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Authorship

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Acronyms

AMMPARO	Accompanying Migrants with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities
CBO	Community Based Organisation
EECMY	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus
ELCZ	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HIAS	Hebrew Sheltering Immigrant Aid Society
IDI	In-Depth Interview
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IDDIR	Traditional Community-Based Organizations
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IR	Islamic Relief
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LCCN	The Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria
LDS	Lutheran Development Services
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MeCAHT	Media Coalition and Awareness to Halt Human Trafficking
MSC	Most Significant Change Stories
NAPTP	National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons

NCRMIDP	National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons
NDLEA	National Drug Law Enforcement Agency
NDS1	National Development Strategy 1
OECD/DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SoH	Symbols of Hope
UMC	Unaccompanied Migrant Children
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VAW	Violence Against Women
World Vision	World Vision
ZEP	Zimbabwe Exemption Permits

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Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

This evaluation report provides insights on and analysis of the Symbols of Hope (SoH) project, a global intervention implemented in three countries. The SoH project was implemented between 2021-2023 in Ethiopia, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. The focal concern of the initiative was to capacitate churches to respond to issues surrounding irregular migration and human trafficking. The project pivoted around three activities and these were raising awareness among potential migrants about the risks and realities of irregular migration; providing psychosocial support to returnees especially victims of trafficking and enhancing livelihood opportunities for potential migrants and returnees through vocational trainings and seed funding. The project sought to provide hope and a renewed perspective on life for beneficiaries and communities while amplifying the role of the church in developmental processes.

External Evaluation

In line with the OECD DAC criteria of *relevance/coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability*, Panorama examined the program's successes, opportunities, as well as challenges. The evaluation was organized around two broad objectives that entailed assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the project as well as providing recommendations for the future. The report discusses the program's key activities at both the global and local levels.

Methodology

Panorama adopted a qualitative methodological approach that combined different data gathering methods and these included the review of program documentation and external literature, key informant interviews, in-depth interviews, most significant change stories as well as focus group discussions. The underlying aim was to gather rich and nuanced data that addressed the demands of the assignment.

Key Evaluation Findings

In the context of increasing mobility and mixed migratory patterns, the SoH project remains relevant and appropriate in the contexts within which it was implemented. The project attained some of its desired outcomes and also some positive unintended effects. While concerted efforts were made towards localization of the project through capacitation of local churches and amplifying the voice of the church in developmental processes, the project did not succeed in local fundraising. The benefits of the programs are likely to endure but the continued implementation of the projects hinges on the capacitation of project holders in fund raising- locally and internationally.

Recommendations

Drawing from the evaluation findings the report proffers some recommendations. Some of the outlined recommendations include the need for the project to be alive and responsive to changing trafficking targets. There is need to continue the localization drive particularly through strengthening fund raising efforts. At a global level, there is scope for LWF to be a key global actor on migration issues and for such efforts to succeed there is need for systematic networking and collaboration with different like-minded agencies and actors.

Introduction

This report provides an assessment and analysis of the Symbols of Hope (SoH) program, a global initiative of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The program is coordinated by the Department for Theology, Mission and Justice (DTMJ). The multi-country program was undertaken in three countries in Africa, namely, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Zimbabwe from 2017. Implementation in Nigeria and Ethiopia started in 2017, while the Zimbabwe project began in 2021. The evaluation covers the 2021-2023 period, and it takes into account the work that was carried out through LWF member Churches: Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN), and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ).

The SoH initiative aims to empower churches to respond to issues surrounding irregular migration and human trafficking. In line with this ambition, the program raised awareness among potential migrants about the risks and realities of irregular migration, provided psychosocial support to returnees especially victims of trafficking and enhanced livelihood opportunities for potential migrants and returnees through vocational trainings and seed funding.

External Evaluation

The broad objective of the evaluation was to assess the project's performance and results in various aspects of migration, as well as to provide guidance for its future direction and improvement. Two broad objectives guided the exercise and these were to:

i)   Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the project in terms of design, implementation (efficiency and effectiveness) as well as sustainability.

ii)   Provide recommendations for the future of the project, which may include continuation, exit, transformation, replication, or expansion.

In essence, and using the OECD DAC evaluation criteria of *relevance/coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability*, the evaluation focused on the program's successes, identified opportunities, risks/threats as well as challenges. The evaluation also sought to explore the ways in which the program was *inclusive* of the views and perspectives of vulnerable groups and minorities in the design and implementation of the project. In addition, the evaluators also looked at the effectiveness of *global coordination* efforts in supporting in-country implementation and achieving overall goals of the program.

Progress of the SoH Program 2017-2023

The SoH program was initiated in 2017 and implementation started off in Ethiopia and Nigeria. In 2020 and following an end of project phase evaluation, the implementation was extended in both countries for three years and an additional country, Zimbabwe was added into the initiative.

Building upon the recommendations made in the 2020 evaluation report, implementation in the 2021-2023 period, the project was adapted to encompass strategies for localization and to establish LWF as a global actor connecting activities in project countries with churches in Europe and the Global North. The project was to establish systemized ways of peer learning and experience sharing amongst the

three countries. Other recommendations stemming from the evaluation included the need for the inclusion of more women in the project and training on gender related issues for all staff. In addition, there was a need to capacitate project holders on advocacy and fundraising. Suffice to note that a number of these recommendations were implemented and this included conducting baseline studies prior to implementation.

This evaluation is predicated on the 2020 evaluation and looks at some of the achievements and the performance of the project from 2021 to date.

Contextual and Situational Analysis

This part of the report discusses migration in a global context and provides an overview of the obtaining political, and socio-economic situations in the project countries. The purpose of this section is to provide the context within which the evaluation was conducted and the backdrop upon which recommendations are made.

Contemporary Migration: a Global Context

Globally, the migration of individuals has increased exponentially. There are an estimated 281 million international migrants globally representing approximately 3.6% of the world's population (IOM 2024).[1] Increased mobility has reshaped and restructured the patterns and nature of migration and contemporary migration is increasingly driven by intersecting factors such as conflicts, political upheaval, uneven development, socio-economic decline and fragmentation as well as climate change. Collectively, these factors influence global mobility in diverse and mainly, problematic ways. In the first instance, people are rendered vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse. Secondly, in many parts of the world, migrant smuggling, human trafficking and modern slavery have become rife leading to immense human suffering and trauma. Globally, IOM has identified and assisted more than 156,000 victims of human trafficking from 187 nationalities and in 189 countries since 2012. Of these, women and girls constitute 68% of the victims (Rossetti 2022).[2] Rossetti (ibid) contends that irregular migration is a fraction of regular migration and often happens through the activities of smugglers who move people through dangerous routes.

Contemporary migration patterns also tend to be mixed in nature with some individuals falling into more than one category. Often, people travelling as part of mixed migration flows consist of asylum seekers, refugees, stateless people, victims of trafficking, unaccompanied or separated children and migrants and often in an irregular manner. Their specific needs differ and at varying moments they may

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[1] International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2024). Africa Migration Report (Second edition). *Connecting the threads: Linking policy, practice and the welfare of the African migrant*. IOM, Addis Ababa.
[2] Clarissa Rossetti (2022). *An IOM Perspective on Human Trafficking in Niger: Profiles, Patterns, Progress.* IOM, Niamey. Available at: https://niger.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl1221/files/documents/an-iom-perspective-on-human-trafficking-in-niger_2.pdf

be rendered vulnerable (see Brubaker and Bessa 2009).[3] IOM (2024) who perceive mixed migration as complex population movements, define mixed migration as:[4]

> "People using the same routes and modes of transportation to travel, but moving for different reasons. The main characteristics of mixed migration flows include the multiplicity of factors driving the movement, and the different needs and profiles of the persons involved. These mixed movements may include migrants, some of whom may have specific needs, refugees, unaccompanied and separated children, or victims of trafficking. Some individuals may fall into more than one of these categories. Mixed migration frequently occurs irregularly, without the requisite documentation, and often involves human smuggling and trafficking."

Irregular migrants face extreme risks and dangers while on the move and these include navigating difficult and dangerous terrains, violence, criminal gangs and syndicates and these exacerbate vulnerabilities. Contemporary forms of migration are characterised by increasing numbers of irregular and undocumented migrants, internally displaced persons (IDPs), changing gender patterns of the migrants, newer categories of migrants such as unaccompanied migrant children (UMC) as well as victims of human trafficking. The different categories of migrants are rendered vulnerable at different moments. For instance, migrants are often excluded from forms of social protection offered by host nations not least due to their undocumented status but also due to their desire to remain 'invisible' or under the radar of government officials and this exacerbates their vulnerability.

Country Contexts

Ethiopia

Migration in Ethiopia is complex and driven by man-made and natural disasters such as political conflicts, wars, climate change, poverty, as well as severe economic hardships. The crises (socio-economic, environmental and political) that span over 50 years have pushed people to move internally and across borders.

Migration and population movements have increased significantly in Ethiopia as the country is a central hub for migrants traveling across the Horn of Africa. Adugna (2021) asserts that mobility in the country is increasingly characterized by its irregularity as regular channels are often complex and unaffordable for indigent individuals.[5] Adugna (ibid) highlights that economic factors have given contemporary migration in Ethiopia immense impetus particularly for rural youth who target opportunities in the Middle East, Europe and Africa, especially South Africa. At one and the same time, the country remains one of the continent's largest countries of origin for refugees and asylum seekers, with an estimated 280,000 Ethiopians living in this status as of 2020 (ibid). The ethnic conflict in the Tigray region that broke out in November 2020 has also displaced people internally and also produced thousands of refugees.

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[3] Brubaker, R., & Bessa, T. (2009). Managing Mobility for Human Development: The Growing Salience of Mixed Migration. IDEAS Working Paper Series from RePEc

[4] IOM, IOM Regional Office for West and Central Africa, IOM UN Migration, 2024, Accessed 22 April 2024, Available at https://rodakar.iom.int/mixed-migration

[5] Adugna, G. (2021). Once primarily an origin for refugees, Ethiopia experiences evolving migration patterns. *Retrieved from Migration Policy Institute.*

While Ethiopia is an origin country for migrants it also serves as a host and transit nation in the horn of Africa for migrants from Eritrea and Somalia. IOM (2021) highlights that Ethiopians that migrate are typically between the ages of 19-29, largely female and most of them travel to countries such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, South Africa, United Arab Emirates, United States and Yemen among other destinations, in search of better opportunities. Ethiopia also houses migrants fleeing conflict from other countries in East Africa and the Horn of Africa, particularly Sudan and Somalia.

