

The National Evangelical Church of Beirut

Johann Ludwig Schneller School

Khirbet Kanafar

Strategic Plan

17 February 2010

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Johann Ludwig Schneller School

Strategic Plan

I. Introduction

As Presiding Pastor of the National Evangelical Church of Beirut, the owner of Johann Ludwig Schneller School, and as the chair of the Board of Overseers of the institution, it gives me pleasure to introduce this Strategic Plan to the reader. This plan has been in the process of preparation and discussion for over two years. Due to the unstable security situation in Lebanon, we were unable to finish it any sooner.

JLSS has been long awaiting a comprehensive strategic plan that demonstrates that the organization has achieved a critical level of internal agreement. We have been in general quite excited and pleased with the whole process. We learned a great deal about the institution as we went through the detailed questions pertaining to the strategic plan.

I fully endorse the process we have adopted and the results that have been reached thus far. I am confident that all the other members of the Board share my view. I hope the reader of this document will find it illuminating, lucid and transparent.

By definition, a strategic plan is always a continuous process. I believe that we have started on the right track and hope that we shall continue this learning experience, improving ourselves always in order to reach the best performance possible.

Rev. Dr. Habib Badr

Beirut 16 September 2008

II. Executive Summary

Johann Ludwig Schneller School (JLSS) is the result of a great and wonderful mission that was rooted in the history of the Middle East since 1860. This history was and continues to be turbulent. The challenges facing an evangelical ecumenical institution that dedicates itself to providing education and a healthy home to orphans and underprivileged children regardless of gender, race, or religion in this region, are enormous.

The aim of this strategic plan is to help all parties involved in the ministry of JLSS to focus and improve their collective effort in order to work together towards achieving the goals and objectives of this school.

Furthermore, Lebanon and the Middle East are continuously facing instability and wars. The economic instability of living in the 21st century is another major challenge. This strategic plan is also intended as a tool that helps all parties concerned to assess and adjust the direction of JLSS in this changing and turbulent environment. It is intended as a uniting factor that combines and focuses all efforts towards a better and safer future.

The process of preparing this strategic plan was a long one. The board spent hours of discussion in order to reach consensus on the mission and vision statements of JLSS.

Using the SWOT analysis technique, the board held a succession of meetings to assess the situation of our school.

A session held in September 2007 was dedicated for gathering board and staff perceptions. Similar sessions were held in Germany and Switzerland with EVS (EMS) and SVS (Schweizer Verein für die Schneller-Schulen im Nahen Osten). Our partners in BibleLands were also kind enough to respond to our questionnaire by email and they also provided us with their perceptions.

SWOT sessions were held in JLSS with:

- Administration & Finance Department
- Preschool Teachers
- Junior School Teachers
- Intermediate School Teachers
- Trainers of Carpentry
- Trainers of Electricity
- Trainers of Industrial Mechanics
- Trainers of Car Mechanics
- Boarding Department Staff
- Bakery Staff
- Maintenance Staff
- Guesthouse, Kitchen, Laundry and Cleaning Staff
- Random Selection of 10 students from the Junior School

Random Selection of 10 students from the Intermediate School
Random Selection of 10 students from the Vocational School

Students from both the academic and vocational Schools had projects included in their program to conduct a SWOT questionnaire. They were supervised by their teachers and they conducted this questionnaire in Khirbet Kanafar, Machghara, Kab Elias, and Jib Jinneen. They interviewed random people of the following professions in every town: Clergymen (Christian and Muslim), Head of the Municipal Council, Mukhtar, Medical Doctor, Pharmacist, Banker, Teacher, Car Mechanic, Grocer, Carpenter, Baker, and Farmer. The questionnaire was prepared and approved by the board.

A SWOT analysis session was also held with the Parents' Committee of JLSS.

The Board during its 17 September 2007 retreat evaluated the following programs: Academic School, Vocational School, Boarding Department, Bakery and Guest House. The heads of departments were invited to the evaluation sessions of their departments.

