Evaluation Report

for

Welthungerhilfe e.V.

submitted by

Samia Raoof

and

Beate Scherrer

JIGSAW – Services for Development

Bonn, March 2013
I. Summary

1 Background of the Country Programme for Pakistan (CPP)
In 2010, Pakistan experienced the worst floods in its history in the wake of heavy monsoon rains that were leaving almost 20 per cent of the country’s total land area inundated. More than 20 million people were affected by the flooding and almost 2,000 persons lost their lives. In cooperation with its international partner organisations of the Alliance2015, Welthungerhilfe decided to resume its work in Pakistan and initiated extensive relief interventions in the flood-affected regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and Southern Punjab Provinces. A Country Office was established in Islamabad, and a project office opened in Multan (Southern Punjab). In addition, Welthungerhilfe continued projects with two local partner organisations from the districts Shangla, Swat and Kohistan (KPK), which had been in long-term cooperation since 2005. Taking into account the highly fragile socio-political situation in Pakistan and the country’s exposure to frequent hazards such as earthquakes, floods and droughts, Welthungerhilfe drafted the CPP as its strategic guidance for the organisation’s reconstruction works over the next five years.

The CPP builds on the development objectives of the Government of Pakistan (GoP) as derived from the Preliminary Damage and Needs Assessment which highlighted the principles of reconstruction (to build back better) with a commitment to a consistent and co-ordinated approach to meet the needs of affected populations. Welthungerhilfe commits itself to work in this challenging environment based on the organisation’s core competencies in the area of Rural Development and WASH, and to share the experience with civil society partners in Pakistan. The CPP approach follows the concept of Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) as a guiding principle to move forward from emergency relief to development assistance.

The CPP formulated its overall objective with five main strategic areas: 1) Reduction of vulnerability of target groups, 2) Sustainability, 3) Partner orientation, 4) Integration of Disaster Risk Reduction Management (DRRM), and 5) Expansion and reinforcement of cooperation with Alliance2015 partners.

Following a severe security incidence in January 2012, Welthungerhilfe decided to re-orient its project work towards full partner implementation. All international staff relocated to Islamabad for remote project-steering and backstopping supported by field visits.

2 Evaluation process
This mid-term evaluation was conducted after 28 months of programme implementation by a team of two independent consultants (national and international) from 25 January to 12 February 2013. The methodology included an analysis of data and information, field visits, discussions with target groups, partners, CPP staff and other stakeholders. The schedule however, needed changes and adoptions according to the fact that preparation of the evaluation at Country Office was limited, and the travel permit required for KPK could not be obtained. Adequate preparation of updated documents on the status of implementation is a pre-condition for substantiated analysis and should be kept in mind for an eventual final evaluation.

3 Key findings
3.1 Programme rationale
The fact that the programme lacks a clear intervention planning (i.e. no logical framework is required by Welthungerhilfe for country programmes) with formulated outcomes, indicators and linkages between different levels, sectors and dimensions of intervention, resulted in some uncertainty among the Pakistan team about how the strategic directions would be operationalized at field level and where it should lead to.
While the projects funded within the ECHO framework follow a clear reconstruction agenda within the donor framework, the partner-implemented projects funded by the German Government (BMZ) are heading towards further development oriented activities. The partner call process in turn initiated an intense capacity building process which created considerable attention on partner monitoring. The evaluation team also perceived that expectations grew among partner organisations and national staff alike that this investment in their capabilities will provide returns along with future cooperation and funding.

There is a need for an updated programme-centred intervention plan (Logical Framework/ PPÜ) which follows the required LRRD approach and clarifies intervention levels for projects, sectors, management by the country office and Head Quarters (HQ), and links these levels to problem analysis, framework conditions, PME mechanisms, and partnerships/cooperation. This joint exercise should be undertaken as soon as possible to define perspectives and operations for the remaining programme period.