Nigeria

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic, culturally diverse federation that is also divided along religious inclinations. The growing insecurity, in the northwest region, terrorist groups in the north-east and religious tensions in the south-east coupled with poverty and lack of livelihood options are driving mobility and movement. Between 2015-2022 the economic growth rate decreased significantly and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation levels reached a high of 31.7% in February 2024. These challenges have pushed millions of Nigerians into poverty. In 2023, poverty rates reached 38.9%, with an estimated 87 million Nigerians living below the poverty line. The Nigerian economy offers limited opportunities to most of its citizens and fails to absorb the 3,5 million Nigerians entering the labour force every year. Emerging problems such as the increased severity and frequency of extreme weather events, especially in the northern parts of the country have also added complexities to these long-standing development challenges.[6]

The International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2019) asserts that political instability, insecurity, and lack of adequate social infrastructure fuel the desire of many Nigerians to leave their country in search of better prospects.[7] Nigeria has the highest recorded numbers of irregular migrants moving from West Africa to Europe. A number of negative consequences can be alluded to and these include heightened human trafficking and exploitation and in some cases the loss of life. Migration from Nigeria is increasingly dominated by younger people aged between 16-35 and mostly female. The young women are rendered vulnerable during their journeys, and some of them are subjected to various forms of abuse such as rape/sexual assault, slavery, domestic servitude, and prostitution. Young men on the other hand, are often tortured and subjected to slavery or forced into criminal activities. Victims often suffer psychosocial trauma, and rejection or isolation from family and broader communities.

Zimbabwe

Historically, Zimbabwe has been both a receiver and sender of migrants as part of 'flexible mobility' that is a key defining feature of the Southern African region. Contemporary Zimbabwe serves as a destination, transit as well as a sender of migrants to regional countries and those further afield. The intertwined socio-economic and political downturn of the past two decades has resulted in limited livelihood options, social disillusionment and resulted in the mobility of thousands of individuals to regional countries- mainly South Africa, Botswana and Namibia- and those further afield. The employment context is characterized by a contraction of the formal economic market and limited formal employment opportunities as the country's mainstay economic sectors- agriculture, mining, and manufacturing- traditionally the largest employers- have been adversely affected, which in turn has

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[6] World Bank, The World Bank in Nigeria: Overview, World Bank IBRD+IDA, 21 March 2024, Accessed 22 April 2024, Available at https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nigeria/overview

[7] IOM. (2019). Migration in Nigeria: Thematic Document on National Security and Migration, towards an Effective Cross-Border. International Organization for Migration (IOM).

caused widespread job losses but at one and the same time spurred a burgeoning informal sector as individuals seek livelihood and survival. Youth who make up 67.7% of the population are adversely affected. They are typically confronted by a lack of sustainable livelihood options, unaffordable education, and lack of access to health care due to a complex set of problems such as 'excessive poverty, forced mobility (migration) due to limited opportunities, child marriages and sexual abuse of young women among others' (see OHCHR 2020).[8]

The migration of Zimbabweans to South Africa, the regional hub, has changed in scale and nature in the last decade but generally mediated by uncertainties and the precariousness which has resulted in increased mobility and the return of migrants into communities back home. Thousands of Zimbabwean migrants have been grappling with lack of legal documentation and constant xenophobic tensions, periodically escalating into violent attacks.

The entire Southern African region has also been affected by climate change manifest in unpredictable weather patterns such as prolonged dry spells, heat waves, droughts and flooding (Chikozho 2010; Dile et al 2013).[9][10][11] The *El Nino* weather phenomenon has caused a severe drought in the 2023/2024 agricultural season adversely impacting agricultural productivity and output and exacerbating food insecurity while at the same eroding the coping strategies of households.

Conceptual Framework and Methodological Approach

The evaluation was summative in nature. A summative evaluation is one that provides information about the overall effectiveness, relevance/coherence, impact, outcomes, and sustainability of a particular project. This type of evaluation determines a program's effectiveness after a length of time and the actual accomplishments in terms of achieving the desired goals and objectives.

In conducting the evaluation an equity focused and rights-based approach, which promotes the participation of project beneficiaries, and the principles of equity/non-discrimination, was adopted.[12] The guiding principles to this evaluation were, *Participation and inclusivity, Diversity, Gender, equity/non-discrimination, Independence, objectivity, and impartiality* to ensure credibility and legitimacy to evidence-based evaluation results.

The underlying aim of the methodological approach was to: (a) obtain relevant information from multiple sources, using both primary and secondary data, in the most cost-effective and realistic way; (b) validate the findings through triangulation. Panorama adopted a qualitative methodological

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[8] Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Annual Report 2020. United Nations https://www.ohchr.org/en/publications/annual-report/ohchr-report-2020

[9] For example, in 2019, *Cyclone Idai* left a massive trail of destruction in the eastern parts of the country while in 2022, excessive rains from *Cyclone Anna* resulted in the destruction of property and affected overall agricultural output.

[10] Chikozho C. 2010. Applied social research and action priorities for adaptation to climate change and rainfall variability in the rain-fed agricultural sector of Zimbabwe. Phys Chem Earth. 35:780–790.

[11] Dile YT, Berndtsson R, Setegn SG (2013) Hydrological Response to Climate Change for Gilgel Abay River, in the Lake Tana Basin - Upper Blue Nile Basin of Ethiopia. PLoS ONE 8(10): e79296. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0079296

[12] An Equity-focused evaluation involves a rigorous, systematic and objective process in the design, analysis and interpretation of information in order to answer specific questions, including those of concern to worst-off groups. It provides assessments of what works and what does not work to reduce inequity, and it highlights intended and unintended results for worst-off groups as well as the gaps between best-off, average and worst-off groups. It provides strategic lessons to guide decision-makers and to inform stakeholders. Equity-focused assessments provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful, enabling the timely incorporation of findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making process.

approach. This participatory approach privileged the voices of all the people and actors who were involved in the project thereby creating an enabling and positive reflective learning space for LWF, project holders, stakeholders, and beneficiaries.

In assessing social and economic development interventions, we have noted that contextual conditions under which projects are implemented influence the resultant outcomes and are therefore critical to consider. Projects are often mediated by obtaining social, cultural, economic, and political environments with the effect that the same project might thrive in one social environment and fail in another setting due to surrounding circumstances and other contextual factors. Our focus was to identify and document achievements, learning processes, opportunities for scaling up, replicating, exiting, or expanding.

Data Collection

Evaluation data was gathered using different data collection techniques such as documentary analysis, focus group discussions (FGD), in-depth interviews (IDI), key informant interviews (KII) and most significant change stories (MSC). In the section that follows, the report details the sampling approaches and the data collection techniques.

Sampling Approach

Study participants were selected purposively. Panorama provided the three project holders with the profiles (in terms of gender, age, category of beneficiary etc.) and number of participants that were required for the evaluation. The project holders in turn used the profiles to identify and mobilize participants for the evaluation. FGD participants, for example, comprised beneficiaries categorized as returnees or potential migrants. These participants were also disaggregated according to gender and age categories to ensure that different perspectives- shaped and informed by gender or age- were captured. The researchers also spoke to couples in in-depth interviews that aimed to capture the most significant changes brought about by the project. Key informant interviews were conducted with officials from project holders and LWF as well as Government officials and religious leaders that were involved in the project.

Documentary Analysis

Panorama reviewed SoH project documents, and these included the main project proposals, baseline, and periodic reports as well as the 2020 mid-term evaluation report. A review of global and country specific migration literature and reports was conducted with a view to bring out how broader structural, socio-economic, and political factors impinge on the possibilities of marginalized communities and individuals and give impetus to migration as well as the consequences that emerge thereof. The information gathered from the review of documents provided the contextual backdrop for the evaluation. In addition, the information from the documentary analysis sheds light on the rationale for the program and the ways in which the project spoke to the realities and experiences of the different communities within the three countries and the way in which it was articulated to the mandate of LWF and its project holders within the different country contexts.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

Panorama conducted a series of key informant interviews with LWF leadership as well as project holders from the three countries. In addition, key informant interviews were conducted with various stakeholders (Government officials, local leaders, community leaders) in the respective countries.

The questions posed to these key informants focused on the relevance and effectiveness of the program, how the program was implemented, and the challenges encountered in implementation as well as the outcomes and impact of the project. Panorama sought to document key milestones achieved by the program and some of the lessons learnt as well as the recommendations that can be adopted in future programming or the direction that the SoH project will take.

A semi-structured interview guide was administered to the key informants. We talked to a total of 34 officials as illustrated on Table 1.

Data Collection Method	Country			Total Numbers
	Zimbabwe	Nigeria	Ethiopia	-
KII with LWF-Co	-	-	-	3
KII with Stakeholders	13	6	4	23
KII with Project Holders	2	5	1	8
In-depth Interviews with Religious Leaders	4	4	4	12
IDI-MSC with beneficiaries	10	4	6	20
Total	29	19	15	66

Table 1:Breakdown of Data Collection per Country

In-depth Interviews with beneficiaries (Most Significant Change Stories)

Panorama conducted in-depth interviews with a total of 20 beneficiaries in the three countries as shown on *Table 1* (10 in Zimbabwe, 4 in Nigeria and 6 in Ethiopia). Their accounts/narratives provide more embodied and nuanced data that complemented the data gathered through other research instruments. In Zimbabwe and Ethiopia some of the narratives were drawn from couples that were interviewed to establish changes in household livelihoods resulting from the project. The main goal of these interviews was to show how the lives of the project beneficiaries, and their communities have been transformed because of the project as well as to decipher- from the perspective of the beneficiaries some of the changes they have observed in their own lives or those of other beneficiaries.

In-depth Interviews with Religious Leaders

A main component of the program was anchored on the psychosocial training that was given to religious leaders and the support that was rendered to returnees that had experienced traumatic experiences. Panorama conducted 12 in-depth interviews with the religious leaders that had been trained under the SoH program. Four leaders were interviewed in each country. The main questions that these interviews focused on included how and in what ways was the project articulated to other initiatives by the church and how it spoke to other initiatives by other actors in the area/nationally.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

FGDs were the main data gathering tool with program beneficiaries. A total of 21 FGDs were conducted in the three countries (9 in Zimbabwe, 5 in Nigeria and 7 in Ethiopia). The FGDs were varied in terms of gender, age categories and included different migrant categories (such as IDPs, migrants, returnees etc.) as well as potential migrants. Each FGD was made up of 7-9 participants. In essence, the FGDs were representative of the target beneficiaries and disaggregated by gender. In the FGDs, the researchers sought information on the relevance, effectiveness, and impact of the project from the perspectives of the beneficiaries. Some of the questions posed to participants included the extent to which the interventions' objectives and design responded to the needs of the beneficiaries and the significant effects generated.

Data Analysis

The evaluation findings were triangulated to arrive at a balanced set of observations and analysis about the performance of the SoH program. The data was analysed using thematic content analysis to highlight evaluation participants' and stakeholders' assessment of the program.