Four graduates from the last three years were called at random by the director's office and asked questions aimed at assessing the impact of our programs on their lives.

The head of the Vocational Department interviewed random customers in the Car Mechanics, Industrial Mechanics, and Carpentry Workshops respectively.

The supervisor of the Bakery conducted a similar questionnaire on our customers.

The person in charge of the Guesthouse also conducted a similar questionnaire on a random selection of guests who stayed in our guesthouse.

All Program Outcome Studies were completed before 31 December 2007.

The Board commissioned the business office to make a cost/benefit analysis of our programs.

The study included finding the cost of similar programs in other institutions in our region.

A board session was held for conducting a competitive analysis (MacMillan Matrix) of programs, articulating previous strategies, and identification of critical issues.

Another board session was held for outlining the strategic directions, the general strategies, long-range goals, and specific objectives of its response to critical issues.

We finally have this very important document that states the mission and vision statements of JLSS. It gives a brief history of our school. It presents the critical issues, strategies, goals, and objectives as reached by the board after a period of one year of research, hard work, discussions and deliberations.

We thank all participants in this long process that culminated in this very important document. We thank students, teachers, and members of staff who helped us to gather the perceptions of the people in our region. We thank our partners, EVS, EMS, SVS, and BibleLands for taking the time to provide us with their perceptions. We also thank the newly

elected parents' committee of JLSS whose first task was to hold a SWOT analysis session for this purpose.

It is our hope that this document will be the guide and focus of all parties involved in the ministry of our institution in order to work together towards the same objectives and goals in the coming few years.

III. Mission and Vision Statements of JLSS

JLSS Mission Statement

Johann Ludwig Schneller School is an evangelical ecumenical institution in Lebanon. It aims to provide education and a healthy home to underprivileged children regardless of gender, race, or religion.

It endeavors to equip children under its care with the necessary means to become responsible citizens in their societies by nurturing them spiritually and ethically; and by attending for their physical and emotional needs, their academic education and their vocational training.

JLSS Vision Statement

We at JLSS commit ourselves to providing a safe home, an excellent educational environment and a distinguished vocational training program for all underprivileged children in our care.

IV. Profile and History of JLSS

History

In 1860 Johann Ludwig Schneller, born in Württemberg Germany, founded the Syrian Orphanage (*Syrisches Waisenhaus*) in the city of Jerusalem to shelter young boys that were orphaned by the civil war raging in Lebanon and the vicinity at the time. From its inception, the orphanage aimed at providing a boarding facility for orphaned boys, coupled with an opportunity to receive an academic education and/or vocational training.

Ever since its foundation, the Orphanage has been *and today continues to be* generously supported from Christians in Germany. Since the establishment of the ***Evangelischer Verein für die Schneller-Schulen*** (EVS, formerly Evangelischer Verein für das Syrische Waisenhaus), a mission founded by Rev. Ludwig Schneller, a son of Johann Ludwig Schneller and friends in the South West region of Germany, EVS organized support for the Schneller-institutions in the Middle East. Soon afterwards a sister missionary society was established in Switzerland under the name of the ***Schweizer Verein für die Schneller-***

Schulen im Nahen Osten, (SVS). Since the beginning of the 20th century EVS fully administered the institutions from Germany.

In 1948 the establishment of the State of Israel, caused many German mission organizations to leave Palestine. Mr. Elias al-Haddad, then an assistant to Hermann Schneller (the grandson of the founder), took refuge in Chemlan, Lebanon with twelve children from the orphanage; while Rev. Hermann Schneller was deported to Australia by the authorities. In 1951 Hermann Schneller came to Lebanon and after several sojourns in the Beqaa region of Lebanon, he and Haddad 1952 moved with the children into the newly opened school near the village of Khirbet Kanafar, where he bought a small piece of land. Until the present day, socially underprivileged youths and orphans are given a home, schooling, and vocational training in a beautifully constructed campus that grew with time to become what it is today. Hermann Schneller decided to name the school after his grandfather, thus it became known as the *Johann Ludwig Schneller School* (JLSS). He also found it opportune to partner JLSS with the *National Evangelical Church of Beirut*, NECB, (an Evangelical Reformed Church founded by American missionaries in 1848). This he did in order to obtain legal and ecclesiastical coverage for the newly founded institution. Thus JLSS became legally owned by the NECB. In the late 1970s, following a new understanding of ecumenical partnership, a process was started with the aim of handing over the two German institutions in the Middle East (JLSS and Theodor Schneller-School in Amman/Jordan (TSS) founded in 1959 by Ernst Schneller on behalf of EVS) to local churches. At present JLSS is managed and governed by the NECB, in full partnership with EVS.

