

Terms of Reference for Midterm Review (MTR)

Empower@Scale Project

A. Introduction

The Humanist Institute for Co-operation with Developing Countries (Hivos) is seeking to hire a consultant to carry out a Midterm Review (MTR) for its Empower@Scale Project. The project is being implemented by a Consortium with Oxfam Novib as a lead partner. Funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the project seeks to propose a mechanism for facilitating the set-up and professionalisation of Empowerment Learning Centres (ELC) engaging with IFAD-supported projects and other actors for capacity development on Household Methodologies (HHM) like Gender Action Learning System (GALS) maintaining key principles such as gender equality, empowerment, and participation. By linking the ELCs into Regional Hubs and national/regional networks and a global platform, the Consortium will create a strong knowledge and evidence base to support scaling up of the gender transformative HHM. With rural women and men, the consortium will develop and package new approaches to HHM for working for instance with youth; integration into rural finance programmes; and for engaging with the private sector to achieve gender equality and social inclusion in rural value chains.

The project has 4 outcomes namely

- a. A network of local/national Empowerment Learning Centres (ELC) for quality assured capacity development services on HHM established and functioning
- b. Regional hubs for networking, knowledge sharing and monitoring the use of HHMs set up and effectively used
- c. Increased availability of new approaches for HHM/GALS for specific thematic areas and to reach particular target groups, such as youth and indigenous people
- d. Increased global coherence of HHM implementation

B. The purpose of the Midterm Review (MTR):

The major objective of the MTR is to learn from the progress made so far in order to strategize for the remainder time of the project. The key findings, good practices and recommendations will be shared with all project stakeholders and used to support future initiatives and learning.

The specific Midterm Review questions are:

- What progress has the project achieved in meeting its targets and objectives as outlined in the project proposals and monitoring documents?
- What has worked well and what not? How effective/efficient has the implementation been so far? Which lessons have been learned? What needs to change to achieve the goals of the project?
- Is there need to review the projects logframe to align it to current project realities?
- What external circumstances have influenced the implementation of the project and how have they been managed? What could be improved?
- How effective has the cooperation and integration between the parties involved been and how can this be improved? What has worked so far in integrating activities with IFAD programs? What has

not worked? How can this collaboration be improved/Strengthened?, and what would be the measure of success?

- What lessons have been learned in terms of scaling up the GALs approach/methodology to other community members (not linked to IFAD projects) and ensuring global coherence? What are the obstacles and what are the opportunities? What can we learn from this? What are the recommendations for future implementation and project design?
- How can the sustainability of the results be ensured? What measures can the project take to ensure sustainability of project structures such as ELCs, Online Platform and regional hubs? To what extent are E@S mechanisms currently being included in existing projects and/or in programme development?

C. Approach and Methodology

The exercise is expected to employ a variety of data collection and analysis techniques. The final decision about the specific design and methods for the Review will emerge from the initial consultations among the project staff and key stakeholders about what is appropriate and feasible to meet the Review purpose and objectives and answer the questions, given limitations of budget, time, and the Covid19 pandemic. The consultant will do this during the consultation phase and he/she will clearly describe the proposed Review methods before the start of the exercise.

Key deliverables

- I. **MTR inception report:** this will be prepared by the consultant before going into the technical mission and full data collection stage.
 - a) The inception report further details the consultant's understanding of what is being assessed and why, showing how each question will be answered by the way of: proposed methods, sources of data and data collection/analysis procedures. The inception report provides the project team and the consultant with an opportunity to verify that the consultant shares the same understanding about the exercise and clarifies any misunderstanding at the outset.
 - b) Proposed schedule of tasks, activities and deliverables.
- II. **Draft MTR Report:** the project team and key stakeholders review the draft MTR report to ensure that the exercise meets the required quality. Key elements when assessing the quality of the draft report are:
 - Is the Methodology well explained?
 - Are key questions addressed?
 - Is there Clarity of reasoning
 - Are the Findings sound?
 - Depth of analysis
 - Are the Conclusions sound?
 - Relevance of recommendations for scaling up
 - Is the report complete?

- III. **Final MTR report:** Final version of the report after integration of relevant comments from key stakeholders. Key stakeholders include amongst others GALS champions and facilitators, management and implementation staff of Oxfam and Hivos, partner organizations and IFAD where relevant or applicable

D. Consultant's required competencies

The assessment will be performed by an external consultant and requires the following competencies:

- At least 10 years Proven expertise in gender approaches, evaluation(s) and proven experience in evaluation of multi-country and multi-stakeholders projects.
- Working experience with IFAD Will be an asset.
- Experience in participatory methodologies and preferably in quantitative/qualitative gender research, monitoring and evaluation.
- Experience with livelihood programmes and projects with a focus on value chain development, rural finance or agricultural extension.
- Understands the theory behind the project (the participatory Gender Action Learning System -GALS- methodology), and has minimum 5 years experience working with/evaluating the methodology
- Social Science related research experience at community level as well as organizational level.
- The consultant is independent from organizations involved in designing, executing, managing or advising any aspect of the project/organization that is the subject of the evaluation.
- Language skills: English. (However, Understanding of National languages in target countries will be an asset)

