainability and programme ownership. For example it was felt that without the support of **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD**, the CBR work of OCADES in Kaya would be difficult to sustain. CBR is a limited part of the wider diocesan development programme. **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** is encouraged to systematically identify and address the needs of partners in areas such as leadership, strategy development at all levels, human resource management and development, development of an internal learning culture and diversification of funding sources etc.



LIGHT FOR THE WORLD is recommended to include other staff categories such as ophthalmic nurses in its programme to build capacity for eye health. Although **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** is aware of the important role DPOs play in Burkina Faso, they are not sufficiently included in the capacity building aspects of the programme and this should be considered.

Coordination between the different OCADES implementing CBR projects was found to be a challenge. Greater synergy is encouraged to strengthen the sharing of lessons learned and best practices for greater impact. Combined services can have better results than isolated individual services. For example CODEC microcredit and training combined with the CBR services of OCADES helped people with disabilities to re-integrate into the community through micro-enterprise.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD could diplomatically play a key role in promoting ideas and practice of performance management and accountability. It could facilitate open processes that bring together multiple partners and that build respect, trust, ownership and responsibility for results among key stakeholders inside and outside Government Ministries, Civil Society and the Catholic Church in Burkina Faso.

2. LIGHT FOR THE WORLD's relationship based and low profile partnership approach puts the organisation in a strong position to act as a convenor and catalyst bringing together the various stakeholders as recommended in A and B.

With increased awareness and therefore demand for services, there is an overall lack of service coverage for people with disabilities. Given the lack of quantitative and qualitative research it is highly likely that many people with disabilities are "hidden" in communities. For this reason it is important that there is more joined up thinking and that strategic level collaboration and coordination increases between government and civil society partners and that de-centralisation at local authority level is advanced. No-one can do everything. **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** can play a role in convening and increasing synergies between partners e. g. community leaders, local authorities, local public health care centres, government social programmes such as "Action Sociale" and other relevant actors.

There are few networks at the Region, Province and commune levels that connect CBR centres, Specialist centres, DPOs, Communities and Local Authorities. All the connected areas of the evaluation's focus have highlighted this gap between policy and practice at macro, meso and micro levels.



D. INTERNAL CAPACITY AND COOPERATION O

Key findings

- **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD has a committed and dynamic team**
- **Financial and administrative systems are solid**
- **Occasionally communication gaps between Vienna and the Country Office**

The evaluation team really appreciated the hospitality, openness, commitment and transparency of the **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** Country Office and Vienna teams. These were found to be dynamic, committed, open, collaborative, vision and value driven at both levels. The team is characterised by a positive atmosphere which is a key ingredient for staff performance. The Country Office has high ownership and a sense of responsibility for the vision and values of **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD**. It is rooted in the local context and well connected with key actors, which makes it responsive to needs. The programme has increased in scale and scope over the past 5 years, while staff numbers have remained the same.

The internal support provided by the **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** Vienna Office is characterised by high degrees of mutuality, trust, openness, respect and hard work. There is a good level of synergy between Vienna and the Country Office. The finance and administrative systems were found to be robust and fit for purpose. The social capital – relationships, contextual connect-edness, cultural knowledge, sense of timing within the country team and partners are the programme's bedrock. This is irreplaceable. The key value added by European office and Unit for Programme Support and international Advocacy (UPSA) is in doing what the Country Office may not be so strong on or able to do: Backstopping support: Writing and polishing of proposals and reports; project planning and identification, nurturing and liaison of international funding opportunities. **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD's** clear people centred approach must be maintained and its relationship based partnership approach should be further articulated.

Recommendations

1. Finalise national staff Terms and Conditions (performance maintenance factors)

A Review of the Country Office Personnel Policy and Terms and Conditions with particular attention to a salary grid and review of this by the Burkina Faso Government's Employment Directorate is recommended.

2. Review Austria and Country Office roles and responsibilities to ensure maximum synergy

On occasion and particularly in relation to national staff terms and conditions Country Office staff feel that they have not been fully heard. Roles and responsibilities of Vienna and the Country Office could profit from a review. This should consider whether some of the things done and decisions made at Vienna level could be more appropriately done in the field. The Country Office staff would benefit from input on work planning and personal efficiency.

3. Fully anticipate the impact of increased restricted funding. Carefully think through its effect on organisational identity and ways of working.

F LIGHT FOR THE WORLD

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD has decided to increase the amount of restricted funds that the organisation accepts. This will enable an increase in scale of work. **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** should fully consider the impact of this on the organisation's identity and ways of working. Managing and reporting on restricted funds implies increased rigour. It also brings a risk of losing **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD**'s unique character. The challenge will be to balance restricted and unrestricted funding. Greater engagement of the Country Office is crucial in projects designed with restricted funding, to ensure higher ownership and knowledge of grant management and reporting. It is clearly time to review the country strategy while maintaining the pillars of strength clearly identified in the evaluation with the participation of stakeholders at all levels. In consideration of internal capacity issues a key question is whether capacity should be increased within **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD** or within the partners. This is why better articulation of **LIGHT FOR THE WORLD**'s partnership approach and development of the new strategy should inform these decisions.



CONCLUSION

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD is making a positive contribution towards an inclusive society where people living with disabilities are empowered, participate and access services in mainstream society. The support provided is often transformative for people facing the additional vulnerabilities brought about by disability. Everyone has a right to life with dignity. Challenges remain in the translation of policy into practice and in influencing wider social and behaviour change. People with disabilities and communities need to be at the centre of creating a more inclusive society. Greater synergy and collaboration between the actors involved can bring about further positive changes. Evaluation is finally about learning and improvement. The challenge is now to act on this learning.



Acknowledgements

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD would like to thank all its implementing and strategic partners in Burkina Faso. Without your engagement and determination to bring about an inclusive society for persons with disabilities, the changes mentioned above would have not been possible. We would also like to thank all the individual and institutional donors of our programme in Burkina Faso. A special mention goes to the Austrian Development Agency for their important funding of the Framework programme "Towards an inclusive Society in Burkina Faso 2012–2014"; the Medicor Foundation for their crucial support in the fields of Eye Health, CBR and Inclusive Education, and L'Occitane Foundation for their major support to the development of comprehensive Eye health services.

If you have any questions or comments about the evaluation and its findings, please do not hesitate to contact us: burkinafaso@light-for-the-world.org · www.light-for-the-world.org