In 1972, EVS joined in the founding of the Association of Missions and Churches in South Western Germany known as the *Evangelische Missionswerk in Suedwestdeutschland* (EMS). EMS, EVS and NECB are now partners in mission not only via the work of JLSS, but also through many other common activities and projects that they join hands in. Other partners and friends locally and abroad (such as *BibleLands and SVS*) help with JLSS finance.

During the Lebanon war of 1975-1990, JLSS greatly suffered and was forced to discontinue the upper secondary education academic section. But the School carried on, and continued to provide care and education for children to elementary and intermediate students. Fortunately, in 2009, JLSS restarted the secondary section.

Most noteworthy is the major development that took place recently when a girls' boarding section was added in the year 2002 and new vocations for girls are now being envisaged and planned for.

Mission and Ministry

Johann Ludwig Schneller School (JLSS) is situated in the middle of the fertile area of West Biqaa, in the village of Khirbet Kanafar in Lebanon. It is much more than just a school. At present about 180 boys and girls aged between 4 and 19 are growing up together in ten families. About 30% of them are Christians from different denominations and 70% are Muslims (Sunnites, Shiites and Druze). The children have also different nationalities. In

addition to Lebanese there are Syrians, Palestinians, Iraqis, Egyptians, and other nationalities. JLSS aims to provide a healthy home to socially and vocationally underprivileged children regardless of their background, race, religion, and gender. The aim is to equip them with the necessary means to become responsible citizens in their societies by nurturing them spiritually, ethically and caring for their academic education and vocational training. About 300 boys and girls come from the vicinity as day-students. Children start at KG1 and continue until Grade 9. The last two years of the Intermediate Level can be spent either in the academic section or in vocational training. Students after Grade 9 can continue in the Vocational School for three years following the Dual System program. At present there are four main workshops: Carpentry, Electricity, General Mechanics and Car Mechanics. As the boarding department now also includes girls we will soon have vocational training facilities for girls. In the afternoon children do their studies and enjoy sports, music, art, chess, and other leisure activities. A lot of workers are needed at a place as large as JLSS. About 85 people: educators, teachers, technicians, administrative staff, cooks, bakers, a medical doctor, and psychologists among others see that the children are not only getting good education and adequate care but also good food and clean clothes. About 100 acres of farmland belong to JLSS. Part of the land is used to grow apples and olives. We also own a vineyard which is leased to the famous Lebanese Ksara wine company. The bakery produces German and Swiss breads of high quality.

Finances

20 years ago EMS (Evangelisches Missionswerk in Südwestdeutschland) handed over the school to the National Evangelical Church of Beirut (NEC). Part of the running costs is carried by the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs mainly supporting students in the Boarding Department. Another part is secured from the school fees of day-students. JLSS is still dependent on donations from EVS (Evangelischer Verein für die Schneller-Schulen) in Germany, SVS (Schweizer Verein für die Schneller-Schulen im Nahen Osten) in Switzerland, churches in the UK and other countries, alumni, and worldwide friends and partners.

V. Critical Issues and Strategies

Critical Issues

1. Program Development

Future of Co-education

Lack of Nursery and Grades 10 & 11 in the Academic School

Providing quality care in boarding department (quality home care away from home)

Training staff in marketing skills

Farm (providing food for boarding department, vocational training, etc.)

Religious & peace education

2. **Staff Challenges**

Superfluous Staff (Maintenance Department, Security & Guards, etc.)

