



**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INTERMEDIATE EVALUATION
AECID PROGRAM 14-CO1-115:
RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESILIENCE IN ETHIOPIA**

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1. Introduction

Cáritas Española (CE) supports development-aid programs with a “fraternal aid” approach. An aid modality that works with the most underprivileged in terms of equality, reciprocity and co-responsibility and seeks to empower local Caritas organisations in the South, strengthening their structures while maintaining an active presence in European and international networks.

The initiatives promoted by CE are intended to implement measures that directly contribute towards ending the causes of poverty and its consequences, as well as adding the component of sustainability into interventions. The involvement of the people receiving these actions is key for this aim, as we are convinced that they are the main people responsible for their own development.

At CE we consider it to be essential to monitor and evaluate all our projects and programmes, with a view to optimising the results of our actions and foster learning processes.

This intermediate external evaluation is promoted by AECID (Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation) and Cáritas Española (Caritas Spain).

Its main objective is to verify the quality of the intervention, obtain lessons learned and make specific recommendations for improvement. The evaluation is part of a learning process that will facilitate and legitimise future decision-making, guide planning in the years to come and contribute towards the quality of the aid.

The evaluation will focus mainly on the processes and impact of the program, and it will be oriented towards preparing an improvement plan with specific, measurable, realistic actions.

2. Evaluation Object and background:

The Program to be evaluated is: *“Desarrollo rural y aumento de resiliencia de las comunidades para hacer frente a las crisis alimentarias recurrentes, garantizando de forma sostenible el derecho a la alimentación, en Etiopía” Exp. 14-CO1-115// “Food Security and Rural Development II (FSRD II), Ethiopia”*

The overall objective of the Program to be evaluated is rural development and building resilience in the communities to face recurring food crisis, ensuring food security in a sustainable way in Ethiopia.

The target *woredas* are Shashemene, Arsi Negelle, Shalla, Siraro and Wondo. The duration of the Program is four years, plus the inception phase:

- Inception phase: June 1st 2014– November 30th 2014
- Implementation phase: January 1st 2015–December 31st 2018

The Program is being fully implemented in the field by the local partner (Ethiopian Catholic Church – Social Development Coordinating Office of Meki), with a part-time international technical advisor (90 days out of each year), a CE expatriate in Ethiopia and a technician at the head office in Madrid.

The actions under the Program seek to address these problems:

- Low farming productivity owing to poor access (in terms of both quantity and quality) to farming supplies and advanced production techniques.
- Low cereal-storage capacity, as farmers are forced to sell their crops as soon as they are harvested, when prices are at their lowest.
- Poor access to markets to sell farm products, often turning to intermediaries.
- Poor access to credit for the rural population in general and particularly women.
- Women's challenges: access to land; access to diversified income generation activities; participation in economic or household decision-making.

These issues result in recurring food insecurity and dependency on external food aid.

The Program includes five basic actions, the first four of which correspond to the four specific objectives of the Program:

- 1) Empower farmers and increase their income through improved access to supply and marketing services delivered by an efficient network of multipurpose and service cooperatives as well as through a healthier natural environment
- 2) Improve the socioeconomic circumstances of women through savings and credit cooperatives (SACCOs)
- 3) Increase the capacity of the zone and woreda offices (Arsi Negelle, Shashamene, Shalla, Siraro and Wondo) to support and promote rural development.
- 4) Improve the resilience of vulnerable households in the Convenio area (Arsi Negelle, Shashamane, Shalla and Wondo) through the recovery of their livelihoods.

In addition, one more transversal action:

- 5) Awareness raising activities in Spain.

The intervention strategy is based on building the skills of local government, as the holders of responsibilities under the national five-year development policy (Growth and Transformation Plan II (2015/16-2019/20), which gives priority to increasing farm production and supporting the setting-up and accompaniment of farming cooperatives.

The intervention strategy aims to uphold and strengthen the existing structures of civil society (cooperatives and cooperative unions) in accordance with their own development strategies and priorities, with emphasis on the cooperatives' long-term sustainability.