Ethical Considerations

The study that was dealing with human participants adhered to strict ethical guidelines to ensure that research participants did not suffer any form of harm due to their participation in the evaluation. Participants in this study were informed of the purpose of the evaluation and its benefits after which they were invited to take part in the study. Participants were also made aware that they were not obliged to respond to any questions that they were not comfortable with. Participation in the study was therefore voluntary and on the basis that respondents had been fully informed, and they understood the rationale for the study. Project beneficiaries were informed of their rights such as their right not to continue with the study or not to answer questions they were uncomfortable with.

Methodological Limitations

The researchers adopted a qualitative methodological approach to evaluate the program. The qualitative approach enabled the evaluation team to solicit rich and detailed data relevant to answering the research questions and this allowed the researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the project within the set timeframes. This methodology also provides richer insights.

However, there were a few limitations in conducting the study. The adopted methodological approach collects a large volume of data making analysis and interpretation cumbersome. In anticipation of this challenge the researchers conducted de-briefing sessions throughout the data collection phase to ensure that there was consistency and rigour in the analysis of data from the different contexts. The researchers also sought clarity on issues that were not clear during the data collection period.

The multi-country study posed a challenge in terms of language. To overcome this limitation and to ensure that the views and perspectives of evaluation participants were not lost in translation, Panorama engaged a local researcher in Ethiopia to collect data rather than conducting the data collection virtually. This ensured that the data was collected in the language that the participants

understood, in their localities and the researcher was able to observe some of the changes brought about by the program in the contexts within which they occurred, and we believe this enhances the quality of the data. In Nigeria, English was mainly used in gathering data, but the researcher ensured that local meanings and nuances were captured through requesting participants to articulate any issues in local languages and interpretations provided to ensure that meanings were not lost. In Zimbabwe, to cater for Shangani speakers in Chiredzi, interpreters from the local community were also engaged.

A practical challenge that emerged in Zimbabwe was that the implementation sites are dispersed from each other and the distances within the sites were considerably long in difficult terrain. However, Panorama ensured that all the participants that were selected for the evaluation were met in their specific localities and observations were used to triangulate some of the responses provided by the participants.

Evaluation Findings

This section of the report presents the evaluation findings drawing from the data gathered through documentary analysis, interviews, focus group discussions and most significant change stories. The findings are complemented by field observations. The findings are presented following the OECD DAC evaluation criteria and therefore detail the **relevance/inclusivity, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability** of achieved changes.

Relevance and Inclusivity

Relevance is defined as the extent to which the intervention's objectives and design responded to the needs of beneficiaries (congregations, local communities, and partner/institution needs) as well as the priorities of the program.

The project was initiated on the backdrop of increased contemporary migration and displacement with the overarching objective to empower churches to respond to irregular migration and human trafficking. Following an external evaluation in 2020, the program's main areas of intervention are three-fold and they encompass raising awareness among potential migrants about the risks and realities of irregular migration, providing psychosocial support to returnees, especially victims of trafficking, and enhancing livelihood opportunities for potential migrants and returnees through vocational trainings and seed funding.

The evaluation found that, at both the global and local levels, the program was largely relevant and consistent with the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries and the broader communities particularly given increased rates of irregular migration and human trafficking.

The SoH project tackled a series of complex issues that were plaguing communities and provided alternatives to irregular migration and in the process preserved lives, restored hope and dignity as well as encouraged social cohesion in contexts that had become fragmented and rife with stigmatization. The program addressed the needs of women, youth, and men by providing livelihood options, raising awareness on the dangers of irregular migration as well as providing trauma counselling and psychosocial support.

A government official in Ethiopia stated that:

> The program brought a change in community attitudes about migration. Migration is no longer perceived as a shortcut to making money and people are aware that opportunities exist to work locally. There is also improved community awareness on the challenges faced by people who migrate irregularly. Even returnees have seen that it is possible to start with seed money, save in the bank, lead a family, and change one's life. The project practically demonstrated that it is possible to start small and make a difference in one's life and livelihood. There is also improved mental and psychosocial status of returnees – who have coped well through the psychosocial support and peer-to-peer counselling and self-help groups. Women have self-support through savings systems where they discuss and help each other and are now respected community voices on different issues.

A similar sentiment was also echoed by project beneficiaries in an FGD in Zimbabwe who see the value of the project in the way in which it is providing accurate information about the ills of irregular migration especially to youth. As a result, the project has also fostered greater community cohesion. One female participant highlighted that:

> We now understand that irregular migration is bad. We were losing our kids after they completed Grade 7 (the highest level of primary education completed by learners aged between 11-12 years). They were leaving the country for South Africa, and we were not aware of the dangers they encountered. We are now aware of those dangers. Many of those that were taught were the ones who were involved in irregular migration, they no longer go, they now know the dangers, they are occupied and fending for themselves. We now also work in teams. I know many other people. We are one group. SoH has brought us together from many different communities.

Research participants lauded the SoH program and particularly the psychosocial support component in helping restore the dignity of returnees who hitherto were being shunned by their families and broader communities. The project has fostered the reintegration of returnees into communities whilst assisting people to overcome trauma and affording them an opportunity to rebuild their livelihoods. A religious leader in Nigeria highlighted that:

> The project is very relevant. Psychosocial support has served communities as well as individuals, and it is not something to be taken for granted. Psychosocial support heals traumas and is very important. The project has addressed the physical, social, and financial wounds that returnees harboured. The re-integration of returnees was a problem, but SoH has enabled the returnees to reconnect to communities, families and to the church.

These observations were corroborated by one of the FGD participants in Nigeria. The participant, a female returnee, emphasized that the psychosocial support enabled her to have hope and a renewed perspective on life. The psychosocial support also enabled her to regain her confidence and she is now able to interact with other community members and fend for herself:

> For those that are traumatized the project gave hope. I had lost all hope and belief in myself. When you embark on this journey and then come back, the community will see you in a different light. They will imagine that you engaged in all manner of unscrupulous things, and these are things that you might not have done or encountered. My family rejected me. Once you return your name won't carry any honour and you even start discriminating yourself. SoH made me realize that there is hope. I am now a new person; I am now strong and focused. When I came back, I was so quiet and could not face people. I would not even talk in a group setting like this one. I attended counselling sessions, and I am now able to interact and face people. I have also been empowered to make a living.

Evaluation data shows that within the LWF and broadly the Lutheran church itself, the SoH program is relevant and is perceived as a practical expression of the Christian values and ethos that the church aspires to. The program has enabled churches to play a practical role in developmental processes. One of the key informants stated that:

> Within the LWF, SoH is relevant. It keeps the topic (migration) alive in a rooted way and in more than a theoretical way as it links it to real people. SoH showcases the capability and ability of local churches to bring real change to people's lives. This establishes that churches give hope and meaningfulness to the people assisted. The programming is faith sensitive because faith has a place in the work of people. It is an essential part of caring for people (pastoral care).

These sentiments were also echoed by another key informant, a religious leader who perceives the SoH project as a practical manifestation of Christian ideals. He revealed that:

> The SoH project is the pride of the Lutheran church and nation. It speaks of the voice of the body of Christ. The psychosocial support offered to returnees was a big success. I have seen some people give their life to Christ and I have seen others rededicate their lives to Christ. At the same time the project was not confined to Christians alone but also Moslems and non-believers.

Most research participants found the program relevant and to a large extent responsive to their individual needs as well as those of their communities and the church. Evaluation material also highlights that the project was perceived as inclusive. We define *Inclusion* as the extent to which the design and implementation of the project considered the perspectives of vulnerable groups, including minorities. The program was inclusive of different categories of beneficiaries across the lines of gender, religion, ethnicity and age categories and interview material highlights that this was due to the adoption of a community based approach that allowed community leaders and members to play an active role in program activities. In the three countries the program created linkages between different stakeholders and this was important in the inclusivity of the program. There was collaboration between SoH and different stakeholders.

In Ethiopia, the community based selection approach allowed community leaders and stakeholders to identify potential beneficiaries. A religious leader in Lemmo who was trained under the SoH and provided psychosocial support counselling to beneficiaries asserted that:

> Program people work with us and stakeholders participate in the project at different levels. The project has a community based approach that goes deep into and involves the community in design and implementation. Local influential leaders such as religious and IDDIR leaders actively participated in the project and selection of beneficiaries. The government authorities also participated in the selection of beneficiaries.[13]

Equally, in Chiredzi (Zimbabwe) the program adopted a community based approach that enabled different stakeholders to play a role in program implementation particularly in the selection of

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[13] IDDIRs are traditional community-based organizations (CBOs) that have the objective of providing social and economic insurance for the members in the event of death, accident, damages to property among others. see Getachew Alebachew Mekonnen, 2020. "Fulfilling the Responsibility to Protect: The Roles of IDDIR on Supporting Orphan Children in Bahir Dar City, Ethiopia," International Journal of Risk and Contingency Management (IJRCM), IGI Global, vol. 9(1), pages 29-54, January.

beneficiaries for livelihoods support. Traditional leaders (chiefs, headmen and village heads) were involved in the selection of beneficiaries:[14]

> The SoH program managed to target the rightful people and provide them with skills training because they partnered with traditional leaders in the community and this made their work easier as they helped them identify those who were being targeted by the program.

A key informant in Chiredzi highlighted that the SoH project was inclusive of the views of the community and in implementation the project sought to include the minority groups, age categories and to ensure that the needs and desires of the communities and beneficiaries were taken on board. She stated that:

> Input from the community was taken into account during the design phase of the program. The micro grant forms were designed to take into account what potential beneficiaries especially the youth wanted to do. Community leaders suggested the addition of sporting activities for young people and this was implemented. The project also works with pastors from different churches as the community is not typically Lutheran so people of different religions are included.

In another part of Zimbabwe, Insiza, participants stated that the program was inclusive and that their views and perspectives were considered in the design and implementation of the program. In one of the FGDs one participant revealed that:

> Our perspectives were considered in the design and implementation of the project because we were first asked what we wanted and they provided exactly that. Prior to the project, I was not doing anything as I had just returned from South Africa. The condition was that before we engaged in any livelihood activities we were supposed to submit business plans detailing what we intended to do. I submitted a plan on sewing because I hold basic skills in that area. My plan was selected and I was given a starter pack.

Another key informant echoed similar sentiments and highlighted that:

> During these consultations, we heard what the project intended to do and as community members we realised we could offer training in skills we had. My husband and I volunteered to train garment making. This was approved and we have since opened up our home as a training centre for the youth in our community.

A key informant in Zimbabwe concurred and in turn highlighted that SoH was responsive to the identified and stated needs of different people within communities

> The SoH program managed to target the right people and provide them with skills training because they partnered with traditional leaders in the community and this made their work easier as the traditional leaders helped them identify those who were supposed to be targeted by the program. Those who had already started their businesses were taught business management skills. SoH provided start-up capital that enabled beneficiaries to start their desired income generating activities.

In Nigeria, among the potential migrants in Yola as well as in Numan, Adamawa State, FGD participants comprised both Christians and Moslems as well as People with Disabilities.