Difficulty of recruiting qualified teachers for the Academic School according to the current market rates

Difficulty of recruiting good educators for the Boarding Department according to the current market rates

Difficulty of recruiting qualified staff for religious and peace education.

Operating and maintaining an efficient finance office.

3. **Financial Challenges**

Marketing Products (Vocational School & Bakery)

Cost and sustainability of boarding department vis a vis inflation

Pricing and quality of products

Maintenance Department Costs

Security & Guards Costs

Campus Development (landscaping, etc.)

Need for new methods of fundraising

Dependence on partners

Need to develop fundraising policy in coordination with partners and alumni

Use and development of property (land and guesthouse)

4. **Legal Challenges**

Organizing and clarifying Land & Property official documents of ownership

Guest House status vis a vis Ministry of Tourism

License for bakery and use of profits

Sharpening housing contracts with residing staff

5. **Partnership Issues**

Defining nature of partnership with EMS and EVS vis a vis other partners

Co-workers

Volunteers (Keeping volunteers within the framework and vision of the church (Beirut).

Developing Cooperation with TSS.

6. **Security Situation & Risks**

Strategies

1. Recruit better trained staff whether paid or volunteer.
Find ways of creating incentives to attract better staff.
Promote the culture of peace through all our programs.

2. Enhance the human resource capacity of the institution.
Invest in training of staff to attain maximum productivity.
3. Enhance income generating policies and practices at the internal and external levels.
Pursue strict and professional policies and practices for the most cost effective operations.
Active search for more economic and environmentally friendly energy resources.
4. Active follow-up of land and other legal issues to settle all outstanding questions.
5. Define and clarify the nature, level, and extent of traditional partnerships and developing relationships with all involved parties within the framework of the National Evangelical Church in Beirut.
Strengthening existing partnerships and relationships.
Developing new partnerships and relationships.
6. Prepare contingency plans to meet possible security threats and political changes affecting the institution.

VI. Program Goals and Objectives

Goals for the Academic School, the Vocational School, and the Boarding Department

Incorporation of peace education, tolerance, conflict resolution, and team work into the school curriculum

Aggressive recruitment policy spreading information about JLSS vacancies over a wider circle among churches and partners

Investigation about incentives that attract more qualified staff and the implementation of findings in order to improve JLSS staff to the required level

Holding continuous training seminars in JLSS and sending teachers to training seminars held in other schools and universities

Coordination with cultural and language centers to improve and update teaching of foreign languages in JLSS

Employment of English rather than only French-educated teachers

Adopting and promoting a competitive policy that strives for modernization, excellence, and an impeccable approach in relating to parents and students to deal with competition from other private schools

Adding classes that the school and the parents view as very necessary in a school they consider registering their children in (Nursery and Grade 10 & 11)

Adoption of waste reduction approach in teaching materials

Adoption of recycling methods and environmentally friendly approaches especially in relation to consumption of water, diesel, electricity, and managing waste

Exploring relations with partners to develop and enhance programs

Incorporation of emergency and war contingency plans

Developing an approach of referring all children from conflict zones to psychologists for support

Promotion of excellence and perfection among students in the fulfillment of tasks

Adoption and incorporation of team work, tolerance, problem solving, delegation of authority to lower levels, and a democratic approach in relations among colleagues and students

Adoption of a more aggressive approach to promoting JLSS products and workshops in the market

Goals for Other Departments

Utilization of relations with Senior Expert Service (SES) and companies such as FESTO in Germany, SEC in Switzerland, and others to improve the skills of staff through regular training programs both abroad and in JLSS

Adoption of waste reduction approach in use of materials

Promotion of excellence and perfection in work and production to deal with competition

Adoption of recycling methods and environmentally friendly approaches especially in relation to managing waste, consumption of water, diesel and electricity

Adoption and incorporation of team work, tolerance, problem solving, delegation of authority to lower levels, and a democratic approach at the workplace

Adoption of a policy that allocates specific time for the purpose of exposing our staff to the latest developments in their fields through organized visits to leading industries in Beirut and other main cities in Lebanon during work hours

