Report

on the mid-term evaluation of the project:

"Strengthening the capacities of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) in the area of climate-sensitive disaster risk management – Climate Advocacy and Coordination for Resilient Action (CACRA project)"

Evaluation Assignment period: **September – October 2019**

Commissioner of the evaluation: **German Red Cross (GRC)**

Implementing Partner: **Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS)**

Project Implementation Period: **September 2017 – December 2020**

Donor & PN: **German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ): 2017.2612.4**

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<u>Abbreviations</u>

BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CBDRR	Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction
CC	Climate Change
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
GCRI	Global Climate Risk Index
GRC	German Red Cross
GoP	Government of Pakistan
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IVCA	Integrated Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
MTE	Mid-term Evaluation
PRCS	Pakistan Red Crescent Society
RBM	Results-Based Management
SSF	Social Structural Funding
ToA	Theory of Action
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
WRI	World Risk Index

1. Executive Summary

The mid-term evaluation (MTE) report at hand describes the findings, conclusions and recommendations generated by the evaluator during the evaluation period in September and October 2019. The field phase took place between September 16th and September 20th. The project with the official title **"Strengthening the capacities of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) in the area of climate-sensitive disaster risk management"**, internally called **"Climate Advocacy and Coordination for Resilient Action (CACRA project)"**, is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) under the Social Structural Funding (SSF) line (project number**:** 2017.2612.4). Approved project implementation period is **September 2017 – December 2020**.

The **project objective** defines the aim *to strengthen and expand the capacities and structures of the PRCS and essential actors in the area of climate-smart DRM.*

Three subordinated results are defined as follows:

Project result 1
PRCS will have contributed to improved coordination and development of contextualised tools in the field of climate-smart DRM with relevant actors at different levels.

Project result 2
PRCS will have established internal structures and enhanced its capacities on national and provincial level in the area of climate-smart DRM.

Project result 3
Selected vulnerable rural and urban target communities will have improved knowledge of climate change, adaptive measures in DRM and strengthened coordination with relevant local stakeholders.

The preliminary hypothesis of the GRC prior to the MTE was that the conceptual feasibility and practical achievability of the approved project proposal and its developed intervention logic is challenged. Therefore, the **purpose of the MTE** was **to reassess the concept, as sketched in the proposal, and its implementation status** accordingly.
The data sets, that constitute the analysis in this report, were generated through the application of a mix of methodologies, namely a

- desk review of project documentation and other written sources such as national and institutional policies,
- key informant interviews,
- own observation.

The evaluation design was non-experimental. Sampling was non-random and purposive.
As the field phase had to be reduced from two weeks to one week, the methodology and scope had to be amended by the parties.

The **evaluation questions** were answered as follows:

- **Is the project proposal currently providing sufficient guidance to achieve its objectives?**
The proposal with its logframe is not providing sufficient guidance on processes how to achieve its objectives. The objectives themselves (results and project objective) remain for most parts not sufficiently defined. In absence of appropriate outcome indicators, the current version of the logframe was developed to enable managers to determine whether planned activities are being performed on time and desired outputs are being delivered according to plan.

But for crucial components managers and evaluators alike cannot use the logframe to assess whether the outputs help to achieve desired outcomes or whether the outputs will bring about the envisaged development impacts.

- **To what extent is the concept of the SSF instrument known to PRCS implementers?**

This question was not directly addressed during the KIIs that the author conducted. But the proposal itself in its current version does not comply with the concept as an enabler of organisational development (capacity development and institutionalisation), because for crucial parts it neglects the complexity of the task and lacks explicit awareness on the necessity of sequential and mutually dependent processes that are involved. The proposal sets desired long-term outcomes and impacts of a process of capacity and organisational development as targets for a 3-year phase.

PRCS implementors were never briefed sufficiently on the SSF instrument.

- **Which opportunities does the SSF instrument provide as an enabler of meaningful organisational development?**

The instrument provides for 3-4 phases of 3 years (default) to work on capacities and organisational development. If the targets for the first project phase were reduced to realistic targets in line with the SSF model and then qualified as long-term goals to be achieved with 9-12 years instead, a long-term intervention strategy (Theory of Action), embedded into a wider Theory of Change could have been translated into intermediate outcomes (milestones) for a first phase until 2020. Thus, the proposal designers could have deduced achievable and realistic immediate outcomes for a first phase.

Generally, it is not realistic to target (and thereby to be held accountable for) outcomes, that require implementation of contributions by actors that are beyond control of PRCS. Therefore, the objective and results should not have set targets that are beyond the control of PRCS.

- **Were the project objectives, results and indicators appropriate to the perceived realities at a national, regional and organisational level?**

As discussed throughout this report, the project proposal and logframe was not appropriate. The proposal equals and sets long-term objectives of a multiyear project as phase 1 objectives to be achieved in 3 years.

This is partly to be indebted to the former proposal template of the SSF, valid at the time of proposal writing that asked applicants to define project targets without referring to the option to instead set objectives for a first phase. The current proposal template version from 2018 explicitly mentions the option of either setting project goals or goals for the phase, thereby directly referring to the assumed necessity of a sequential approach for long-term multiphase SSF interventions.

- **Is the project concept, and its outlined objective relevant to needs of PRCS and the context in which PRCS operates (sectors, themes, core competences etc.)?**

Yes, the general project concept and outlined objective is relevant to PRCS and the operational context.