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[14] Chiefs are traditional leaders who exercise a form of leadership predicated on traditional or customary authority, such as lineage or descent and they settle disputes involving customary law or tradition.

Coherence

In this report, *coherence* explores the extent to which the project was articulated with other initiatives of EECMY-DASSC, LCCN, LDS, and the LWF-CO as well as with similar initiatives by other actors in the target areas, and the linkages created in the process.

Broadly, the intervention speaks to global agendas and initiatives to address irregular migration and human trafficking, specifically, the United Nations (UN) Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) of 2018 an initiative to address all aspects and facets of international migration. In addition, the program is articulated to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children and the protocol against the smuggling of migrants by land, sea and air of 2000.

In Europe there are two projects run by member churches. One of these is in Italy (a receiving country) and the other is in the Czech Republic and they both aim to assist refugees. The projects focus on providing shelter. At the LWF-CO concerted attempts have been made to strengthen efforts to influence global policy on migration. This has been done through linkages and networks with various actors that include the Islamic Relief, HIAS and the UNHCR.

Furthermore, in 2021 there was a Migration Network Meeting that was conducted and it brought together actors working on migration such as the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia who implement the 'Safer Colombia' project, the member churches in Italy and the Czech Republic. The meeting also included beneficiaries and participants shared their experiences in a bid to understand the complex nature of migration and how the Lutheran Church is trying to address migration challenges. In the meeting participants also shared lessons learnt. While this meeting offered an appropriate platform to share best practices, the major limitation is that the meetings have not been conducted in a systematic manner and the meeting held in 2021 was the last such gathering. The LWF-CO collaborated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through the Accompanying Migrants with Protection Advocacy Representation and Opportunities (AMPARO) and officials from AMPARO visited Zimbabwe to learn from the SoH project.

There is scope for LWF-CO to network and collaborate with other actors and for such efforts to succeed there is need to put in place a deliberate and systematic approach to the engagements given the continued prominence of migration issues globally.

Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, SoH created synergies and there was collaboration with Government ministries. Religious leaders provided psychosocial support jointly with Government experts who provided entrepreneurship training to the SoH project beneficiaries. The project also collaborated with the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs. These collaborations and linkages enabled the project to address other issues prevalent in the target communities such as Violence Against Women (VAW) and harmful practices which include early marriages and female genital mutilation (FGM). In an interview a Government official stated that:

> The SoH project objectives and activities are related to and create synergy with the Woreda, Women and Children Affairs office duties and responsibilities. We jointly organized awareness raising and

education on irregular migration in all kebeles. The project is articulated to our offices' other initiatives. While implementing our office activities, we invite the SoH project beneficiaries as models to share their experiences and skills with other kebeles. During awareness raising sessions on FGM and early marriage prevention, we integrate education on irregular migration. The project has these synergies to ensure women benefit equally in different spheres of life.

In addition to working with a range of Government ministries, the program was also integrated with initiatives of different religions groupings and Christian movements (Islam, Orthodox and Protestant churches) as well as community institutions such as IDDIR. These linkages enabled the project to have a wider and diverse reach beyond the Lutheran church as well as Christian communities.

Nigeria

In Nigeria, the SoH project established strong relationships and close collaboration with Government departments and agencies. These included the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTP), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Media Coalition and Awareness to Halt Human Trafficking (MeCAHT) and the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCRMIDP). These linkages have made the SoH project highly visible in the country. The collaboration with Government agencies coupled with the inclusion of religious leaders such as Pastors and Imams has enabled the SoH program to reach out to broader publics across religious and ethnic lines. According to a key informant, the collaborative approach enables different approaches to be employed in the battle against irregular migration and human trafficking.

Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, the SoH project has worked with traditional leaders (chiefs, headmen and village heads); community-based organisations (CBOs) and local community leaders (councillors). SoH also worked with Technical and Vocational Centres (TVCs) as well as Government Departments such as the Ministries of Social Welfare, Education, Women and Youth. The project also worked with World Vision (WV) especially in mobilizing youth for activities. Key informants stated that the program activities, particularly livelihoods support, are directly aligned to and contributing to broader global development goals such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through poverty alleviation. The project accorded women sources of income and availed sustainable livelihood opportunities. As such, the project speaks to SDG 5 which aspires to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Nationally, the project is aligned to the National Development Strategy 1, (NDS1) particularly its ambition to promote employment and job creation through fostering the inclusion of cross cutting issues such as gender, youth and People with Disabilities.

Effectiveness

In this report *effectiveness* is defined as the extent to which the intervention produced the desired effect. The evaluation explored the extent to which the program progressed towards the achievement of stated objectives. In addition, effectiveness explores the intended and unintended changes brought about by the project, and what the effects of the changes were. This section also looks at the unintended negative consequences of the project, and how these were addressed.

Table 2 provides a detailed breakdown of the project's goals, objectives, log frame indicators and achievements:

Global		
Overall Goal: *To empower churches to affect positive change in people's lives through relevant, effective, and visible diaconal engagement.*		

Objective: *LWF member churches will be effectively responding to issues surrounding migration, internal and external displacement.*	
Target/Indicator	**Achievement**
Number of potential migrants reached by the churches' awareness raising activities.	1550 360 Female, 152,800 male (720+61,440+246,000=308,160)
Number of potential migrants, IDPs, refugees and returnees benefitting from LWF-supported livelihoods activities by the member churches.	760 (500 female, 260 male) (100+360+300=760)
Number of people benefitting from LWF-supported psychosocial support by the member churches.	570 (360 female, 210 male) (120+150+300=570)

Ethiopia					
Overall Goal: *A strengthened church EECMY that, through EECMY-DASSC, responds effectively to issues surrounding migration, internal and external displacements in the Symbols of Hope operational areas in Ethiopia through awareness raising in Ethiopian society, livelihood enhancement and psychosocial supports to potential migrants, IDPs, refugees and returnees.*					
Indicator	**Target**	**Achievements 2021**	**Achievements 2022**	**Achievements 2023**	**Cumulative Achievement**
Objective 1: *Potential migrants in Ethiopia are empowered to make informed decisions based on comprehensive information shared by EECMY-DASSC on the risks of irregular migration.*					
1a. Number of male and female potential migrants reached by EECMY-DASSC's awareness raising activities on the embedded risks of irregular migration	**64 440**	13 600	17 535	20 843	51 978 32 916 Females 19 062 Males
1b. Percentage of targeted youths (5,000) aware of the risks of irregular migration and reporting decreased vulnerability to irregular migration and human trafficking Baseline: 0, target: 60% or 3,000 (1,500 female, 1,500 male)	**3000**	1 100	23 502	8 691	33 293 15 727 Females 17 566 Males
Objective 2: *Potential migrants, IDPs, refugees and returnees in Ethiopia rebuild their lives through livelihood support provided by EECMY-DASSC.*					
2a.Number (male and female) potential migrants, IDPs, refugees and returnees benefitting from livelihoods activities Baseline: 0, target: 360 (270 female, 90 male)	**360**	155	181	48	384 300 Females 84 Males
2b.Percentage of the 180 persons (potential migrants, IDPs, refugees and returnees) supported with seed funding who retained their small business for at least 5 months after provision of seed funding Baseline: 0, target: 60% or 108 (70 female, 38 male)	**60% or 108**	128	196	34	358 243 Females 115 Males
Objective 3: *People, especially victims of irregular migration and displacement, benefit from psychosocial support provided by trained church pastors, diaconal workers, or religious leaders.*					
3a.Number of traumatized returnees (male and female) who received psychosocial and social reintegration services from the local communities Baseline: 0, target: 150 (100 female, 50 male)	**150**	823	42	97	962 450 Females 512 Males
3b.Number of religious leaders and diaconal staff capacitated and ready to provide psychosocial and social reintegration support to	**125**	120	476	123	719 149 Females

					570 Males

victims of irregular migration and displacement
Baseline: 0, target: 125 (25 female, 100 male)

Nigeria					
Overall Goal: *LCCN responds effectively and visibly to irregular migration and human trafficking in Nigeria by providing psychosocial and sustainable livelihoods support to potential migrants and returnees, raising awareness in society about irregular migration and human trafficking, and collaborating with government and non-government agencies.*					

Indicator	Target	Achievements 2021	Achievements 2022	Achievements 2023	Cumulative Achievement
Objective 1: *By the end of the project, an increased number of members of Nigerian society are aware about the risks of irregular migration and human trafficking, and an increased number of potential migrants are empowered to take informed decisions based on information shared by LCCN.*					
1.a Number of male and female potential migrants reached by LCCN's awareness raising activities on the risks of irregular migration and human trafficking Baseline: 0, Target: 246,000*	246,000	720,000	1, 530,000	1,852, 550	**4,102,550** Female-2,630,000 Male -1,472,550
1.b Number of male and female returnees engaged to share about the risks of irregular migration to the public including potential migrants Baseline: 0, Target: 90 (60 females, 30 males)	90	120	301	318	**739** Female – 410 Male – 329
Objective 2: *By the end of the project, 300 returnees (200 females, 100 males) have been able to reintegrate into their home communities and rebuild their lives through livelihoods support provided by LCCN.*					
2.a Number of male and female returnees received sustainable livelihood support in the form of training and seed funding Baseline: 0, Target: 300 (200 females, 100 males)	300	288	400	277	958 Female- 515 Male-443
2.b Number of male and female returnees whose small businesses are still up and running after 3 months since establishing Baseline: 0, Target: 220 (150 females, 70 males)	220	239	337	244	820 Female –601 Male -219
Objective 3: *By the project, 300 returnees (200 females, 100 males), especially victims of human trafficking, have benefitted from effective psychosocial support provided by trained church pastors and/or diaconal workers.*					
3.a Number of male and female pastors and diaconal workers trained on psychosocial support Baseline: 0, Target: 150 (90 females, 60 males)	150	188	250	308	746 Female – 212 Male – 534
3.b Number of male and female returnees having received psycho-social support Baseline: 0, Target: 300 (200 females, 100 males)	300	188	250	410	848 Female- 601 Male- 247

Zimbabwe					
Overall Goal: *LDS has effectively responded to and is addressing both negative and positive impact and issues of migration in the two districts of Chiredzi and Insiza through creation of knowledge hubs, livelihood alternatives and psychosocial support for potential migrants and returnees.*					

Indicator	Target	Achievements 2021	Achievements 2022	Achievements 2023	Cumulative Achievement
Objective 1: *To raise awareness on the dangers of irregular migration among 720 youth, women and men in Chiredzi and Insiza districts by 2023*					

1a. Number of women, men, female and male youth reached through awareness raising on irregular migration. Baseline: 0, target: 720 (female, male)	720	28 people at inception 258 people 21000 listeners	432 people at awareness meetings 218 receiving t-shirts and hats 578 international day celebrations 6000 visual awareness	146 people at awareness meetings 144 international day celebrations 235 in churches	29 339
1b. Percentage of women, men, female and male youth confirming that the awareness raising has empowered them to take informed decisions on whether and how to migrate. Baseline: 0, Target:	-	15%	25%	45%	85%
Objective 2: *To enhance income generation for 100 potential migrants and returnees in Chiredzi and Insiza through capacity building and support to business initiatives by 2023.*					
2.a Number of female and male youth trained in vocational skills and supported with starter kits. Baseline: 0, target: 60 (female, male)	60	18 builders 10 in-situ trainings	21 carpentry	6 electricians 10 welders	65 21 Females 44 Males
2.b Number of women and men supported with small farming projects. Baseline:0, target: 40 (female, male)	40	-	17	30	47 12 males 35 females
Objective 3: *To capacitate family, community and social structures to promote the well-being and development of the 120 potential migrants and returnees in Chiredzi and Insiza by 2023.*					
3.a Number of female and male youth, women and men benefitting from psychosocial support services. Baseline: 0, target: 120 (female, male)	120	-	218	229	447 277 females 170 males
3.b Percentage of female and male youth, women and men who reported confidence and improvement in social participation following participation in activities implemented through this project. Baseline: 0, target: -(female, male)	-	-	44%	38%	82%

Table 2: Log frame Indicators and Achievements[15]

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[15] In Nigeria, the awareness raising under Indicator 1a shows relatively high figures. However, the numbers provided are not reflected in the project reports. LCCN attributes these figures to the mass campaigns within the church as well as media campaigns coupled with support from different Government arms and collaboration with other actors. We recommend robust and effective monitoring and reporting to adequately capture the SoH's reach.