Adoption of a more aggressive approach to promoting JLSS products and workshops in the market

Ensuring that JLSS is in a continuous state of readiness to deal with any emergency, conflict, or war

Utilizing all available JLSS resources before resorting to outside paid-for skills

Adoption of a policy that uses daily-paid labor rather than full-time employment when possible

Insistence on adherence to strict inventory procedures, transparency and accountability in all operations

VII. Management Goals and Objectives

General Director

Regular meetings with all heads of departments to familiarize teachers and members of staff with the strategic plan and working in accordance with it

Develop annual operating plans

Follow up of land issues with lawyer and Property Committee of Beirut Church until land issues are settled and all property is fully registered and secured against abuse

Develop and enhance relations with partners and friends

Develop and enhance relations with JLSS graduates in the interest of the school

Coordinate with all heads of departments to ensure JLSS is in a state of readiness to deal with any emergency, conflict or war

Seek additional donors to support the current needs and projects

Promote the institution internationally, especially among German and Swiss partners, through mutual exchanges and visits

Members of the Board

Use their connection in Beirut and elsewhere to help the school administration in procuring lecturers and seminars at JLSS.

Develop a policy of succession planning and advanced preparation of necessary staff rather than only looking for them at the time they are needed

Define and clarify the nature, level, and extent of traditional partnerships and develop relationships with all involved parties within the framework of the National Evangelical Church of Beirut

Strengthen existing partnerships and relationships

Develop new partnerships and relationships

Adopt a clear policy for dealing with superfluous or under-performing teachers and members of staff

Further and develop the involvement and oversight of the National Evangelical Church of Beirut in the life, programs, and operations of JLSS

Promote JLSS and all its facilities among churches and in the local Lebanese community

Adopt a policy of small yearly budget allocations to the upkeep and development of JLSS property and campus rather than allow the property to deteriorate and require huge budgets for repair

Develop a new approach to fundraising

Prepare contingency plans vis a vis traditional sources of funds (Partners, Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs, School Fees, and land lease)

Securing permanent sources of income for JLSS, specially through the establishment of an endowment fund that will insure its sustainability

VIII. Appendices

Work Plan Chart

Date	Task	Achiever
17 September 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Plan • JLSS Mission Statement and Vision • Gathering Board Perceptions of JLSS (SWOT) • Approval of SWOT Questionnaire to be used by JLSS Students to assess External Perceptions • Evaluation Session of Programs • Program Outcome study Questionnaire • Commission the business office to do the Cost/Benefit Analysis 	The Board
8-12 November 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering EMS & EVS Perceptions of JLSS (SWOT) 	Rev. G. Haddad
31 December 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swiss Verein Perceptions 	Rev. G. Haddad
31 December 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BibleLands Perceptions 	Rev. G. Haddad by email
31 December 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff & Student Perceptions 	Rev. G. Haddad
31 December 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents' Committee Perceptions 	Rev. G. Haddad
31 December 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Outcome study of the Academic & Vocational School 	Mrs. H. Saadeh
31 December 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Outcome study: random customers in the Car Mechanics, Industrial Mechanics, and Carpentry 	Mr. J Bou Simaan
31 December 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Outcome study: Bakery 	Mr. M. Rahhal
31 December 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Outcome study: Guest House 	Mr. M Bernhard
31 December 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost/Benefit Analysis 	Mr. T. Nasr
January 2008	2nd Board Retreat: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive Analysis (MacMillan Matrix) of programs. • Articulating Previous Strategies • Identification of Critical Issues 	Board
April 2008	3 rd Board Retreat: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing Strategies, Goals, and Objectives 	Board
August 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing the Written Plan 	Rev. G. Haddad
1 September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JLSS Strategy draft distributed 	Miss M. Kattan
Mid September 2008	Final Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approving the Strategic Plan of JLSS 	Board