- **What is the perceived timeframe for addressing and achieving meaningful and lasting institutional and structural capacities and sustainability?**

An answer to that question always depends on baseline data and theories of change for the specific actor and context. For good reason the SSF instrument provides for up to 12 years of funding.

- **Does the project and its applied activities sufficiently address and focus on who and what in PRCS will carry forward learning and help facilitate institutional changes (materials developed, implementers/trainers, departments, staff, volunteers etc.)?**

Neither the proposal nor project reports provide sufficient specification and data to answer the question. A strategy document that would guide and frame the implementation of institutionalisation and could serve as a reference for monitoring of intended progress is not available with the author. It

is strongly advisable to develop detailed written concepts for institutionalisation and sustainability of outcomes, denominating tasks, responsibilities and resources.

The project setup as per proposal defines a crucial PRCS project manager position, responsible for overall planning, coordination and execution of the project in coordination with the international project delegate. Following late recruitment, this position is vacant again since a while. The incumbent reportedly changed position within PRCS and re-recruitment of a successor remains pending since months. This fact ultimately hampers institutionalisation and ownership of the project within PRCS. Thus, the author concludes that for an OD project targeting changes at all levels of PRCS, the position should be filled with an experienced, competent and trusted senior manager, in order to accompany and steer the change processes throughout the organisation beyond the duration of the current project phase. In absence of such a key figure, responsibilities for overall management will remain with GRC, which in turn will hinder full ownership of PRCS, which is a precondition for institutionalisation and sustainability.

Summary conclusions:
Analysis has shown that the targets are relevant to address underlying needs in Pakistan. Hence the intention and general direction of the project are positive and relevant to contribute towards intended changes.
But the questions how to get there and when (sequential step-by-step approach) have not been answered and translated into an appropriate long-term theory of change that defines realistic own PRCS roles and contributions in an implementation strategy. Thus, a related coherent operational plan and logframe for the first project phase, that represents targets as milestones on the way to long-term intended impacts, is missing.
The current logframe lacks coherence and seems clouded by incoherently elaborated and ill-defined objectives and results. The intended outcomes remain overambitious and too unspecific for measurement at the same time.

Recommendations:
Therefore, the outcomes and indicators until 2020 need to be revised and specified, based on a more specific and coherent intervention strategy.
For the revision to succeed, the author recommends a sequential process, ideally during an extended participatory workshop with GRC and PRCS HQ and branches, with the following outputs:

1. Review and re-definition of underlying long-term theory of change that defines the targeted situation in future (WHAT) related to the general relevance (WHY) and provides a theory on what needs to be done by whom to get there (HOW). The product will

   - define the wider context with actors involved and

   - specify PRCS own roles and sectors, contributions and limitations. (wider Theory of Action of PRCS)

   The process is meant to create a consensus among stakeholders (PRCS different departments and GRC) about what exactly is expected to change in the long-run and why and how to get there as a combined effort of all Pakistani stakeholders.

2. Present the SSF model with its opportunities and limitations.

3. Find the overlap between PRCS wider Theory of Action and the opportunities of SSF. In other words: Review which contributions by PRCS are feasible for implementation within SSF programming and which are not.

4. Translate PRCS roles and contributions into a long-term (vision) and implementation strategy, acknowledging
   - what can be done within SSF funding,
   - how achievements are to be sustained institutionally after end of SSF funding and
   - what needs to be done by other means within PRCS and how.

   Important to consider: Long-term (sustainable) institutionalisation: The Theory of Action should contain a strategy, how and through which departments climate-smart DRM will be anchored institutionally in PRCS in the long run. It should be explained, how the CACRA project unit´s capacities and responsibilities are to be transferred into PRCS core structures.

5. REVISED PLANNING OF THE CURRENT PHASE: The current phase now needs to be embedded into the long-term strategy. Long-term targets and outcomes need to be broken down to achievable targets until 2020, as indicators. These indicators thereby represent milestones on the way towards achieving the long-term targets. In other words: Specify these SMART milestones and set them as an additional layer in the logframe. With reference to the long-term targets, these immediate outcomes represent milestones towards achieving the long-term targets.

6. Start development of immediate outcome indicators by compiling a comprehensive list of potential indicators which reflect the objectives and the logic of the intervention or strategy from all perspectives.

7. Assess the candidate indicators against SMART criteria in order to evaluate their quality, appropriateness and utility.

8. Select indicators under consideration of the following advice:
   - First, it is advisable to select only a manageable number of indicators which best reflect the progress made towards achieving objective and results and the context in which the intervention takes place.
   - Second, it is advisable to limit the number of indicators, as using too many indicators makes it harder to assess performance.
   - Third, the indicators should capture the result or phenomenon that is to be measured as best as possible, and stakeholders should agree on what exactly is being measured.
   - Fourth, the choice of indicators depends on whether data are available or can be collected and monitored at a reasonable cost.

9. Assign target values to the individual indicators that acknowledge the remaining time until end of the project phase.

The author deems the upper mentioned process as essential to design a logframe that enables a results-based management approach which is in line with BMZ SSF requirements: A management and monitoring framework leading towards realistic and achievable results.

Thus, the author sees the success of a consensus-based revision by PRCS and GRC as a precondition for the continuation of the project beyond the current phase, if to be handed in as a follow-up proposal to BMZ under the SSF title.
The planning of a proposal for a follow-up phase should refer to the outputs of steps 1-4 above, review and revise them in light of observed changes, and finally repeat the steps 5-9 to generate the necessary input for a follow-up proposal.