C:\Users\Wiesenbach\Dropbox\Caritas Germany - Beirut\AA-DCV - Logos\logo_caritas-germany.epsTerms of Reference

Mid-term evaluation of the project “Advocating for Sustainable Social Services provided by 5 Caritas Social Centers to vulnerable people affected by Ukrainian conflict within the national Decentralisation Reform in Ukraine.”

# Background information and Context

Caritas Germany (Deutscher Caritasverband - DCV) and Caritas Ukraine (CUA) have maintained a longstanding partnership since the establishment of Caritas Ukraine following Ukraine's independence in 1991. DCV played a crucial role in supporting CUA from the beginning, serving as one of its initial international partners and contributing to the financing of its inaugural programs.

In 2014, the **decentralization process** in Ukraine began, which aimed to increasingly transfer administrative, financial, and political powers from the central government to local authorities, promoting local governance and decision-making.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has been actively involved in supporting the decentralization process in Ukraine. It provided financial assistance and expertise to help the Ukrainian government implementing reforms that strengthen local governance, improve public services, and promote sustainable development at the local level. Through the decentralization process, the availability of funds at the local level has been increased, including resources for social services. Recognizing this as a unique opportunity, CUA sought to access local funding to enhance the sustainability of its social programs of Home Care and Children and Youth work. This strategic shift aims to reduce dependence on international partners for ongoing program financing.

# Subject of Evaluation / The Project

The project to be evaluated is entitled “Advocating for Sustainable Social Services provided by 5 Caritas Social Centers to vulnerable people affected by Ukrainian conflict within the national Decentralization Reform in Ukraine”. It has an implementing time from 01.08.2020 until 30.04.2025 and is funded by BMZ with an overall budget of EUR 5.730.000.[[1]](#footnote-2)

The project’s **overarching objective** is to enhance the resilience of conflict-affected internally displaced persons (IDPs) and vulnerable host communities by bolstering the provision of social services through access to diverse funding resources (local public budgets, (inter)national grants, in-kind and in-cash donations etc.) and community mobilization (creation of beneficiaries’ associations, activation of volunteers, legal/operational support of local NGOs/CSOs working in social field). At Output level, the project has defined the following four results:

# The work of Caritas social centres is secured through intensive advocacy work, if possible in the context of the national decentralization reform.

# The preconditions for the provision of Caritas social services are in place and supported by relevant stakeholders due to intensive lobbying and advocacy work.

# The functionality of Caritas Social Centres at the local level is ensured through continued access to funding opportunities, including local budgets where possible.

# The central Caritas social services in Home care and Child and youth work in accessible project regions remain available through new approaches to financial diversification.

Ultimately, the project seeks to contribute to the **sustainable preservation of five Caritas social centers** through active advocacy efforts within the framework of the national decentralization reform.

The key **stakeholders** of the project representing the Ukrainian government at different levels are:

* The Ministry of Social Policy, as the primary focus of advocacy and lobbying, relevant for advancing social legislation revision and improving social service provision in the country.
* National and international institutions, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil-society organizations (CSOs) operating in Ukraine within the realm of social services and emergency relief.
* Regional administrations/self-government bodies and relevant departments (e.g., social policy, education, health) for joint events and awareness-raising campaigns to support the social reform process and secure local funding for social services.

Caritas Germany is the official grant recipient of the BMZ and as such accountable to the BMZ for the project implementation in line with the approved log-frame. BMZ funds are channeled via DCV to CUA. Caritas Germany supports the CUA in project implementation, e.g. by providing methodological support. A German integrated expert of the DCV, based in the Caritas Ukraine office in Lviv, supports the monitoring of the project implementation and progress, as well as the compliance with the conditions of approval on site.

Current status / Implementation challenges

While previous projects, many of them equally funded by BMZ, focused on the establishment and provision of social services and humanitarian aid for IDPs and host communities in Ukraine, the current project aims to ensure the **sustainability of the social services and social centres**, through access to state and municipal funding.

With the full-scale invasion of Russia in Ukraine on February 24, 2022 many components of the project had to be adjusted to the changed circumstances and needs of beneficiaries during wartime. Two of the social centers, Caritas Mariupol and Caritas Kramatorsk had to be evacuated, while others were forced to step up their emergency services and further intensify the provision of social services.

