

Terms of References for the Midterm Evaluation of “Stronger after the Pandemic – Transnational Capacity Building of Deaf Associations” 2022-2025

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1. Background

The “*Stronger after the Pandemic - Transnational capacity building project for deaf associations*” is a three-years intervention. As part of a long-term support to national associations of deaf in West Africa targeting Mali, Niger, Togo, and Ivory Coast, the project seeks to ensure that by the end of May 2025, the four targeted deaf associations in the countries mentioned have established a strong foundation for their future work becoming effective and capable associations for their deaf members, and that there is increasing awareness of deaf issues among government agencies and general public as well as establishing a common framework for sign language training in the four countries. Ghana National Association of the Deaf (GNAD) as the main project partner, hosts the project secretariat and carries a mentoring responsibility as the most experienced organisation of deaf people in the region in cooperation with the West and Central Africa Regional Secretariat (WCARS) of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD). GNAD has been supported by Danish Deaf Association (DDL) for 17 years and it has developed from a small and relatively weak organisation of deaf to an organisation with moderate strength and national coverage, widely recognised by government, key authorities, general public, the disability movement and members. Valuable experience gained along the way, includes how best/not to combine specific support to an organisation of deaf along with support to development of in-country Sign Language Interpretation (SLI) capacity and inclusion of deaf in the national disability movement while pursuing advocacy for the rights of deaf according to the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD).

The objectives of the transnational capacity-building project are:

1. The four targeted deaf associations have established a strong foundation for their future work becoming effective and capable associations for their deaf members through systematic and focused organisational development.
2. The general public and government have increased their awareness of deaf issues re-enforced by the targeted deaf associations’ capacity to do systematic advocacy around recognition and promotion of sign language, access to deaf education, and access to employment.
3. The four targeted deaf associations have developed a common framework for sign language training, which has been accepted by key stakeholders.

The project approach is based on human rights and peer-to-peer organisational support allowing for unique sharing of experience and growth of a strong regional and global movement of deaf. It is funded by Danida through The Danish Disability Fund and managed by DDL.

Much experience harvested during the development of GNAD is reflected in the transnational capacity-building project focusing on Mali, Niger, Togo and Ivory Coast, and it has already been proved that replication of known approaches is worthwhile though at the same time challenging. Geographical distance along with different political, social, economic and cultural contexts present new challenges to be understood and overcome. Key approaches of the transnational project, which are building on experiences from Ghana, include:

1. Use of parallel capacity building of deaf associations in the four countries to enable barrier-free sharing of experience within the West African community of deaf *before* targeting closer cooperation with the respective national disability movements (requiring access to quality sign language interpretation, which currently is not available);
2. Use of the Octagon tool to measure organisational capacity;
3. Focus on building basic in-country Sign Language Interpreter (SLI) capacity along with building organisational capacity;
4. Use of a Local Activity Fund (LAF) to allow for application of learnt skills and support to minor advocacy activities;
5. Use of the WFD West and Central African Regional Secretariat (WCARS) for processing of data in order to strengthen cooperation and contact between the regional office and national members of WFD.
6. Use of gender equality and age-diversity strategies and policies, which has not yet been systematised as an approach.

For several reasons some of the approaches and strategies were changed in 2022 in accordance with recommendations from previous evaluation and are being implemented in this project. Particularly the Country Project Team approach has been rolled out since 2022 as an alternative to the previous TOT model. The change from the TOT model to the country project team model is informed by the need for more hands-on support to ensure sustainability and continuous of the project implementation. Use of the Octagon for measuring organisational capacity has been successful and reconfirmed that Octagon is a relatively easy and useful tool, though still insufficient to measure access to SLI, SL proficiency (among leaders, members and staff) and gender and youth concerns, which are significant capacity aspects.

Given that the transnational capacity building project forms a part of a long-term support to the West African Region and the transition to the programme modality replacing all DDL's current projects from January 2025, this evaluation is also addressing the fact that three partners have been invited to participate in the programme, and two partners are being phased out. Hence, the objectives of this project will be changed in 2025 to focus on a sustainable phasing out of the two partners.

2. Objectives

The evaluation of the *“Stronger after the Pandemic - Transnational capacity building project for deaf associations”* has four objectives:

1. To assess achievements and preliminary impact of the project with a focus on effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and social/organisational sustainability. The assessment should cover the total project and closely related activities and include a closer study of two of the four countries, e.g. Ivory Coast and Mali.
2. To assess the feasibility of the key approaches of the project (presented above) and recommend adjustments, in particular regarding the Country Project Team approach, the parallel/transnational capacity building approach enabling regional barrier-free communication and the involvement of WCARS.

3. To recommend adjustments of key approaches and interventions in the remaining project period and in the programme, which serve
 - a. increase of impact
 - b. cost-effectiveness
 - c. strengthening of regional experience sharing and solidarity among deaf men and women
 - d. increased focus on gender equality and age diversity within the organisations of the deaf.
4. To guide the phasing out of Mali and Niger, ensuring that the results and changes achieved so far will be sustainable.

3. Scope of work

The evaluation will address the issues and questions listed below:

General

- Has the project increased sustainable organisational capacities and changes in Niger, Mali, Togo, and Ivory Coast?
- Has the revised project setup and the division of roles and responsibilities between the different actors yielded the desired results?
- Is the project cost-efficient?

Project strategic level

- How has the transnational approach to strengthening of national organisations of the deaf contributed to mutual learning and experience sharing among the partners? Which approaches should be continued in the programme?

The Training of Trainers Model

- Is the adjusted training approach to capacity building for the Country Project Teams feasible given the capacity to learn in the four countries (the low literacy and level of education), the capacity of focal national trainers to learn and train others, the capacity of the project staff at GNAD to train trainers from varied contexts, curriculum and training tools available?