List of Evaluated Programs

1. Academic School (Standard, Foreign Languages, Secondary Classes, Pres-school, etc
2. Vocational School (Standard, Foreign Languages, Dual System, Girls Programs, etc
3. Boarding Department
4. Guest House
5. Bakery
6. Maintenance & Development Department
7. Security & Guards
8. Car Mechanics Garage
9. Carpentry Shop
10. Metal Works Shop
11. Farm
12. School Shop
13. Staff Housing
14. Partnerships
15. Volunteer Programs
16. Administration & Finance Office
17. Outreach: Religious Education & Peace Education
18. Fundraising
19. Land & Property (legal issues, Ksara, etc)

Detailed List of Critical Issues

1. **Academic School:**
 - Lack of nursery and Grades 10 and 11.
 - Difficulty in attracting good teachers .
2. **Vocational School:**
 - Marketing Vocational School workshops' production.
3. **Boarding Department:**
 - Future of coeducation and structure.
 - Attracting good educators.
 - Cost of sustainability of the Boarding department visa-vie the rising prices.
 - Providing quality boarding care to children (quality home-life away from home)
4. **Guest House:**
 - Location of Guest House in Boarding Department.
 - Legal issues visa-vie the government.
 - Relationship between Guest House (as a training venue) and Vocational School.
5. **Bakery:**
 - Distance of bakery form market.
 - Pricing of products.
 - Quality of products.
 - Marketing training of staff.
6. **Maintenance & Development Department:**
 - Financial burden on school.
 - Superfluous Staff.
7. **Security & Guards:**
 - Financial burden on school.
 - Superfluous Staff.
 - Parking area problems and risks.
8. **Car Mechanics Garage:**
 - Distance from market.
9. **Carpentry Workshop:**
 - Distance from market.
10. **Metalwork Workshop:**
 - Distance from market.
11. **Farm:**
 - Currently not operational.
 - Possibility of producing food items (milk, meat, eggs, chicken, etc.) for Boarding Department.
12. **School Shop:**
 - Finance and accounting issues.
13. **Staff Housing;**
 - Legal issues.
14. **Partnerships (EMS, EVS, Swiss, BibleLands, etc.)**
 - Defining nature of partnership with EMS visa-vie other partners.
15. **Volunteer Program:**
 - Keeping volunteers within the framework and vision of the church (Beirut).
16. **Administration & Finance:**
 - Major decisions needed.
17. **Outreach: Religious & Peace Education:**
 - Soul of JLSS.
 - Finding staff with adequate qualifications .
18. **Fundraising:**
 - Need for new methods of fundraising.

Dependence on partners.

Need to develop fundraising policy in coordination with partners.

19. **Land & Property:**

Legal issues.

Development and use of property.

20. **Human Resources:**

Superfluous staff.

Outcome Chart of the Application of the MacMillan Matrix to JLSS Programs

The result of the MacMillan Matrix for Competitive Analysis of programs was as follows:

	Program	Result
1	Academic School	(2) Aggressive Growth
2	Vocational School	(1) Aggressive Competition
3	Boarding Department	(2) Aggressive Growth
4	Guest House	(7) Orderly Divestment
5	Bakery	(2) Aggressive Growth
6	Maintenance & Development Department	(10) Orderly Divestment
7	Security & Guards	(10) Orderly Divestment
8	Car Mechanics Garage	(2) Aggressive Growth
9	Carpentry Workshop	(2) Aggressive Growth
10	Metalwork Workshop	(2) Aggressive Growth
11	Farm	(7) Orderly Divestment
12	School Shop	(10) Orderly Divestment
13	Staff Housing	(5) Build up the Best Competitor
14	Partnerships (EMS, EVS, Swiss, BibleLands, etc.)	(2) Aggressive Growth
15	Volunteer Program	(2) Aggressive Growth
16	Administration & Finance	(8) Foreign Aid or Joint Venture
17	Outreach: Religious & Peace Education	(6) Soul of Agency
18	Fundraising	(8) Foreign Aid or Joint Venture
19	Land & Property	(2) Aggressive Growth
20	Human Resources	(5) Build up the best Competitor