The social sector, already underfunded in peaceful times, was further cut at the local level due to the high financial needs of military services. The government's focus within the social sphere is currently on the payment of social assistance benefits to IDPs. The provision of social services by non-governmental providers is currently almost not funded.

As a consequence, the project was forced to temporarily (for the period of martial law) suspend the aim of reaching 60% of local public financing for Home care and Child and Youth work, as well as lessen the percentage of income from paid social services (from 10% to 5%). Despite the underlined changes, the overall goal of achieving sustainability in the provision of social services through access to diverse local funding resources remained unchanged.

# Objective of the Evaluation

The overall objective of the evaluation is to provide an **independent review and assessment** of the project covering the implementing time from ​​01.01.2022[[2]](#footnote-3)​ until ​31.12.2023​, and to contribute to the overall **learning process** of CUA and DCV. The evaluation process shall help to **capture institutional knowledge and expertise**, ensuring that lessons learned are retained within the organizations for the benefit of future initiatives.

More specifically, the evaluation aims to critically reflect on the **successes and challenges** of the project design and its implementation. **Lessons learned** shall be highlighted and **recommendations** derived in order to:

1. adapt the project measures and improve project implementation for the remaining project period, based on identified weaknesses and building on existing strengths. This includes recommendations for the (re-)definition of an **effective exit strategy**, as the initial exit strategy is no longer feasible due to the changed context.
2. support strategic decision-making for a potential future project, including resource allocation and project focus.

The project will be evaluated along six OECD/DAC criteria. Due to the war, which forced the project team to adapt the measure to the changing context, one focus of the evaluation shall be put on the criteria of **relevance**. The evaluation should assessif the project took the right decisions to adapt its activities to the changing needs and context.

Although this being a mid-term evaluation, the evaluator/s should equally put a focus on the criteria of **impact and sustainability**. This is due to the fact that several predecessor projects have already been implemented and the project had defined a clear exit strategy. In this regard, the evaluation shall demonstrate and provide evidence of the project’s **impact on the target population** and relevant stakeholders.

Last but not least, the evaluation shall give advice on how to harmonize advocacy efforts, as well as **different approaches** of financial diversification and community mobilization with other related projects carried out by CUA, within the remaining project time as well as for a follow-on project.

The **results of the evaluation** will be utilized by project implementers (CUA and local Caritas organizations), funding agencies, national-wide/local NGOs/CSOs, governmental/self-governmental bodies, and other actors involved in Home care and Child and youth work in Ukraine.

# Evaluation Criteria and Key Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions are structures along the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. While all six criteria should be covered in line with the questions spelt out below, the focus should be set on the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

**Questions related to Relevance**:

* How has the project’s impact logic been adapted to the changed context?
* Is the (amended) project design (still) appropriate to reach the goal of sustainability of social services in the five project locations in the given context?
* How flexible are the project's advocacy strategies to adapt to changing political landscapes or policy environments? Is there evidence of ongoing adaptation in response to policy changes or evolving community needs?
* Were the project components interconnected enough to achieve valuable change and results? How can the components connect better with one-another?
* Are there alternative ways of project design, potentially under a new project, that could work better under the changed circumstances to fulfill the objectives of the current project?

**Questions related to Coherence**:

* To what extent is the measure designed and implemented within German development cooperation in a complementary manner and with a rational division of labour?
* To what extent is the measure consistent with international and national norms and standards to which German development cooperation is committed (e.g. human rights, SDGs)?
* To what extent does the measure complement and support the CUA's/local Caritas organizations’ own efforts (subsidiarity principle)?
* To what extent is the design of the measure geared towards the use of existing systems and structures (national-wide (local) NGOs (CSOs)/governmental (self-governmental bodies/other donors/international organisations) for the implementation of its activities and to what extent are these used?
* How have relationships with project stakeholders helped or hindered the achievement of the project results? How can these relationships be improved? Are both parties satisfied with the results and form of cooperation?
* To what extent are joint systems (of existing national-wide (local) NGOs (CSOs)/governmental (self-governmental bodies/other donors/international organisations) used for M&E, learning and accountability?