The final beneficiaries or rights holders are the members of the cooperatives (multiservice and SACCOs) — currently 52.360 persons (40.119 men and 12.241 women), as well as other habitants benefiting from environmental and asset-building programs.

The evaluation will cover the period from the inception phase of the Program (June 1st, 2014) until the date of the external evaluation.

3. Actors involved

The promoters of the external intermediate evaluation are AECID and Caritas Española.

The evaluation management unit is composed of *Cáritas Española*, ECC-SDCOM (local partner) and AECID/OTC. This management unit will be responsible for preparing and validating the TOR, selecting the evaluation team, monitoring the quality of the evaluation process, validating the final evaluation report, disseminating the results and launching the improvement plan in the light of the recommendations made in the external evaluation.

The evaluation steering committee is composed of the members of the Management unit and the Local Development Fund (LDF), which is the in-country steering committee for the Program. This committee will be responsible for facilitating the evaluation process and access to key informants and disseminating the results of the evaluation to the actors involved.

Details of the key informants for the external evaluation are shown in the following table:

Actors	Key informants (relevant sample of each woreda)
Rights holders	Members of the multipurpose service-cooperatives (MPSC). Members of the SACCO cooperatives.
Obligation holders	<i>Woreda</i> government offices (cooperatives, women, environment, etc,) and area government offices.
Responsibilities holders	Local partner: ECC-SDCOM offices in MEKI and branch office in SHASHEMENE. Representatives of the SACCO-cooperatives Union Representatives of the agricultural cooperatives Union Local Development Fund (steering committee for the project composed of <i>Cáritas Española</i> , local partner, OTC, government representatives (at both area and <i>woreda</i> level), representatives of the cooperative unions and representatives of the Cooperative Bank of Oromia (CBO).

4. Scope of the evaluation:

As the Program is geographically concentrated in one country and area, it is considered appropriate to evaluate it as a whole.

The intermediate evaluation will not be focused on design but on results, processes and impacts. The aspects of gender and environment sustainability will be taken into account, always from a participatory approach to ensure ownership of all stakeholders in the process, using techniques and dynamics of participatory work to generate learning, and based on knowledge management.

The main objective is to capitalize on best practices, highlighting the weaknesses and strengths as well as impacts, drawing lessons learned and develop concrete recommendations for improvement. Therefore, the assessment is part of a learning process that will facilitate and legitimize the future decision-making, guiding the planning.

Moreover, the evaluation should provide a deep analysis on the following issues :

- Analysis of the increased level of resilience among households.
- Analysis of all the trainings developed.
- Analysis of the relations and coordination between the different stakeholders involved in the project.

- Analysis of the positive and negative impacts of the project. Detailed analysis of the business plans, the guarantee fund and the impact of grain marketing.
- Analysis of access to improved seeds.
- Analysis of the revolving funds.
- Analysis of the monitoring and evaluation system.

5. Questions and criteria for the evaluation

With regard to the evaluation criteria, the evaluation should be carried out in accordance with internationally recognised technical standards. In particular, the Evaluation Criteria for Spanish Aid will be taken into account, prioritised as follows:

Evaluation questions	Prioritised evaluation criteria
Is the project contributing significantly to the improvement of food security in the target population?	Impact
Is there a significant difference in the level of resilience to the current crisis between those households having any cooperative member and those without them?	Impact
Impact of the Guarantee Fund System (through the bank): Does it constitute a proper method? Which are the most recurrent problems? How are they being faced? Which is the level of supervision of the Guarantee Fund?	Impact and methodological aspects
Regarding the access to loans through SACCO's rotative fund: How is the impact of the rotative fund? Is it an appropriate loan modality? Does it constitute the most appropriate instrument, in terms of efficacy and efficiency, to improve women's socio-economic status?	Impact and gender impact
Regarding the Income Generating Activities (IGA): Are they being successful? Are there significant differences on the level of success between the various IGA? At household level, how do women participate in the decision-making to use the profits?	Impact
Regarding animal health activities: which is the impact of technical and logistic improvements on the quality of the services provided by governmental offices to cooperatives? Is the rotative fund (for animal drugs) the most appropriate instrument, in terms of effectiveness, efficiency and feasibility, to improve the services provided to the farmers? Does this improvement has a significant impact on the animal health status? And does it have any impact on the population life conditions?	Impact
Regarding the vulnerable households' asset building: is the chosen aid modality appropriate to significantly improve the vulnerable household resilience in a crisis environment? Focus especially on the coverage of women-headed vulnerable households.	Effectiveness and gender impact
Which are the main reasons for the new members to join the cooperatives (Multipurpose and SACCO)? How can be the number of members be increased? Measure the level of knowledge of the basic principles of cooperativism.	Effectiveness

Evaluation questions	Prioritised evaluation criteria
Regarding the access to improved seeds: Are seed producers efficiently selected, are they correctly trained, do they receive basic seed and fertilizer timely and do they perform well (i.e. do they produce the required quantities)? How is the Union using the produced improved seed? What proportion of the production does go to primary cooperatives members? Are appropriate and respected the required criteria for members to purchase improved seeds? Which is the range of coverage of the demands (from the cooperatives to the Union)? Does the UNION have any other current or previous experiences of improved seeds supply, apart from this project, and what do they consist of?	Effectiveness
Are the Cooperatives and their Unions managed in a professionalized manner, with enough and appropriate human resources? Are they using the received materials and equipment in a proper way? Does the management improve after the capacitation workshops? Is the level of improvement similar among the different cooperatives? In case it isn't, which are the reasons of the differences found?	Effectiveness and efficiency
Is there an adequate level of coordination and communication among: i) the primary cooperative, the Union and their branches, and the MPSC; ii) the SACCOs and their Union? Have the relations been formally described and established?	Coordination and efficiency
Which is the level of supervision and compliance of the Business Plans (Cooperatives, SACCO and UNION)?	Methodological aspects
Are the current indicators appropriate and enough to measure the improvement in food security?	Methodological aspects
Impact on the grain marketing improvement: are the grain sales being profitable? Are the incomes generated from grain selling enough to guarantee the sustainability of the cooperatives?	Sustainability
Regarding the environmental activities: are the selected tree species and the sites to plant them the most adequate? Which are the main aspects that affect the survival rate?	Relevance

The evaluation will also value the progress made in achieving the objectives and results of the Program, working according to the schedule and within the budget.

Transversal factors such as the gender approach, the environment and the transfer of know-how and technology will also be taken into account.

6. Evaluation methodology and work plan

Methodological rigour in the evaluation design will be valued, in order to enable:

- The application of techniques addressing the validity and reliability of social research to be assured.
- A methodological approach to be taken that can validate all four levels of analysis for valuation: findings, interpretative analysis based on that data, facts and information found, final judgments (conclusions) and recommendations.

- A standard interpretation to be made, taking in all the dimensions of the intervention (design, structure, resources, processes and results) and interpretation of causes and influential factors

To evaluate the criteria proposed in this evaluation, we recommend the use of quantitative and qualitative techniques such as open and semi-structured interviews, discussion groups, visits and direct observation.

Interviews or discussion groups with the final beneficiaries (cooperative members) in country, including the gender dimension, will be positively valued.

Particular value will be placed on the triangulation of the data collection and analysis and solid argumentation of the conclusions drawn and recommendations made.

Various different times are planned for the return of data and comparison of information with the evaluation management unit. Validation of the final work plan and final data-collection methodology before the field-work phase will be positively valued.

The evaluation team should provide feedback to the steering committee for the evaluation on the preliminary in-country results before completing the field work phase.

The evaluation team is expected to present a draft report and recommendations to Caritas Española for comments. The following work schedule is intended to serve as a guide (10 weeks).