3.2 Programme implementation status
The programme follows an overall strategic orientation through various activities pursuing the overall goal of the CPP. However, the different components and their supporting organisational structures develop at different speed and are currently at different stages of implementation.

The Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation (PME) unit has established its framework, strategy, tools for impact oriented monitoring, and staffing to become operational since July 2012. It is fairly well advanced in describing operations and lines of communication to underpin the CPP with a much needed systematic and coherent knowledge-management. However, technical and sector-specific activities such as WASH, and Sustainable Food Security and Nutrition (SFSN) are areas of expertise developing at their own pace and are not yet sufficiently integrated into the PME system.

While these on-going projects in rural development are implemented through experienced partners, SFSN may need further expertise to feed in and underpin project implementation. ‘New’ sector activities are explored in a context of DRR, Gender, and more rights-based approaches which are constantly mainstreamed into partner-implemented projects.

The continuation of large-scale humanitarian response and reconstruction projects within the Alliance2015 coalition and the ECHO-funded framework is pending outcome evaluation once it reaches its next stage in ECHO VI. ECHO III has been evaluated with joint lessons learnt among the Alliance2015 partners and provides valuable insights for future collaboration.

On the other hand, the CPP is still in a process to develop an action plan for partner development within a broader partner strategy and as part of the emerging civil society in Pakistan. At the same time, Welthungerhilfe Pakistan has to define its own role in promoting civil society in the country.

An initiative of the programme strategy to work in partnership with local NGOs has started in 2011/12 in the Provinces of Punjab and Sindh, where the programme plans to expand its strategic interventions to address SFSN, agricultural livelihoods, and DRR in a mid-term perspective. The number of new partners has increased over a short period from two to six partner agreements. Additional six new partners have been identified in a Partner Call with a small average financial volume of approx. EURO 50,000 for pilot project interventions. The programme structure links this partner-call-collaboration to regional project coordinators and the PME/Expert Partner Advisor in Islamabad to ensure systematic capacity development and project quality.

Security concerns are an underlying constant at all levels of operations in Pakistan. They are a major impediment to operations in all programme areas – not only for Welthungerhilfe and its staff, but also for partner organisations and benefitting communities. In view of an increasingly fragile
situation during this election year 2013, it will be important to ensure that security rules are observed by all staff at all levels and in all locations.

3.3 Organisational set-up
The organisational structure of the CPP reflects the current transition from a project-focused to a more programme-oriented management. The Office is headed by the international Country Director with two senior positions of a Programme Coordinator, and Head of Finance & Administration plus a Safety and Security Advisor. Two international Heads of Projects (HoP) – who will gradually be replaced by Partner Advisors (PA) - and two PAs support the management of major partner-implemented projects along with the national project coordinators. This ‘mentorship’ approach aims at strengthening the capabilities of national staff as well as to build the capacities among partners. Programme-oriented staffing and organisational management needs to be further developed towards coherent programme-steering, administrative support and implementation structure. This means that as partner capacities increase and may be substituted by qualified national or regional faculty, International HoPs should gradually hand over/phase out by end of 2015.

3.4 Relevance
Within the relatively short period of 28 months, and built on its previous experience in KPK and humanitarian response operations, the programme has started well to re-align its various activities towards its overall objective. Having a sound financial and structural base, the means and inputs can be further mainstreamed into a consistent programme approach to make a relevant and effective contribution to the ends defined.

Welthungerhilfe has technical competencies in all sectors identified for the programme intervention, including the field of SFSN, which has not yet been fully taken forward in the CPP. National indicators for the country show that all CPP sectors will remain relevant and need of support to assist the marginalised and rural poor sections of the population. Hence, the programme’s objective is still valid.

A comprehensive PME system has been established which needs to document and publicise evidence of the programme’s relevance. At the same time the remaining programme concepts, e.g. partner and civil society, food security, DRR strategies should be completed and merged into a more coherent country programme strategy with high priority.

Hence, the CPP team has undertaken necessary steps within its PME framework to document project interventions which address the (basic) needs of target groups in the relevant areas of recovering livelihoods.