**Questions related to Effectiveness**:

* At what level[[3]](#footnote-4) (both locally and nationally) has the advocacy and lobbying work been active so far? Are there important and/or desirable levels missing?
* Which activities in the lobby and advocacy field are the most effective or least effective and why?
* To what concrete results has the advocacy and lobbying work at national and local level led so far? Are the results encouraging?
* What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the outcome(s)/expected results?
* In what ways should project activities be changed to achieve better results during the on-going project as potentially for any follow-on project?
* How can harmonization of project activities between project locations be improved?
* What are current funding options in the various project locations? Which funding options are used by local Caritas organizations and which are not?

**Questions related to Efficiency:**

* How efficiently were human resources utilized across the project, especially regarding national and local advocacy specialists?
* Were there redundancies in project activities, especially regarding possible duplication at different project locations, and how effectively were these minimized to enhance efficiency?
* Were there efficient feedback mechanisms in place to identify areas for improvement?
* Could the same results have been achieved with less input (technical, financial, human resources, etc.)?

**Questions related to Impact**:

* Does the project address the beneficiaries’ needs? Does the project achieve satisfaction amongst beneficiaries? Are all the project beneficiaries target groups sufficiently covered?
* What is the project’s contribution to human and institutional capacity building in beneficiaries’ associations, CSOs working in the field of social services, as well as local state authorities?
* Have lobby and advocacy, networking and fundraising capacities of the local Caritas organizations improved? What impact has this created?
* To what extent has the project helped the 5 local Caritas organizations and local CSOs to access and mobilize local resources for ongoing activities?
* What was the impact of the project on the national legislation and local public budgets/legislation?
* To what extend has the idea to gradually financing running costs through local public budgets created an impact?

**Questions related to Sustainability:**

* To what extent will the positive results of the project continue after the end of the funding?
* What are internal / external factors that will help to sustain the positive effects of the project? What are the risks?
* How likely is it that the positive policy changes influenced by the project will be sustained over time?
* What mechanisms are in place to ensure ongoing community engagement and empowerment beyond the project's duration?
* To what extent do project activities lead to institutional, including financial, sustainability of local Caritas organizations?
* What percentage of the running costs of the social services was raised (Exit strategy)? Where does this money come from? If numbers are not according to plan, what were the challenges? What are unused potentials?
* Has the project created a sustainable structure by the end of it? If not, why? What recommendations for a future project derive from this finding?
* Are there clear and transparent legal rules in place with local public bodies that will enable access to funds as soon as these are available again?
* How are the national, regional and local level working together towards sustainability for social services? What are the chances and challenges for the project’s sustainability in this regard?
* What further steps need to be taken to ensure institutional sustainability, especially financial, of local Caritas organizations?
* How does the project incorporate feedback loops and learning mechanisms to adjust strategies for long-term sustainability?

# Approach and Methodology

The evaluation will be conducted by a **team of two external evaluators**: a local one and one international. The team will include a lead evaluator with strong evaluation experience and related methodological know-how, as well as a second evaluator with strong regional knowledge and expertise in relevant fields, such as social science or services, advocacy, fundraising, transitional support etc.

The evaluation will follow a participatory, transparent, and solution-oriented approach. It should be conducted in line with the OECD/DAC quality standards, be human-rights-based and take into account the interests of key groups of beneficiaries, as well as the position of key stakeholders regardless of their sex, age, social status, religious affiliation and other characteristics.

The evaluator/s will propose an evaluation design and data collection and analysis methods that are able to appropriately address the primary evaluation questions, as well as support its conclusions and recommendation with evidence.

Due to the security situation in the country, a semi-remote design[[4]](#footnote-5) will be followed. Based on the evolution of the security situation this might have to be changed to a fully remote design.

The evaluation methods to be used may include, but are not limited to:

* **Review of project documentation**, such as project documents, monitoring reports, final reports, statistical data, documents pertaining to similar projects led by other donor organizations, etc. Existing project documents and reports are to be shared with the evaluator/s in order to facilitate the realization of the tasks. The evaluator/s are invited to request additional documents that may be needed for the completion of the evaluation.
* **Interviews with key informants:** (semi-) structured interviews with project staff and relevant stakeholders covering the components of lobby and advocacy, community mobilization, fundraising, as well as service delivery. Interviewees thus include, but are not limited to, the lobby and advocacy team at the national level (CUA), project employees at the local level, local and regional stakeholders including governmental bodies and non-governmental organizations, as well as beneficiaries.
* **Focus group discussion** with beneficiaries, local government/self-government officials, CUA/local Caritas’ staff, as well as other stakeholders (if feasible within the timeframe).