PHASE	TASKS	WEEKS									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Office phase	Review of the Program documentation										
	Completion of the work agenda with local consultants.										
	Preparation of data-collection tools working with local consultants.										
	Validation of the final work plan with the steering committee.										
Field-work phase	Interviews with key informants										
	Data analysis and first feedback of general conclusions to the steering committee for the evaluation										
Reporting phase	Preparation of the draft report										
	Comments by Caritas Española and ECC-SDCOM										
	Final delivery of materials (in Spanish and English)										

Note: This is a proposed schedule, intended to serve as a guide to the duration of the process. However, the evaluation team is not bound by it and should fix their own final schedule.

7. Documents and source of information

We consider it to be essential for the evaluation team to review the documentation listed below, plus any others that the team may require as the process progresses:

Document	Location
Formulation and reformulation of the Program (narrative + budget), Formulations PAC 2015 and PAC 2016. Report PAC1 and report PAC2 if available by the evaluation date. Identification diagnoses (Dr Ghani report for the inception phase) and base line Internal Program reports (quarterly) Unions cooperatives business plans	Provided by Cáritas Española
AECID rules on Programs	AECID website
GTP II + specific documentation on cooperatives in Ethiopia + Spanish Aid's Ethiopia Country Association Framework.	Website and provided by Cáritas Española

8. Structure and presentation of the evaluation report

Requirements for the presentation of the evaluation report:

- Maximum 50 pages for the final report, plus appendices.
- Completing the CAD file is compulsory
- Include an executive summary, max. 5 pages.
- The report should be delivered in both Spanish and English. The evaluator is responsible for obtaining the relevant translations, the costs of which may be included in the evaluation budget.
- Three hard (paper) copies and one electronic copy to be delivered in each language.
- A PowerPoint presentation to be prepared, setting out the main evaluation's conclusions and recommendations, max. 20 slides.

The following structure for the final report is provided to serve as a guide:

1. Executive summary. (Max. 5 pages.)
2. Introduction: presenting the purpose of the evaluation exercise, the evaluation questions addressed and the main results obtained. (Max. 2 pages.)
3. Description of the intervention assessed: setting out the objectives and logical structure of the planning of the Program. A brief description of the Project should be included, referring to any relevant background. Organisation and management procedures should be described, identifying the main actors involved and indicating the economic, social, political and institutional context in which the intervention is taking place. (Max. 3 pages.)
4. Methodology used for the evaluation, explaining the methodology and techniques used during the evaluation, as well as any conditioning factors for and limits to the study carried out. (Max. 5 pages.)

5. Analysis of information compiled, beginning with the analysis of the documentation compiled, the section should address the questions and evaluation criteria established in advance, in accordance with the integrated evaluation approach proposed by the awarding entity. Any evidence found related to the evaluation questions set out should be presented, together with interpretations of that evidence.
6. Conclusions: setting out the main conclusions drawn in respect of the evaluation criteria established and including the strong and weak points of project.
7. Lessons learned: obtained from the overall conclusions of the evaluation, indicating any best practices that might be extrapolated
8. Recommendations: beginning with the conclusions set out in the report, recommendations should be made with a view to improving any future actions. It is important for these recommendations to be specific and feasible in the remaining Program-implementation time, indicating the actor(s) to whom these recommendations are specifically being made.
9. Appendices: including the TOR, the completed CAD file, the methodology adopted, the information-compiling tools used, the work plan, the make-up and description of the mission, views expressed and comments made by the various actors on the draft report, and any other information considered relevant.

9. Evaluation team

The evaluation team must assure the following objectives:

- Quality of the evaluation in terms of methodology.
- Quality of technical conclusions and, by extension, technical knowledge of the intervention sector.
- Credibility and legitimacy of the conclusions drawn and recommendations made.
- Independence of the analysis and conclusions with regard to the Ethiopian government, the donor, Caritas Española and the beneficiaries.
- Knowledge of the local context, customs, traditions, legal framework, etc.