3.5 Effectiveness
To enhance the effectiveness of programme interventions through partner projects, the CPP team strives for comprehensive capacity building among partners and national staff with an ultimate aim to empower communities and initiate socio-economic change at grassroots level. Although some tools (e.g. planning and project management) for capacity building have been developed and needs-based trainings took place, the programme still lacks an adequate concept for partner and staff capacity building. Based on the needs assessed at different levels (e.g. country office, partners, and beneficiary communities) a clear concept for capacity building should be developed at an early date (2013).

At project level, effectiveness of services provided by partner organisations depends on their capabilities, technical knowledge-transfer, and community acceptance of innovations. In the course of evaluation, information was collected through field visits (Sindh and South Punjab), communication with staff, and data analysis for KPK. Due to the different stages of implementation and types of project it is difficult to compare their quality. Hence, the evaluation looked at the three different settings of implementation 1) Humanitarian response (ECHO), 2) existing partnerships
(EPS, Lasoona, and since 2012 also Doaba, RWF, TRDP), and 3) six new partners (response to partner call) at pilot project implementation stage.

Overall, partners are well selected according to verifiable assessment and criteria procedures. The evaluation found that partners are working with the disadvantaged and marginalised communities addressing their identified needs, and with participative approaches. It can be expected that the activities contribute to the communities’ strengthened self-help capacities leading to future empowerment. Although partner organisations may need further capacity building efforts from the CPP, they are looking at a sustainable outcome of their interventions beyond 2015.

The evaluation team tried to assess the scope of programme coverage through the available information, which is not yet consolidated but has to be tracked down in project planning documents and reports. It was not possible to obtain consistent quantitative and quality data to add up for an approximate total number of beneficiaries reached through interventions of partners, at the total number of Union Councils, Districts, and Provinces where CPP interventions take place. To provide consolidated figures from the projects to the programme level will be an on-going task for the PME unit. With such overall information, the CPP will also be equipped to provide evidence for the effectiveness of its interventions.

Climate change adaptation and DRR will remain key issues for development in Pakistan for the future and Welthungerhilfe has taken on the challenges of integrating these aspects into its work at community-, partner- and project-levels.

3.6 Efficiency

With its overall comfortable financial framework of more than EURO 25 million over the first half of its implementation period and an estimated further amount of approx. EURO 15-20 million for the next three years, the CPP can build upon a solid financial basis for its operations during the remaining period. No doubt, the financial resources used in the CPP were appropriate in terms of technical input needed. In some areas of the intervention, e.g. partner projects and ECHO, monitoring reports and evaluations have also demonstrated that these funds have been spent in an efficient way to achieve the planned results.

At programme level however, no periodic reports or monitoring data have been developed, to provide sufficient evidence that the programme is carried out in an efficient manner with regard to cost-efficiency, or an outcome analysis based on added value. As mentioned, such analysis needs a sound intervention logic with quantifiable and quality indicators, which does not exist.

Looking at the Logical Framework which has been prepared for the country office (PAK 1037), and the funds allocated to annual programme steering, the evaluation team assesses this investment as justified and adequate with regard to the CPP’s financial volume for projects and the administrative responsibilities of Welthungerhilfe regarding project expenditure.

The joint implementation of four ECHO-funded relief and rehabilitation projects with the partners of the Alliance2015 has gradually improved the efficiency of services delivered on the ground. Although it took some time and efforts with an increased input of resources to coordination, Alliance2015 partners and the Welthungerhilfe CPP team stated that after initial impediments and mutual learning they have now reached a level of cooperation that will enhance future efficiency and facilitate implementation for future interventions.

It is also obvious that the fast growth of partnerships under the partner call initiative with its limited financial investment to projects lacks efficiency at present stage. The collaboration needs high input of training, communication, monitoring and travel; the outcomes are yet to be seen. However, these efforts are an investment to the CPP’s future development which seems to be justified if followed-up with a second phase of funding. As the partner approach consolidates and is gradually
integrated into the CPP, efficiency will also improve.