The sample of interviewees should consider sex, age, beneficiaries/non-beneficiaries and geographical spread in the project region and detailed by the evaluator/s in the inception report.

* **Direct observation during field visits**: The evaluation will cover the five social centers: Caritas Donetsk (located in Dnipro), Caritas Kramatorsk (located in Chervonohrad, Lviv oblast), Caritas Mariupol (located in Cherkasy), Caritas Kyiv (located in Kyiv), Caritas Zaporizhzhia (located in Zaporizhzhia). At least two of them, as well as Caritas Ukraine head office in Lviv shall be visited. Previous project locations of Mariupol and Kramatorsk cannot be visited due to the evacuation of the local teams and the current security situation. However, interviews with project teams and stakeholders can be conducted remotely. CUA will support the (inter)national evaluator/s in organizing field visits to the different project sites, and to CUA head office in Lviv.
* **Standardized Survey and questionnaires:** to quantify the results and deliver a statistical analysis.

# Deliverables and Timeframe

1. Inception Report:

An inception report will be submitted by the evaluator/s in order to demonstrate his/her understanding and planning of the evaluation, which will be reviewed and discussed in cooperation with Caritas Ukraine and Caritas Germany.

The inception report should include an *evaluation matrix[[5]](#footnote-6) (*including the final evaluation questions and indicators); the overall evaluation design and methodology with a detailed description of the data collection methods and data analysis techniques, differentiation of responsibilities within the team of evaluators, as well as a proposed timeframe for the activities and deliverables.

The inception report should not exceed 5 pages and to be provided in English.

1. Workshops:

The **Kick-off workshop** provides an opportunity to discuss organizational processes, methodology, data collection instruments, timetable, milestones, reporting dates, task and responsibilities.

During a **validation workshop**, at the end of the field mission, the evaluator/s will present the preliminary findings collected in the field to CUA and DCV. The workshop will be organized to discuss and validate findings, lessons learned and recommendations proposed by the evaluator/s. Relevant stakeholders will also be invited.

A third and **final workshop** will be organized after submission of the DRAFT evaluation report to provide feedback on the report to the evaluators.

The Kick-off and the final workshop can be held online, whereas the validation workshop will be held in Lviv with the presence of the (at least) national evaluator at the end of the field mission.

1. Draft Report:

The evaluator/s are expected to submit the findings from their evaluation, as well as their recommendations in a Draft evaluation report to the Desk Officer of DCV and CUA project manager. The Draft Report will have a max. of 25 pages, not including appendices. The draft evaluation report, as well as all appendices, should be provided in English.

1. Final Report:

The final evaluation report should take into account the feedback of DCV and CUA to the DRAFT report. All documents and tools should be delivered in English.

Further requirements for the presentation of the final evaluation report are:

1. Maximum 25 pages, not including appendices;
2. Include an executive summary of max. 2 pages.

The final report should, as a minimum, include the following elements:

1. Cover sheet
2. Outline / table of contents / list of abbreviations / summary / executive summary (at least one page, maximum four pages):

* Short description of the implementing organizations and investigative procedures;
* Objective of the evaluation and methodological approach;
* Fundamental findings with reference to the Key Evaluation Questions of the ToR;
* The most important recommendations.

1. Evaluation report (according to the Key Evaluation Questions of the ToR);
2. Recommendations
3. Annexes

a. ToR;

b. Timetable;

c. List of persons interviewed;

d. List of reference documents.

# Timeframe for Deliverables

The evaluation is to be carried out from 01.03.2024 to 15.05.2024.

Key dates and deliverables expected for the evaluation are the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Deliverable** | **Dates** |
| Contracting | Last week of February |
| Kick-off meeting | First week of March |
| Inception Report | Mid-March |
| Field mission | End of March - Beginning of April |
| Draft Report | End of April |
| Final Report | Mid-May |

The evaluator/s should present a proposed work plan and timeframe of all activities including the relevant resource allocationin the offer.

# Roles and Responsibilities

Caritas Ukraine is responsible for facilitating the logistics to and within Ukraine (including field visits and accommodation). Travel plans are subject to approval by security departments of Caritas Ukraine and Caritas Germany.

The evaluator/s will be reporting to the Caritas Germany Desk Officer and the Caritas Ukraine Project Manager during the evaluation phase.