Taking into account the objectives, a team of at least three people is proposed, to allow profiles to be combined and the analysis of the information to be triangulated. It is proposed that the viewpoint and analysis of an international consultant with considerable experience of evaluations and food security in other contexts should be combined with the knowledge of the context and problems specific to Ethiopia provided by one or two local partners.

Details of the profile sought for the evaluation team are as follows:

EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	PROFILE
International consultant or evaluation team	<p>Broad experience of project evaluations.</p> <p>Extensive knowledge of the intervention sector of the project: food security, marketing of cereals and farming cooperatives, and building institutional capacities.</p> <p>Extensive knowledge of qualitative and quantitative research methods and techniques.</p>

	<p>English-language skills. Knowledge of Spanish will also be valued.</p> <p>Experience working with non-profit entities and knowledge of Spanish aid policy will also be valued.</p>
<p>Local partners</p>	<p>Broad experience of project evaluations.</p> <p>Extensive knowledge of the intervention sector of the project, particularly food security, the functioning, management and legislation of Agricultural Cooperatives and SACCOs, and the gender approach.</p> <p>Extensive knowledge of qualitative and quantitative research methods and techniques.</p> <p>English- and Affaan Oromo language skills.</p> <p>Experience working with non-profit entities and knowledge of Ethiopian development policy will also be valued</p>

The international consultant may directly propose partners in Ethiopia who meet the requirements set out above. In this case the consultant should include their fees and expenses in the budget submitted to Caritas Española. The management unit reserves the right to validate candidates in accordance with the profile set out above.

If the consultant does not directly propose any local partners, they will be selected by the management unit and billed separately.

During the planning phase the evaluation team should submit its final work plan, as agreed with the evaluation management unit, together with a model for the evaluation report for the project, the structure and content of which must also be approved by the management unit.

Any changes in the composition of the team proposed must be communicated in advance to the management unit.

If no agreement can be reached with the local partners on the conclusions of the evaluation, both points of view should be included in the report, indicating the points of divergence of opinion and setting out the respective arguments.

10. Premises for evaluation and dissemination

The following basic premises are required for ethical, professional behaviour by the work team:

Anonymity and confidentiality: The evaluation must uphold people’s right to provide information anonymously and in confidence.

Responsibility: Any disagreement or difference of opinion that may arise among the members of the group or between them and those in charge of the intervention regarding the conclusions or recommendations should be mentioned in the report. Any claims made must be sustained by the team and any disagreement reported.

Integrity: The evaluation team will be expected to cover any issues not specifically mentioned in the TOR, if doing so will help a fuller analysis of the intervention to be arrived at.

Independence: The team must assure its independence from the intervention under evaluation, having no links with its management or any of its component parts.

Data protection: The Consulting firm undertakes to maintain the strictest professional secrecy and confidentiality in respect of any personal data to which it has access in consequence of the evaluation carried out and to duly comply with the duty of custody of such data required under the Personal Data Protection Act 1999 (15/99, of 13 December). This requirement shall apply to the evaluation firm throughout the term of the services contract and subsequent to its expiry for any related cause. The evaluation firm further expressly undertakes to take the necessary technical and organisational steps to protect the security of any personal data to which it has access and to prevent any alteration, loss, unauthorised processing of or access to such data, taking into account the current technology available, the nature of the data stored and the risks to which it is exposed, whether from human action or from the physical or natural environment, complying in this respect with the relevant provisions of the Personal Data Protection Act 1999 at all times.

Verification of information: The evaluation team is responsible for assuring the accuracy of the information compiled for the preparation of its reports and shall be responsible in the last instance for the information presented in the evaluation report.

Incidents: Any problems arising during the field work or at any other stage of the evaluation must be communicated immediately to the NGDO, which at its own discretion will forward the relevant information to the funding agency. Otherwise the existence of any such problems may not be used to justify any failure to obtain the results established by the NGDO under these TOR.

Copyright and dissemination. It should be clear that all copyright corresponds to the entity contracting the evaluation. The dissemination of the information compiled and the final report remains the prerogative of the NGDO.