3.7 Sustainability
Upon its inception, Welthungerhilfe assumed an estimated funding framework for the CPP of approx. 40 million EURO until 2015. As compared to the actual figures this assumption appears to be realistic, as co-funding from Government and EU institutions will be made available and Welthungerhilfe’s own resp. donations funding is already earmarked. However, it is equally clear that after this five-year period the amount available for further funding will decrease and a consolidation of the CPP will become necessary. Not for financial reasons alone, the programme has to look for the future of its operations beyond 2015.

Along with the development of adequate programme management systems, and the documentation of relevant monitoring data on performance and outcomes, it will be necessary to elaborate exit scenarios/strategies for sustainable solutions at project and programme level alike over the next few years.

Two factors however, should be kept in mind:
- The programme is currently heading towards development oriented project support through partners; this will make it difficult for Welthungerhilfe to close down or leave the country after 2015, a commitment for the future of the CPP and its nationalisation is required by 2014 latest.
- The probability of more emergency interventions with next disasters is high, and may reverse or undermine the progress achieved. The CPP is certainly well equipped to manage recurring disaster situations effectively with adequate funding from EU and other donors.

Both scenarios will affect the future sustainability of project interventions and programme outcomes. They should be included as alternative factors for future planning.

4 Recommendations

4.1 Evaluations at programme level should be prepared well in advance with updated information. It is suggested to develop a comparable standard design for country programme evaluations to facilitate the monitoring of decentralised overseas structures.

4.2 Establish an updated programme-centred intervention framework (Logical Framework/PPÜ) should be established which follows the required LRRD approach and clarifies intervention levels for projects, sectors, management by the country office and Headquarters, and links these levels to problem analysis, framework conditions, PME mechanisms, and partnerships/cooperation. This joint exercise should be undertaken as soon as possible to define perspectives and operations for the remaining programme period. “The programme orientation should also be clearly communicated within the Pakistan team.”

4.3 Establish a concept and Logical Framework for capacity development - Based on the needs assessed at different levels (e.g. country office, partners, and beneficiary communities) a clear concept for capacity building should to be developed at an early date (2013). To enhance the effectiveness of programme interventions through partner projects, the CPP team strives for comprehensive capacity building among partners and staffs with an ultimate aim to empower communities and initiate socio-economic change at grassroots level. Although some tools (e.g. planning and project management) for capacity building have been developed and needs-based trainings took place, the programme still lacks adequate concept for partner and staff capacity building.

4.4 The CPP is still in a process to develop an action plan for partner development within
a broader partner strategy and as part of the emerging civil society in Pakistan. At the same time, Welthungerhilfe Pakistan still has to define its own role in promoting civil society in the county.

4.5 The CPP has to develop its sustainable outlook beyond 2015 at an early date. Along with the development of adequate programme management systems, and the documentation of relevant monitoring data on performance and outcomes, it will be necessary to elaborate exit scenarios/strategies for sustainable solutions at project and programme level alike over the next few years.

4.6 Despite the fragile security situation in parts of the country, Welthungerhilfe decision making bodies should make it clear that the organisation intends to assist Pakistan’s rural poor and the civil society to build stronger resilience against recurring disasters over the next decade. As in many other countries of intervention, Welthungerhilfe’s engagement in Pakistan is needs based and offers a contribution to strengthen self-help capacities despite fragile security contexts. It may be helpful for the Pakistan team and the CPP to establish closer linkages with the Afghanistan and India programmes for mutual exchange and support.

4.7 Evaluation of outcomes - Due to the present stage of implementation and incomplete systems established to run a coherent programme, a final evaluation of the CPP is recommended in the second half of 2015. Appropriate preparation of updated documents and implementation is a pre-condition for substantiated analysis and should be kept in mind for an eventual final evaluation.