E. Management arrangement of the Review

- Consultant: external consultant that conducts the exercise based on the contractual agreement along with the TOR.
- MTR coordination will be led by Hivos, on behalf of the consortium. On behalf of the consortium, The E@Scale team in Hivos will lead the development and finalisation of the TOR for the evaluation and the collection of key documents to be shared at the beginning of the inception phase.
- Reference group: beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders for the project who: 1) will provide necessary information to the evaluator during the data collection stage; and 2) have already provided input on the evaluation questions and will review and provide comments draft report for quality assurance

F. Tentative timeline of the MTR process

What	Who	When
Recruitment of external evaluator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TORs sent out to Consortium partners • Consortium partners give feedback on TORs • TORs sent to Ifad for review/No Objection • Ifad gives Comments/No Objection • Hivos Incorporates comments • Hivos shares TORs with prospective consultants • Consultants send in proposals • Evaluation of Bids/Evaluation Committee • Award 	M&E Officer, Hivos Project staff P/Manager, Hivos Project Manager Hivos Ifad M&E Officer, Hivos M&E Officer, Hivos Prospective consultants M&E Officer Hivos Project Manager Hivos	13 th July 2020 14 th July 2020 15 th July 2020 23 rd July 2020 28 th July 2020 29 th July 2020 5 th August 2020 10 th August 2020 12 th August 2020
2) Consultation phase Start contract: Briefing of evaluator to orient her/him Desk review of key documents and existing data Finalising the evaluation design, methods and programme Meeting for presentation and approval of inception report	Project Manager MEL and consultant Evaluator Evaluator, Ifad, Project Lead Oxfam, Project Manager and MEL Hivos	17 Aug 2020 17 Aug 2020 18th-20 th August (3 days) 26 th August (1 day) 28 August 2020
3) Data collection and analysis stage	Evaluator	02– 15 Sept (10 days)
4) Synthesis and reporting stage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and interpretation of 	Evaluator	16-21 Sept 2020 (4

<p>findings, preparing and providing a draft report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the draft report with key stakeholders for quality assurance and to provide comments to the researcher. • Incorporating comments and revising the evaluation report. • Submission of the final report 	<p>Project Team including Ifad and Partners</p> <p>Evaluator</p> <p>Evaluator</p>	<p>days)</p> <p>22 Sep – 29 Sept (6 days)</p> <p>30th Sept- 2nd Oct (2 days)</p> <p>7th Oct 2020 (1 day)</p>
<p>5) Dissemination of the report findings (Webinar)</p>	<p>Project Lead</p>	<p>14 Oct 2020 (1 day)</p>

G. Time frame

It is expected that the exercise should be completed within 28 working days from the date of engagement.

H. Consortium MTR principles

Hivos follows five basic principles of sound evaluation practices and the consultant is expected to adhere to these throughout the evaluation process. These are:

- **Confidentiality and informed consent** – all data collected during the exercise will be treated as confidential and cannot be shared outside of Hivos/Project. All respondents must be advised as such and always given the opportunity not to participate, or to terminate or pause the interview at any time. The purpose of the evaluation should be clearly explained before commencing any interviews.
- **Independence and impartiality** – The consortium is committed to impartial and objective studies of our projects. All findings and conclusions must be grounded on evidence. The consultant will be expected to design data collection tools and systems that mitigate as far as possible against potential sources of bias.
- **Credibility** – The Consortium is committed to learning based on credible evidence. The credibility of the study will depend on the professional expertise and independence of the consultant and full transparency in the methods and process followed.
- **Participation** – the views and experiences of beneficiaries and partners should form an integral part of this evaluation.
- **Openness** – To maximise the learning potential of the process, the Consortium may publish the full midterm report or excerpts from it or may otherwise share them with interested parties.

I. Administrative criteria

Deadline

- Any questions, remarks or requests for clarification can be send to mkuira@hivos.org and lchacha@hivos.org before **31/07/2020, 23:59 hours EAT**.
- Any Questions will be answered to all applicants by **30/07/2020**.
- Applications should reach Hivos no later than **05/08/2020, 23:59 hours EAT**.

Content of applications

The following should be included in applications:

- A Technical proposal on how the consultant expects to conduct the MTR
- CV(s) of the proposed consultant(s), proving relevant experience and/or diplomas. Please include examples of written work (e.g. consultancy or evaluation report).
- Financial proposal with a cost breakdown in days spent and the related fee.

Quotations should be submitted by e-mail with the subject line “Call for offers: Midterm Review Empower@Scale Project to estafricajobs@hivos.org

J. Award criteria

The evaluation of the quotations will be based on the best value for money criterion covering technical quality (the technical proposal) and the financial proposal.

Selection and assessment

The assessment of applications will start with an assessment of the administrative criteria. These criteria are all Knock-out criteria. That means that if these criteria aren’t met in your application, this application will be put aside and the award criteria of this quotation will not be assessed.

Applications that meet the administrative criteria will be assessed against the award criteria. The award criteria are assessed according to the following distribution of points.

Criteria	Knock out (KO) / Max. Point
Administrative criteria	
Application received within deadline	KO
Application complete	KO
Award criteria	

Technical criteria	The proposal meets the requirements of the MTR and the methodology is sound	40 out of 100
	The evaluation team have the expertise to conduct MTR and have previous experience on the same	30 out of 100
Financial		30 out of 100