The analysis of project indicators and achievements from the three countries shows that the project was largely effective in achieving the intended objectives. To this effect, the program produced the desired effect as originally envisaged. The analysis of project indicators shows achievement of set targets in all the three countries as depicted on Table 2. In Nigeria, awareness raising, and sensitization on the dangers of irregular migration and human trafficking, is one of the project's key strengths. According to key informants, LCCN reaches over 100 000 people during its annual national conferences, more than 50 000 youth in the youth conferences and they also have clubs in schools where they sensitize school children. In Zimbabwe, in 2021, project targets were not met because the project was in its formative stages and implementation started in September of that year.

Reflecting on the program, one of the key informants stated that, 'every life changed, and people treated with dignity is a great milestone'. Taking this statement as a point of departure, our analysis shows that the project had immense impact on the lives of the beneficiaries and broader communities within which it was implemented. The project reached out to people in vulnerable and marginalized communities and brought to the fore the magnitude of the problem which, hitherto, might not have been well appreciated given the culture of silence and shame that surrounds irregular migration and human trafficking- a culture that perpetuates the practices. In essence, SoH amplified the issue within specific localities and to some extent nationally. Simultaneously, the program created safe spaces where victims could seek help. By so doing the project addressed issues of social justice and restored human dignity. Within the context of Nigeria, one of the religious leaders believes that:

> SoH has been a special example of success. In terms of addressing social justice and human dignity- the program stood out. It was initiated at a time when there was little or no awareness about the magnitude of irregular migration. People thought that this was happening in a small part of the country. The project opened our eyes to how huge, complex, and intricate the problem was. People are deceived and then dehumanized. People deceive children, friends and people from vulnerable communities are easily lured. You cannot stop it all but through the project, people are fully educated.

The tangible effects of awareness raising are evidently seen in the ways in which potential migrants are making informed decisions regarding migrating. In Zimbabwe, hitherto, reported cases of deaths, sexual assaults and human trafficking were rife in the project areas. However, after the implementation of the program there is a perception that there is a significant reduction in these cases. Of salience is the observation by community leaders that a noticeable number of potential migrants are securing passports and following regular routes to South Africa and Mozambique instead of crossing the borders at undesignated crossing points. In Chiredzi one of the traditional leaders revealed that:

> The program assisted a lot and taught us the good and evils associated with regular and irregular migration as well as viable alternatives. Communities were not aware of these, and they were migrating and falling into human trafficking traps, and many died in the process. I was aware of these occurrences as I am required to write burial orders and I would encounter a lot of these cases. Every month we would be burying victims of irregular migration in this community- mostly young people. Many children have been left in the care of the elderly. Chisengwe, an area that was not part of the SoH but close to here, is basically dead. There are practically no men in that area, there are only women left- the men migrated, and many died. Following the implementation of the project there has been a marked decrease in irregular migration and ultimately deaths from the practice have declined. Many people are getting passports and travelling using regular channels and some are engaged in various activities that have improved their livelihoods.

Among the beneficiaries, both returnees and potential migrants, the project has improved the quality of life and expanded their livelihood options. In this way, the project has not only benefitted the individual beneficiaries but has had positive effects on broader communities. The SoH project has fostered economic inclusion for people who otherwise might have been excluded from meaningful economic activity. An account given by a couple in Ethiopia is illustrative of the positive intended benefits of the project. The couple from Lemmo worked as laborers and were classified as indigent-without decent housing. The wife registered at Immigration and received a passport intending to migrate to another country. However, before her intended departure she was identified by Kebele and IDDIR community leaders and elders alongside ten other women to be part of the project.[16] They were selected based on the level of poverty and likelihood to migrate irregularly.

> We were selected because we had the community leaders' trust based on who was likely to bring positive change if assisted and be exemplary to influence others to change perceptions on irregular migration. The project first assisted us through education, which was very important. The education aimed at the ways in which the beneficiaries could change their lives through education and skills training. After the education, we received seed money of ETB20,000 and vegetable seed; and we started the business of buying and selling vegetable oil and cloths. Based on the education received on how to run a business together with vegetable gardening and how to take care of children; we were able to progress in marketing oil/cloth and make profits. We used the savings to build a house and supported our 5 children who are enrolled in and going to school.

In Zimbabwe, an example of a remarkable transformation journey which illustrates the way the SoH empowerment component is enhancing income generation and impacting the community is that of a beneficiary, aged 31. He had been seeking casual work without success in Zimbabwe and he decided to migrate to South Africa without a passport. He tried to do so by crossing the Limpopo River alongside 69 other people. However, tragedy struck as the river was flooded and 68 people were swept away and drowned. Only the beneficiary and his friend survived, and they proceeded with the journey. The beneficiary was to encounter similar conditions in South Africa where he could not get a job and stayed in squatter camps. He rarely had enough to eat and cooked in empty paint containers and he slept on an empty stomach most days. He decided to return to Zimbabwe and with the help of the SoH project, he started off a farming project from which he produces and sells green mealies amongst other produce all year round. He also does fish farming and rears goats. As his project grew, he recruited his brother who was struggling in a nearby town to join him in the farming venture. He is regarded as a role model in the community and is used as an example of using what is locally available to sustain livelihoods albeit in a difficult economic environment. He explained that:

> Upon my return, I started farming and it paid off. I grow different crops and vegetables such as maize, cabbages, tomatoes, rape, and beans. People in my community supported me and the business was doing well although I was facing challenges with stray animals which would walk into my field and feast on my sweat. That is when I was recruited by LDS representatives in my community who started teaching me more about growing different crops and bookkeeping. They provided me with fencing materials to fence off my field. They introduced me to fish farming, and I fell in love with it. It helped me so much because now I have two fishponds and I am working on my third. I started goat rearing recently with my friends using the money I got

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[16] Kebele is a small administrative unit in Ethiopia

from farming. When there are functions in the community I harvest green mealies, cook them and they sell very well, at times I cook more that 1 drum a day and all of them are bought.

Project beneficiaries were trained in various skills, and some sent to vocational training colleges. There has been marked improvement in the availability of locally produced goods and services. Given the numbers of young people that are within the communities in all three countries, the project has increased their confidence and their active participation in income generating projects. The availability of local carpenters, welders, bakers, hairdressers, market gardeners, tailors, fish/poultry producers, and goat farmers has brought goods (beds, kitchen units, bread, fish, vegetables, clothes etc.) and services (hairdressing, metal parts repairs etc.) directly to the people, created employment and given a sense of purpose at community level.

The SoH project also produced some unintended positive changes. According to key informants, in Ethiopia, CBOs that hitherto gave loans to enable members to migrate have since stopped providing such loans for migration purposes due to the awareness of the risks of irregular migration and human trafficking. This is also an acknowledgement of the possibilities that exist in local domains for people to generate incomes and have sustainable livelihood options.

Similarly, a common practice was for religious leaders to pray for and bless migrants who sent money to congregations back home. This was indirectly fueling irregular migration. Due to awareness raising, the practice has since stopped.

In Nigeria, LCCN developed a curriculum on migration and human trafficking. Seminaries are teaching on the risks of irregular migration and how to provide psychosocial support to returnees. This has combined theology with practice in a way that is likely endure.

The effectiveness of the SoH project is also seen in Ethiopia where a project that is similar to SoH is being implemented in Addis Ababa. The project is called Safe from Irregular Migration (SIM) with material support from Norwegian Mission Society.

Efficiency of the Program

The evaluation examined the program's efficiency. We define *efficiency* as the extent to which the program used its financial and human resources efficiently and effectively in relation to its objectives and achievements.

The program benefitted from financial support availed to LWF by a number of donors among them the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Württemberg, GIZ, Act Alliance Church of Sweden, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and German National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation. In total the three countries received €854 118.11. This amount excludes the budget for global coordination both for activities and for direct and indirect overhead costs. The project benefitted immensely from the funding made available and project holders appreciate the role of the LWF in fund raising, coordination and facilitating peer learning through knowledge sharing platforms.

The implementation modalities are country specific and there are certain strengths and weaknesses that emerge as a result of this approach. In a broad sense, such a localized approach allows each country to leverage on specific strengths and advantages.

In Nigeria, the project is implemented directly by the LCCN and this has allowed the project to work closely with congregations and religious leaders as well as the church. According to key informants, SoH has managed to reach out to thousands of individuals through awareness campaigns some of which are delivered by beneficiaries in Lutheran church gatherings.

SoH has also managed to build strong collaboration with government institutions and different actors working on irregular migration and human trafficking and this has contributed to the project's visibility beyond the Lutheran church albeit this being an unintended but positive change.

However, a major limitation is that SoH in Nigeria lacks staff in key technical positions specifically, Monitoring and Evaluation as well as Accounting and this weakness is reflected in reporting as well as compliance. There is a need for these positions to be filled in order to enhance the capacity of all the activities and efficiency in implementation and reporting.

In Ethiopia, the project's major strength is predicated on its ability to mobilize communities through close collaborative relationships with community based organisations (CBOs- IDDIR) who assist members. Equally, in Zimbabwe *chiefs* (traditional leaders) are actively involved in mobilizing communities for awareness raising and monitoring livelihood support activities. Working with these local institutions ensures the sustainability of projects.

However, the evaluation noted some inefficiencies within the Zimbabwean program. The project locations are dispersed from each other and located far away from the LDS office. According to one of the key informants, the operational costs are higher as a result.