Penalty arrangements. In the event of any delay in the delivery of reports or if the quality of the reports delivered is manifestly lower than what was agreed with the NGDO, the penalties and arbitration measures established by the contracting entity under the official terms and conditions of the contract entered into with the evaluation firm shall apply.

11. Deadlines

The estimated time required for the evaluation is 9 weeks (see schedule in point 6).

The evaluation deadlines will be formally fixed in the contract entered into with the evaluation team, together with the delivery dates for the products for each of the phases of the evaluation.

12. Submission of the technical and financial bid and evaluation criteria

In order to participate in the tender process, the tenderer must submit its proposal in digital format, according to the data indicated in these ToR, within thirty (30) calendar days (up to and including 9th September). The technical proposal should include a work schedule setting out the milestones proposed by the firm for the various evaluation tasks.

The technical proposal should have the following characteristics:

1. Cover indicating:
 - Company name, person, evaluation team, etc.
 - Title of the evaluation and the project title (whether intermediate, final, etc.)
 - Contact details for the firm, independent evaluator, evaluation team, etc.)
2. Technical bid, to include:
 - The firm's detailed CV (as appropriate)
 - Detailed CVs of the members of the team who will carry out the evaluation.
3. Remit and working methodology, to include:
 - Objectives of the evaluation.
 - Remit of the evaluation.
 - Preliminary proposal for participatory methodologies, focusing on rights, gender issues, etc.
 - Preliminary proposal for information sources (documentary, key informants, beneficiaries, other stakeholders, etc.)
4. Work schedule, to include:
 - Evaluation tasks.
 - Time planning for the review and reporting deadlines (detailed schedule).
5. Proposal for the report, giving details of its main features.
6. Budget, to include:
 - All expenses incurred in the carrying-out of the evaluation and proposed payment terms.
 - Financial bid, broken down into as much detail as possible.
 - Include VAT in the budget.

Bidders will be informed of their exclusion or success within 15 calendar days of the opening of the proposals received.

The corresponding contract will be signed within 15 days following receipt of the final-award notice.

The successful bidder undertakes to execute the contract in its own right, as any third-party assignment or subcontracting is prohibited, unless specifically authorised by CÁRITAS ESPAÑOLA.

Furthermore, the contractor shall be liable for any consequences derived from any inaccuracies in statements made in respect of compliance with the obligations under these TOR and the subsequent contract entered into.

The bids submitted will be scored with a possible total of 100 points, broken down as follows:

1. **Technical quality of the proposal** and its suitability for the purposes fixed: **40 points**.
The quality of the bid submitted will be scored on the following basis:²
 - The degree to which the evaluation team assures the issue of a systematic judgment.
 - Appropriateness of the techniques and methodologies proposed for the budget and deadlines required.

- Whether a sufficient response to the evaluation questions is assured.
 - Level of commitment by the evaluation team in the work proposed.
 - Participatory level of the methodology proposed.
 - Integration of the rights and gender approach in the proposal.
 - Sensitivity to local beliefs and customs, religious practices and gender roles.
2. **Make-up of the work team: 40 points**
- High weighting: Demonstrable experience in making participatory evaluations with a focus on human Rights and gender issues; demonstrable experience in evaluations with Spanish funding agencies (AECID, CAM, etc.); advanced working knowledge of Spanish and the language of the implementation country; knowledge of the in-country situation and intervention sector; skills in research methods and techniques.
 - Moderate weighting: knowledge of the in-country situation; knowledge of the evaluation of Programs; skills in research methods and techniques.
3. **Financial bid submitted: 20 points**
- Precision and efficiency of the financial bid.
 - Balance between information-compiling costs, fees, travelling expenses, etc.

In order for the bids submitted to qualify for valuation, evaluation firms/independent assessors must accredit their experience in assessing development-aid Programs, citing any similar work done over the last three years.

Personnel responsible for receiving tenders (send to all):

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Submission method: in writing in digital format