Caritas Ukraine and Caritas Germany will provide access to all relevant project documents.

Guiding Principles & Donor concepts

The consultant is to conduct the evaluation in accordance with the principles outlined in the “Caritas Internationalis management standards” document[[6]](#footnote-7), the “Caritas Code of conduct”,[[7]](#footnote-8) as well as the “Guidelines on Combating Fraud and Corruption in the Project Work of Caritas Germany”[[8]](#footnote-9).

The evaluator/s must take all required steps to ensure that the evaluation is designed and conducted to respect and protect the rights and welfare of the people and the communities of which they are members, as well as to ensure that the evaluation is technically accurate, reliable, and legitimate, and conducted in a transparent and impartial manner. Moreover, the evaluation should contribute to organizational learning and accountability.

The project is financed by Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development - BMZ.

# Professional Qualifications and Experience

The evaluation team should consist of an international and a national evaluator. Together they should meet the following skills and competences:

* Extensive experience in conducting evaluations and a proven record in delivering professional results;
* Proven experience in validation of project results based on the theory of change/impact models;
* In-depth knowledge and experience in fields of social service provision and advocacy;
* Proven ability to provide strategic and practical recommendation to key stakeholders;
* Strong analytical skills and ability to clearly synthesize and present findings, draw practical conclusions, make recommendations, and prepare well-written reports in a timely manner;
* Proven experience in using participatory tools, qualitative and/or quantitative data collection and data analysis techniques;
* Familiarity with transparency and downward accountability processes and their values
* Fluency in written and spoken English, national evaluator must have good skills in written and spoken Ukrainian;
* National evaluator*:* Country and regional experience in Ukraine;
* Good understanding and appropriate sensitivity regarding different cultures and traditions;
* Minimum qualification of a master´s degree in political or social science, evaluation, or a similar field, or equivalent combination of education and relevant work experience.

# Application Procedure

Interested candidates should submit their applications by 23.02.2024

The application itself should include the following documents:

* Curriculum Vitae (CV) of each evaluator including 3 professional references, and indication of daily rates in EUR;
* Cover letter transparently summarizing relevant regional and practical experience in planning and conducting project evaluations, preferably of other BMZ funded projects;
* Track record of conducted studies, research, publications and references;
* A technical proposal for the evaluation, including the proposed evaluation timeframe, methodology and work plan;
* Financial proposal[[9]](#footnote-10) of the evaluation;
* A sample of recent writing (report or similar) relevant to the terms of reference stated above.

Any additional documentation proving compatibility with current ToRs are appreciated.

*Please note that the maximum budget for the evaluation is EUR 30.000, which includes payments for both national and international evaluators, as well as travel costs.*

The proposal should be addressed to: **tender@caritas.ua**

Letter topic: **RFQ 20240209.01 Project evaluation**

Interviews with selected persons will be conducted on the Zoom platform at a pre-arranged time.

# Annexes

* **Annex 1:** Financial Proposal.

1. This amount also includes costs that are managed directly by the DCV and are therefore not available to the CUA locally. Total amount available for CUA is EUR 5.533.795 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. As another evaluation has already been conducted for the same project, covering the implementing time from the project’s beginning in 2020 until April 2021, this evaluation will mainly focus on the implementing period from 01.01.2022 until 31.12.2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. including relevant Ministries and Departments, local authorities, local and regional social welfare institutions, TCs, media (radio, television, internet), NGO networks, beneficiary associations, and other targets of lobby and advocacy work. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. The international evaluator is only required to travel to CUA national office in Lviv for a field visit. Visit to one of the local Caritas organizations is encouraged but not required for international evaluator. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Template to be shared upon request. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. See Caritas Internationalis management Standards

   <http://portal.centre.caritas.de/arbeitundmensch/ci-portal/Documents/CI%20Management%20Standards%20englisch.docx>

   please contact desk-officer in charge if you cannot find this document or others [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. See Caritas Code of conduct

   <http://portal.centre.caritas.de/arbeitundmensch/ci-portal/Documents/Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. See Guidelines on Combating Fraud and Corruption in the Project Work of Caritas Germany

   <http://portal.centre.caritas.de/arbeitundmensch/ci-portal/Documents/Leitlinien%20Korruption%20englisch.docx> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. See Financial Proposal *Annex 1.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-10)