Project holders also bemoaned the level of funding *vis-a-viz* the demand for assistance from beneficiaries and communities and the scale of the problems. While the project could only support a limited number of people evaluation participants pointed out some glaring weaknesses that might have affected efficient delivery. In Ethiopia, key informants highlighted that there is limited staff to efficiently implement project activities. They stated that the project requires full time staff that can consistently carry out activities in all the sites. Currently, the present staff feel overburdened.

In Zimbabwe, the project had provision for a single officer per district who was required to oversee four wards yet the wards in rural areas (project sites) have substantial geographic coverage given the dispersed nature of settlements and this might have inadvertently hindered efficient delivery.[17]

Some of the beneficiaries felt that the financial support availed as seed funding was limited and it partially covered their start-up costs. Some of the beneficiaries in Zimbabwe abandoned their projects and returned to South Africa. Some of the beneficiaries felt that the seed funding pegged between USD250-300 was relatively low and they could not purchase everything they needed. Some of the beneficiaries who received start-up kits also bemoaned that their kits did not comprise everything required in the specific trades they practice.

Key informants highlighted the dangers that staff dealing with traumatized individuals encounter. There is a risk of psychological burdens being brought to bear on the staff. Project holders stated that

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[17] A ward is the smallest administrative unit/municipality, and wards fall under a district. Wards are led by elected councillors and ward development committees.

there were wellness programs conducted at least annually. However, there is need for systematic mental health support or wellness programs for staff given the nature of their work.

Sustainability

The evaluation defines *sustainability*, firstly, as the extent to which the program helped target churches to mobilize further resources locally. Secondly, sustainability refers to the likelihood or the extent to which the positive achievements of the program will persist over time and the steps that need to be taken by the target churches to sustain the achievements of the program locally once global funding has ended.

The overriding consensus from the research material is that the positive impacts of the program are likely to endure beyond donor support. This is particularly the case with regards to the awareness raising/education that has been provided to communities as well as the psychosocial component of the project. The vocational skills training that beneficiaries are engaged in is also cited as a component of the project that will endure beyond donor support. A key informant in Zimbabwe stated that:

> The capacity we have tried to impart to stakeholders and beneficiaries is self-sustaining. With regards to psychosocial support- no one can take that away.

Another key informant concurred and in turn opined that the positive effects of the project are likely to endure although the viability of livelihood initiatives is predicated on the broader socio-economic environment within the implementation countries:

> The awareness raising is likely to stay. People were warned that migration is not necessarily as good as it is portrayed and warned of the risks. Livelihood initiatives will stay but these are dependent on the general economic environment. Hope and change created is good but duration, no one knows.

In all three countries the projects are deeply anchored in the communities and within the church. There is a deep sense of ownership among beneficiaries, communities and key stakeholders involved in the project. In Ethiopia, beneficiaries have adopted a strong internal support mechanism that allows them to support any beneficiary who is failing to manage the business until such a time they are back on their feet. In Zimbabwe, project beneficiaries are also eager to train community members some of the skills they were taught during the program life cycle.

While the program enhanced the capacity of the church and collaborated with other actors in responding to irregular migration and human trafficking, the project holders in the three countries have not been successful in raising financial resources locally as envisaged in the mid-term evaluation report. There is no agreed definition of localization but most definitions coalesce around localization as a process where international development and humanitarian actors **shift power and responsibilities** of development and humanitarian aid efforts **toward local and national actors.** Localization helps ensure that those who would benefit from the proposed initiative are a part of the solution, and are consulted from design to implementation of a project. This ensures accountability and the long-term sustainability of development initiatives as well as enhancing the speed, quality and scale of international development and humanitarian response efforts.[18]

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[18] International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA). 2019. *Unpacking Localization*. Humanitarian Leadership Academy. Available at: https://www.icvanetwork.org/uploads/2021/08/Unpacking-Localization-ICVA-HLA.pdf

Using this conceptualization of localization, there is no doubt that since embarking on the process, SoH has made strides in localization efforts through capacity building of the church, local actors and collaborating with different institutions. Project holders in all three countries determine contextually relevant program priorities encompassing the views of beneficiaries and making adjustments while learning from each other. However, efforts to raise financing locally have not yielded the desired results and this impinges on the ability to sustain SoH in the countries the projects are being implemented. The localization efforts have thus been partially successful and have only fallen short on the ability of project holders to source funding outside of the funds from LWF.

In our considered view, localization need not entail that project funding be raised solely from local sources. This is particularly key considering the three countries where the project is being implemented as well as the global context. Ethiopia is in the throes of conflict and it is a hub of migration within the Horn of Africa. Key informants highlighted that conflict in Ethiopia has reshaped and restructured the development and humanitarian aid landscape with much of the financing channelled to immediate emergency assistance and related programming such as peace building rather than other developmental issues like migration.

Nigeria is experiencing an economic downturn that is pushing millions of Nigerians into poverty and driving migratory pressures. There is also unrest and insecurity in the North-West and North-East as well as the South East regions of the country.

In Zimbabwe on the other hand, continued economic decline and a severe drought affecting the entire Southern Africa region continue to fuel migration pressures at a time when there is precariousness due to the possibility of over 178 000 people returning to the country. At the same time, there are no concrete re-integration plans in the country.

Globally, the Ukraine-Russia war has further impacted African economies in general through an increase in the prices of energy, food, and fertilizer and thereby affecting farmers and livelihoods.

In such global and local contexts, it is prudent for project holders to broaden their fund-raising efforts beyond the immediate local contexts. It is unclear if contextual localization studies were conducted as per the recommendations of the 2020 evaluation. There might be need for these studies to be conducted and to also develop the capacities of project holders to fundraise. This might entail strengthening the staff capacities or engaging additional staff that can fund raise locally and internationally and at the same time comply with donor requirements to ensure competitiveness. This is particularly key for Nigeria since the project is being implemented directly by the church compared to Ethiopia and Zimbabwe that are implementing through developmental arms of the church.

However, the project holders have adequate personnel to continue some of the aspects of the project. A number of religious leaders were trained and can continue providing psychosocial support.

Taking these factors into account and against the backdrop of the magnitude of the problem presented by irregular migration and human trafficking, project holders are generally of the view that the project be extended and leverage on the work already done. This will allow LWF and the churches to deepen

the work without spreading themselves too thin as well as allow adequate time to capacitate the project holders to strengthen fundraising efforts.

Emerging Contextual Changes

Project holders in Ethiopia revealed that an emergent issue is the trafficking of children as they are easier to lure with promises of a better life outside of the country. The children are misled through social media platforms to migrate irregularly. Young learners are vulnerable as they are active on social media platforms where they encounter brokers and they share information with peers. An added dimension is that of teenagers being lured by traffickers and asked to pay ETB3000 (approx. USD50) to be assisted to migrate from the country. However, upon payment of the amount, the traffickers hold the teenagers hostage and demand large amounts of money, between ETB300 000- ETB400 000 (approx. USD5000-7000) from their parents.

At a policy level, Saudi Arabia recently resumed hiring Ethiopian domestic workers under an agreement signed with the Government of Ethiopia. While this agreement is not a challenge per se, it however opens avenues for traffickers to lure people, mostly women, into migrating without being fully informed of the realities of migration.

In Nigeria, key informants also spoke of intricate webs of trafficking where traffickers entice young children from villages with promises of job opportunities as house helps but once allowed to relocate they are sold into slavery and in some cases moved out of the country.

In Zimbabwe, the South African policy environment pertaining to Zimbabwean migrants that were in 2009 granted special dispensation permits, commonly known as the Zimbabwe Exemption Permits (ZEP) poses a specific threat and might have far reaching effects for returnees. South Africa, which over the years has renewed the permits indicated that the permits will no longer be extended post November 2025 and holders of these permits are obliged to relocate to their home country. The uncertainty is lingering and within the context of waves of sporadic xenophobic attacks, it is anticipated that some of the estimated 178 000 ZEP holders will relocate to Zimbabwe (IOM 2023).[19] The return of migrants to Zimbabwean communities potentially poses significant conundrums given the obtaining socio-economic conditions. Studies conducted by IOM show that the Zimbabwe government has no plans in place for the reintegration of returnees from South Africa. In Zimbabwe, there is a potential opportunity to collaborate with IOM on a programme to assist in the reintegration of returnees and host communities.

Despite these uncertainties, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia remain key transit points for migrants. People from many parts of Africa transit through Zimbabwe into South Africa- a regional powerhouse. There is need for the program to adapt to meet the needs of people in transit who encounter several challenges and vulnerabilities.

In considering the future direction of the program, it is prudent for LWF to take into consideration these emerging issues and to adapt the program accordingly to maintain the program's relevance.

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[19] International Organization for Migration (IOM). 2023. Government of Zimbabwe Assessment on Zimbabwe Exemption Permit Holders. IOM

Global Coordination and Localisation

In interviews with project holders they stated their satisfaction with the level of support they have been given by LWF-CO. They stated that LWF has given SoH and local churches the leeway to identify areas of need and priorities without defining what happens in each specific context.

The project holders appreciated the constant support from LWF particularly the learning platform that has been established for the three countries to share experiences and best practices.

Collectively, the support from LWF has enhanced the localization of the program and given the project holders a sense of ownership. In addition, there has been room for the project holders to adapt programming to suit the needs of beneficiaries. In Zimbabwe, for example, the project added a sporting component to further enhance the psychosocial support in the communities.

Lessons Learnt

There is commitment to evidence-based programming. Most of the recommendations from the 2020 report were implemented, and this largely enhanced program quality and delivery.

The project made deliberate efforts to foster gender inclusion considering the social, cultural and structural barriers that confront women and inhibit their full participation in project activities. However, these factors still abound and affect the participation of women especially in the uptake of technical and vocational trainings. There is need to continue efforts to foster gender inclusion not only for single mothers but even for married, pregnant or lactating mothers in order for them to benefit from technical and vocational trainings.

The peer learning and knowledge sharing platforms are essential and are enabling project holders to exchange ideas. These platforms are crucial going into the future as SoH continues efforts to fundraise broadly. There is scope for the three countries to lodge joint funding applications leveraging on the work already done.

Conclusion

The report attempts to analyse the performance of the multi-country SoH initiative. The intervention has attempted to tackle the ills emerging from forms of irregular migration, displacement and human trafficking. The scale and complexity of the task is immense given rising rates of mobility and the mixed patterns of migration in contexts where there are push factors compelling individuals and propelling irregular migration, human trafficking and smuggling.

The project remains relevant both in a global context characterised by increasing rates of irregular migration and human trafficking. Over the course of six years in Ethiopia and Nigeria and three years in Zimbabwe, SoH has impacted the lives of beneficiaries and communities while amplifying the voice of the church within key developmental processes.