Administration, coordination, monitoring, evaluation and learning

- Has GNAD sufficient capacity to manage a project of this scope, size, and complexity?
- Has the adjusted project setup with CPOs and CPTs contributed to the achievement of results (delaying or supporting)?
- How is the monitoring of financial management by the four national associations prioritised compared to the monitoring of activities?

Cross-cutting concerns: Gender equality and age diversity

- How can the gender strategies be effectively implemented in the four associations ensuring ownership?

Transition to the programme

- Do ANASOCI and AST have sufficient capacity to participate in the programme? If not, which gaps are there, and what are the recommended mitigating measures?

- Should the current setup regarding GNAD being the host of the project and having the responsibility of capacity building, project management, and monitoring of ANASOCI and AST be continued in the programme?

4. Methodology

With reference to the time plan in section 6, the evaluation will be based on desk studies and assessments, interviews with relevant stakeholders in Denmark and West Africa and field visits tentatively planned for Ivory Coast and Mali, as well as participation in discussions at the joint Project Forum for all involved organisations in August 2024. The initial desk studies will be concluded with an inception note outlining the further steps of the evaluation, people to be contacted and refined methodology to guide the collection of data and field visits. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods should be included, and the general approach should reflect inclusion, participation, gender sensitivity and age consciousness.

The purpose of the field visits is two-fold in accordance with the evaluation objectives. Achievements of the project should be identified, validated, compiled, and assessed, but also the adjusted project approach should be assessed and challenges as well as possible improvements considered in dialogue with the target group, key stakeholders, and project staff. DDL and GNAD are aware of a number of challenges in the project already and attempts have been made to address and overcome these, so the mere identification of challenges should not only be presented, but be accompanied by an analysis of the challenges and tangible recommendations for adjustments and improvements. This may involve some cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness analysis as well as balancing and comparison of the input with often abstract outputs. In this regard, exact calculations requiring access to specific documents is not a priority, the point is to clarify the advantages, costs and disadvantages of different approaches to development of the deaf organisations. The rather usual conclusion that the development of disabled people's organisations is expensive and challenging due to the disability and context should at best be avoided, and ways to address and handle the fact be put at the centre.

Documents to be studied should include

- Project proposal for *"Stronger after the Pandemic - Transnational Capacity Building of Deaf Associations"* 2022-2025
- Annual report 2023
- Annual results sheets 2023 and 2024
- 6-months progress reports 2023 and 2024
- Reports from major activities such as first Training of Trainers and Project Forum in 2024
- Activity reports from the four associations
- Project accounts 2023 and 2024
- Updated Octagons for the three associations
- Organisational Development strategy for each association
- Advocacy strategy for each association
- Gender strategy for each association
- LAF reports
- Evaluation and end of project report related to *"Reflecting and Maintaining Momentum during the Pandemic"* (2021)
- Evaluation (2021) and end of project report (2023) related to *"Transnational Capacity Building of Deaf Associations"*

5. Outputs/deliverables

Inception note (5-10 pages) in English based on desk study and initial interviews. It will present the main issues to be addressed during data collection/fieldwork, a detailed outline of methodology and work plan. The inception note will serve as input to the meeting between the Evaluation Team and DDL.

Debriefing note (3-5 pages) with brief PP presentation in English and French to all attending the Project Forum in Accra (4th – 7th August 2024) that summarises the findings and recommendations for discussion and validation.

Evaluation report (Max. 30 pages excluding annexes) with PP presentation in English and French presenting findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The report shall comprise an executive summary of not more than three pages. Conclusions and recommendations shall be stated in a separate section. The report will be written in English and partly translated into French.

6. Time plan

Below is a tentative time plan for the evaluation, a more specific time plan will be agreed upon when the evaluation is being commenced.

Phase	Activities	Output	Timing
Inception phase including desk studies and data collection in Denmark	<p>Meeting with DDL to clarify the selection of countries, methodology and timing of field studies.</p> <p>Preparatory desk study to analyse key documents, in particular as related to organisational and financial management. Based on this, the team will draft an inception note presenting the approach and methodology of the field study.</p> <p>Data collection and initial interviews with DDL and GNAD key staff and resource persons in Denmark.</p> <p>A meeting between the Evaluation Team and DDL to discuss the Inception note.</p> <p>Planning of field studies and virtual meetings.</p>	Inception note	End of June 2024

Field studies including data collection by local consultant(s) and/or international consultant	Meetings, interviews and discussions with GNAD and the organisations of deaf in particularly Ivory Coast and Mali to assess achieved results, performance and lessons learnt as well as the feasibility of applied approaches. Meeting with all involved at the Project Forum (4 th – 7 th August) in Accra for collection of data and presentation of preliminary findings.	Country notes (Ivory Coast and Mali) Debriefing note	July 2024
Analysis and Report writing	Preparation of draft report for comments and discussions. Finalisation of report and translation into French.	Draft report in English Final Report in English and French	August 2024. Submission of the final report by 31 August 2024 (English), the French translation is to be submitted by 15 September 2024.

7. Qualifications required

An Evaluation Team of one international consultant based in Denmark and a local consultant based in West Africa is required. The team should hold relevant education, solid experience with organisational development and rights-based civil society organisations in developing countries, experience from similar assignments, experience with capacity building of Disabled People’s Organisations in Africa, experience with quantitative and qualitative methods, regional knowledge and good skills in English and French.

8. Budget

A total of 145.000 DKK will be available for the evaluation, including travelling. The daily fee of the international consultant should not exceed 5.000 DKK, and the total number of working days to be distributed between the international and local consultant should not be less than 25. Please note: Work/travel on weekend days is expected during the field visits.