The localization efforts have capacitated local actors particularly the church to respond in meaningful and productive ways to the perverse effects of irregular migration and human trafficking. There are however emerging contextual changes that pose a threat to the benefits accrued but also provide an opportunity and scope for program adaptation. There is need for capacity building in fundraising in order for localization processes to be a complete success and program implementation to be more effective.

Recommendations

Drawing from the evaluation material we make the following recommendations:

Future Direction of the Program: Undoubtedly, the SoH initiative has had immense impact in the countries it has been implemented. The scale of the problem remains huge and there is need for the program to deepen the work that has already been done. We are of the view that it is prudent for work in the three countries to continue. There is need to involve other LWF member churches in different countries and regions. Such an approach will require additional funding as current funding levels will not be adequate to cater for additional sites.

Enhancing awareness raising: Human trafficking and irregular migration thrive on ever changing and sophisticated methods of recruiting victims. It is important for SoH to disseminate information through the channels and platforms that target communities use to access information. This may entail working with influential figures (context specific role models), creative industry players and utilizing social media platforms to enhance awareness raising efforts. The platforms and methods to be used can be preceded by information ecosystem assessments which examine how people in the target communities access, produce and trust information. Awareness raising information can be channelled through the trusted platforms.

Changing human trafficking targets: Research material suggests that human traffickers are currently targeting minors and learners. The SoH programme should consider awareness raising campaigns that target schools and learning institutions to protect minors.

Staffing and Staff Mental Wellness: Project implementation in the three countries can be further enhanced through ensuring adequate staff to avoid overburdening the current staff. In addition, there is need to have regular programs that support staff mental health given the nature of the work they deal with on an everyday basis.

Reporting and Compliance: Vacant positions particularly in Ethiopia and Nigeria need to be filled to ensure that the reporting and compliance requirements are satisfied and adhered to, to ensure projects run efficiently.

Fundraising Efforts: Project Holders need more support and capacitation to heighten their fundraising activities and enhance localization efforts.

Global Engagements and Networking: LWF-CO to amplify its efforts to network and collaborate with other actors working on migration and for such efforts to bear fruit there is need to put in place a deliberate and systematic approach to guide the engagements.

Key Informant Interview Guide

Introductions- Hello, my name is……………………….. We are conducting an Evaluation of the Symbols of Hope (SoH) program. The program was launched in 2017 and implemented in Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe through LWF member Churches: Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN), and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ). The program sought to raise awareness on the risks of irregular migration and human trafficking in the churches and society. In addition, religious leaders, pastors and diaconal workers were trained on psychosocial support and counselling as well as in providing psychosocial support and counselling to returnees, with a specific focus on those who had experienced human trafficking during their journeys. The program also supported potential migrants, internally displaced persons and returnees with skills training and seed funding to (re)build their lives and gain new tangible perspectives in their home countries.

I am kindly asking you to participate in this evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation is to examine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the SoH program and to draw out some lessons that can be used to improve future programming. Other related issues may come out of these conversations, and you may share additional information you so wish to share.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this evaluation will remain confidential. The information will be used for the purposes of writing an end of program evaluation report that will be shared with LWF and project holders.

Key Informant Interview Guide (To be administered to LWF Leadership/Management, Project holders, Partners/Stakeholders. Tool to be adapted accordingly to suit specific key informant.)

Preliminary question- Thank you for agreeing to participate in this evaluation. Please tell me briefly about your position/role in / [*insert LWF/project holder/stakeholder*] in relation to this program/project?

1. Do you think the program and its objectives were appropriate for the target communities/beneficiaries globally and/or within the Ethiopian/Nigerian/Zimbabwean context(s)? Probe: How and in what ways? What was the impact of the program on the different categories of individuals, groups and communities?- girls, women, youth, men, religious leaders etc.

2. How and in what ways were the perspectives of vulnerable groups, communities considered in the design and implementation of the project?

3. How and in what ways was the program articulated to and created synergies with other initiatives of EECMY-DASSC, LCCN, LDS and the LWF-CO as well as similar initiatives by other actors in the target areas.

4. How and in what ways did the program create synergies with national institutions, priorities and global norms and agendas? Probe: SDGs? With respect to specific categories- women, youth, men, communities/ or vulnerable groups including minorities?

5. How was the project affected by the contextual environment? Probe: Policy/Legislation/?

6. How effective has the program been in supporting implementation on the ground and achieving its overall goals and objectives?

7. What are some of the key milestones/significant successes achieved under this program?

8. To what extent did the Covid-19 pandemic (as well as any other challenges) affect results and how and in what ways did the project holders/marginalized groups/communities adapt to the new situation? What lessons are to be learnt for the future?

9. How did you find the workload for this particular program? Did you feel you were adequately resourced in terms of staff and any other resources- such as time, expertise, funds etc? Do you think that the program represented good value for money?

10. What do you consider as some of the weaknesses and failures of the program? What caused these weaknesses? Were there any consequences brought about by the program albeit un/intended?

11. What were some of the lessons that you learnt from the program? Are there any potential best practices/ that can be replicated in other programs?

12. What else do you think needs to be done going forward to build on the work that has already been done? Probe: What are some of the new actions/interventions/strategies that can be adopted in a program or initiative of this nature?

13. Are there any areas where further/future interventions should be avoided and where programme activities are at risk (threats)?

14. To what extent do you think the positive impacts or changes will continue outside of donor support? How sustainable is this program and are the results and benefits likely to be durable? Probe: How and in what ways does the program address the issue of sustainability?

15. Is there anything that you might want to add or comment on drawing from this interview?

Thank you

Appendix B: Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide

Introductions- Hello, my name is…………………………. We are conducting an Evaluation of the Symbols of Hope (SoH) program. The program was launched in 2017 and implemented in Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe through LWF member Churches: Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN), and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ). The program sought to raise awareness on the risks of irregular migration and human trafficking in the churches and society. In addition, religious leaders, pastors and diaconal workers were trained on psychosocial support and counselling as well as in providing psychosocial support and counselling to returnees, with a specific focus on those who had experienced human trafficking during their journeys. The program also supported potential migrants, internally displaced persons and returnees with skills training and seed funding to (re)build their lives and gain new tangible perspectives in their home countries.
I am kindly asking you to participate in this evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation is to examine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the SoH program and to draw out

some lessons that can be used to improve future programming. Other related issues may come out of these conversations, and you may share additional information you so wish to share.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this evaluation will remain confidential. The information will be used for the purposes of writing an end of program evaluation report that will be shared with LWF and project holders.

(Capture age, gender, country, site/area, category- Returnee, Migrant etc.)

Preliminary question- Thank you for agreeing to participate in this discussion. Ice-breaker: What are some of the activities that you participated in?

1. Do you think the project implemented by EECMY-DASSC/ LCCN/LDS benefitted the community/specific groups within the community? *Probe: How did the project respond to the needs of the different beneficiaries?*

2. Do you think a project of this nature is relevant and appropriate for the community. How and in what ways?

3. Do you think that your perspectives were considered in the design and implementation of the project? Probe: Elaborate

4. What are some of the positive changes you have observed in the community/among beneficiaries since the start of the project?

5. What do you think might have happened if this project was not implemented?

6. What are some of the positive/intended impacts you have observed in the community/among beneficiary groups that were brought about by the project?

7. Are there any negative/unintended impacts that the project had on beneficiary groups and the broader community?

8. Are there any factors that hindered the project or the benefits you derived from the project?

9. Do you think a project of this nature can be replicated in other places?

10. What else do you think needs to be done going forward to build on the work that has already been done? Probe: What are some of the new actions/interventions/strategies that can be adopted in a project or initiative of this nature in future?

11. Do you think the community/beneficiaries can sustain the project activities without the support of external partners? Probe: How and in what ways?

12. Are there any recommendations you might want to share?

13. Is there anything that you might want to add or comment on drawing from this discussion?

Thank you!!!

In-depth Interview (IDI) Guide- Most Significant Change Stories

Introductions- Hello, my name is………………………….. We are conducting an Evaluation of the Symbols of Hope (SoH) program. The program was launched in 2017 and implemented in Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe through LWF member Churches: Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN), and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ). The program sought to raise awareness on the risks of irregular migration and human trafficking in the churches and society. In addition, religious leaders, pastors and diaconal workers were trained on psychosocial support and counselling as well as in providing psychosocial support and counselling to returnees, with a specific focus on those who had experienced human trafficking during their journeys. The program also supported potential migrants, internally displaced persons and returnees with skills training and seed funding to (re)build their lives and gain new tangible perspectives in their home countries.

I am kindly asking you to participate in this evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation is to examine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the SoH program and to draw out some lessons that can be used to improve future programming. Other related issues may come out of these conversations, and you may share additional information you so wish to share.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this evaluation will remain confidential. The information will be used for the purposes of writing an end of program evaluation report that will be shared with LWF and project holders.

In-depth Interview Guide (To be administered to Individual Beneficiaries and Couples)

Preliminary question- Thank you for agreeing to participate in this evaluation.

1. May you please share with me an account of your life story before the project, how you became part of the project and how the project assisted you/family?

2. Are there any improvements that can be made to the SoH project? Elaborate

3. Do you think you can continue doing what you learnt in the project without the support of the SoH project?

4. What do you consider as some of the weaknesses and failures of the program? What caused these weaknesses? Were there any consequences brought about by the program albeit un/intended?

5. Is there anything that you might want to add or comment on drawing from this interview?

Thank you

In-depth Interview (IDI) Guide- Religious Leaders

Introductions- Hello, my name is…………………………….. We are conducting an Evaluation of the Symbols of Hope (SoH) program. The program was launched in 2017 and implemented in Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe through LWF member Churches: Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN), and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ). The program sought to raise awareness on the risks of irregular migration and human trafficking in the churches and society. In addition, religious leaders, pastors and diaconal workers were trained on psychosocial support and counselling as well as in providing psychosocial support and counselling to returnees, with a specific focus on those who had experienced human trafficking during their journeys. The program also supported potential migrants, internally displaced persons and returnees with skills training and seed funding to (re)build their lives and gain new tangible perspectives in their home countries.

I am kindly asking you to participate in this evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation is to examine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the SoH program and to draw out some lessons that can be used to improve future programming. Other related issues may come out of these conversations, and you may share additional information you so wish to share.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this evaluation will remain confidential. The information will be used for the purposes of writing an end of program evaluation report that will be shared with LWF and project holders.

In-depth Interview Guide (To be administered to Religious Leaders, Pastors, and Diaconal Workers.)

Preliminary question- Thank you for agreeing to participate in this evaluation. Please tell me briefly about your position/role and in relation to this program/project?

1. What are some of the challenges encountered by people in this community in relation to migration and mobility?

2. Do you think the program and its objectives were appropriate for the target communities/beneficiaries within your community? Probe: How and in what ways? What was the impact of the program on the different categories of individuals, groups and communities?- girls, women, youth, men, religious leaders etc.

3. How and in what ways were the perspectives of vulnerable groups, communities considered in the design and implementation of the project?

4. How and in what ways was the project articulated to other initiatives by the church? How did the project speak to other initiatives by other actors in the area/nationally?

5. How was the project affected by the local contextual environment?

6. What are some of the key milestones/significant successes achieved under this project?

7. To what extent did the Covid-19 pandemic (as well as any other challenges) affect results and how and in what ways did the project holders/marginalized groups/communities adapt to the new situation? What lessons are to be learnt for the future?

8. What do you consider as some of the weaknesses and failures of the program? What caused these weaknesses? Were there any consequences brought about by the program albeit un/intended?

9. What were some of the lessons that you learnt from the program? Are there any potential best practices/ that can be replicated in other programs?

10. What else do you think needs to be done going forward to build on the work that has already been done? Probe: What are some of the new actions/interventions/strategies that can be adopted in a program or initiative of this nature?

11. Are there any areas where further/future interventions should be avoided and where programme activities are at risk (threats)?

12. To what extent do you think the positive impacts or changes will continue outside of donor support? How sustainable is this program and are the results and benefits likely to be durable? Probe: How and in what ways does the program address the issue of sustainability?

13. How and in what ways has the program helped target churches to mobilize further resources locally? Which steps need to be taken by the target churches to sustain the achievements of the program locally without further global funding?

14. Is there anything that you might want to add or comment on drawing from this interview?

Thank you

Appendix E: Terms of Reference for Symbols of Hope Program evaluation (2021-2023)

Terms of Reference for Symbols of Hope Program Evaluation (2021-2023)
Commissioned by: The Lutheran World Federation, Department for Theology, Mission and Justice
Target countries: Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe

Background and Rationale

The world has faced a global migration and displacement crisis over the past decade, with 82.4 million people being forcibly displaced worldwide in 2020, including 26.4 million refugees and 48.0 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). In addition, there is an increasing number of migrants who leave their home countries due to poverty and a lack of perspective and hope, oftentimes through irregular and highly dangerous channels. Irregular migrants are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking and forced labor. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities of people on the move, particularly of those being forcibly displaced.

The Symbols of Hope (SoH) is a global initiative of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) that aims to empower churches to respond to issues surrounding irregular migration and human trafficking. The program started in 2017 and has been implemented in Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe through LWF member Churches: Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN), and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ). The objective of the program is to raise awareness about the risks of irregular migration and human trafficking in the churches and society, train religious leaders, pastors and diaconal workers on psychosocial support and counselling, provide psychosocial support and counselling to returnees, especially those who have experienced human trafficking during their journeys, and support potential migrants, internally displaced persons and returnees with skills training and seed funding so that they can (re)build their lives and gain new tangible perspectives in their home country.

The program underwent an external evaluation in 2020, which recommended localizing the program more effectively, addressing gender equality issues during implementation, and adopting a more focused approach for selecting beneficiaries. The program has three main areas of intervention for 2021 to 2023: raising awareness among potential migrants about the risks and realities of irregular migration, providing psychosocial support to returnees, especially victims of trafficking, and enhancing livelihood opportunities for potential migrants and returnees through vocational trainings and seed funding.

Purpose

The evaluation aims to assess the project's performance and results in various aspects of migration, and to provide guidance for its future direction and improvement.

Evaluation objectives

1. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the project in terms of design, implementation (efficiency and effectiveness) as well as sustainability and
2. Provide recommendations for the future of the project, which may include continuation, exit, transformation, replication, or expansion.

Evaluation scope and questions

The evaluation will focus on the implementation period January 2021 to December 2023 and will include both the global coordination as well as implementation in the target countries. Stakeholders include project leadership, implementing teams and beneficiaries. The following evaluation questions will be assessed by the Consultant:

1. **Relevance**: To what extent do the intervention objectives and design respond to the needs of beneficiaries (congregations, local communities, and partner/institution needs) and priorities of the program?
2. **Inclusion**: To what extent has the design and implementation of the project considered the perspectives of vulnerable groups, including minorities?
3. **Effectiveness**: What were the intended and unintended changes brought about by the project, and what were their effects? Were there any unintended negative consequences of the project, and how were they addressed?
4. **Coherence**: How does the project fit well with other initiatives of EECMY-DASSC, LCCN, LDS, and the LWF-CO as well as with similar initiatives by other actors in the target areas, and to what extent linkage has been created?
5. **Risk**: Are there areas where (further or future) interventions should be avoided, and where program activities are at risk (threats)?
6. **Global coordination: How effective has the program been in supporting implementation on the ground and achieving its overall goal?**
7. **Efficiency**: To what extent did the program use its financial and human resources efficiently effectively in relation to its objectives and achievements?
8. **Sustainability**: Has the program helped target churches to mobilize further resources locally? What is the likelihood that the program's positive achievements will persist over time? Which steps need to be taken by the target churches to sustain the achievements of the program locally without further global funding after 2023?
9. **Recommendations**: What concrete measures should be taken to further enhance the project management and implementation both at global level and in the target countries?

Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation will be conducted using a mixed-methods approach, including both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. The evaluation methodology will be further detailed in the Inception

Report, where the evaluator will specify the exact focus and approach for the exercise, including a work plan for the evaluation, the selection of target areas for in-depth assessment as well as stakeholders to be involved. The evaluation will be guided by the OECD-DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance programs.

Management of the Evaluation

The independent final project evaluation will be led by a consultant who reports directly to the LWF-Communion office in Geneva. In consultation with the LWF Program Executive for Diakonia and Development as well as the LWF PMER Coordinator, the consultant will develop a detailed evaluation methodology, based on which he/she will lead the evaluation, including data collection and analysis as well as report writing. The project holders (EECMY-DASSC, LCCN, and LDS) will assist the evaluation process by arranging the evaluators' meetings with the project's beneficiaries and other key stakeholders, provide contacts, references, information about activities and logistical support to the evaluator as needed at the beginning and during the evaluation, join the inception and validation meetings of the final evaluation organized by the LWF Communion Office (LWF-CO), review the draft evaluation report and give substantive feedback when requested by the LWF-CO.

Evaluation timeline

The consultancy shall be completed in March 2024. The following is the tentative timeline of the evaluation. The report will be shared with LWF CO staff first, then with national coordinators of the program in an online meeting. The consultant will set a deadline for the final draft with the LWF-DTMJ Program Executive for Diakonia and Development and the PMER Coordinator.

Timeline	Action
December 2023 - March 2024	Call for expression of interest released by LWF (open tender)
	Deadline for receiving expression of interest:05 January 2024
	Evaluator selected by LWF-CO: 12 January 2024; Consultant start desk review 31 January 2024
	Evaluator submits inception report 11 February 2024. LWF provides feedback 14 February 2024
	Data collection, field visit at least two countries 5 days each (Nigeria, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe) 15 February 2024-15 March 2024 Remote data collection (Ethiopia) 15 February to 15 March 2024 in a one-/two-day meeting with staff and stakeholders Outcome harvesting workshop (online) with the three target countries, around 25 March Data analysis and report writing 16-29 March 2024
	Submission of draft report to LWF CO: 29 March 2024. LWF provides feedback 05 April 2024
	Evaluator submits final report **15 April 2024**

Desired Consultant profile

Evaluators should have:

- An advanced university degree or equivalent background in international development, migration, social sciences or a related field.
- Experience with the work of CSOs and/or faith actors on migration and trafficking issues, preferably in African countries.
- Proven experience in designing, managing and conducting evaluations with multiple stakeholders, project planning, monitoring and management.
- Strong methodological skills in evaluations, including data collection and analysis using quantitative and qualitative approaches.
- English proficiency in writing and speaking.

Deliverables

The evaluator will be expected to deliver the following:

- An inception report detailing the methodology, data collection tools, and work plan.
- A draft evaluation reports.
- A final evaluation reports.

Submission of Offers

To apply for the evaluation, interested applicants are required to send expression of interest (EOI), CV, technical and financial proposal (2-3 pages), a sample of previous work in a similar field and relevant documents and certificates to lwf.pmer@lutheranworld.org until 05 January 2023 COB.

Appendix F: Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions/themes	Information source(s)	Data collection methods
Relevance	Relevance is defined as the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries' global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change. Key Questions to be addressed: i. To what extent do the interventions' objectives and design respond to the needs of the beneficiaries (congregations, local communities and partner /institution needs)? ii. To what extent was the project design fit for purpose iii. To what extent has the design and implementation of the project considered the perspectives of vulnerable groups, including minorities?	Project design documents and Interviews	Documentary analysis; Key informant interviews and FGDs
Coherence	Coherence defined as the compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution. i. How does the project fit well with other initiatives of EECMY-DASSC, LCCN, LDS and the LWF-CO as well as with similar initiatives by other actors in the target areas and to what extent have linkages been created? ii. To what extent has the project supported or undermined policies? iii. To what extent has the project created synergies and inter linkages with interventions by other partners including the government and adhered to international norms and standards? iv. How did the project influence the policy environment and policy environment in turn affected the project? v. What gaps did the project fill and how well?	Project design documents and Interviews	Documentary analysis; Key informant interviews

Effectiveness	Effectiveness defined as the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups. i. What were the intended and unintended changes brought about by the project, and what were their effects? ii. Were there any unintended negative consequences of the project and how were they addressed? iii. What factors enabled or hindered greater project effectiveness-Are there areas where (further or future) interventions should be avoided, and where program activities are at risk (threats)? iv. How effective has the program been in supporting implementation on the ground and achieving its overall goal?	Program Reports (e.g., budgets, M&E reports, progress reports etc), LWF and project holders' interviews	Documentary analysis, key informant interviews, FGDs, IDIs.
Efficiency	Efficiency defined as the extent to which the intervention delivered results in an economic and timely way. i. To what extent did the program use its financial and human resources efficiently in relation to the set objectives and achievements? ii. Were activities cost-efficient? iii. Were objectives achieved on time? iv. Was the project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?	Project proposal, monitoring reports,	Document review and analysis, key informant interviews.
Impact	Impact is defined as the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects. i. To what extent have the interventions achieved their objectives and what significant effects have been generated, positive, negative, intended, or unintended? ii. What other effects can be seen on community level? iii. What would have happened without the intervention? iv. To what extent has the project contributed to the outcome and overall goal of the project?	Project design documents, project monitoring reports, KIIs, project staff and stakeholders.	Documentary analysis, key informant interviews, in depth interviews, MSCs and FGDs.

Sustainability	Sustainability defined as the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue. i. To what extent will the positive impacts or changes of the program continue (likely to) beyond donor support? What is the likelihood that the program's positive achievements will persist over time? ii. To what extent is the project delivery infrastructure or mechanisms created by the project and its partners sustainable iii. Has the program helped target churches to mobilise further resources locally? iv. Which steps need to be taken by the target churches to sustain the achievements of the program locally without further global funding after 2023?	Project monitoring reports, Project staff and stakeholders	Documentary Analysis, Key informant interviews, FGDs, IDIs, MSCS