Terms of Reference

Final evaluation, Ukraine

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| Project Information | |
| **Project Title:** | Psychosocial support for school children in the Eastern Ukrainian war zone, 2021–2024 Contract Number Renovabis: 600-804-1096 |
| **Project Period:** | 01.12.2021 – 30.09.2024 |
| **Project Evaluation Period:** | 15..03.2024 -25.04.24 |
| **Overall Budget:** | 1.263.210,00 EUR |
| **Project Donors:** | KZE, Renovabis, Caritas Austria. |
| **Project Partner:** | Renovabis Caritas Austria |

# Background information and Context

## Background

The project is implemented by 3 local Caritas diocesan organisations at five project locations. The project sites were selected based on the following considerations:

* Basic needs of vulnerable Ukrainians;
* Available and experienced personnel;
* Number of IDPs in the target area.

**Caritas Ukraine** (CUA) is a member of the international Caritas network and one of the largest non-governmental welfare organisations in Ukraine with headquarters in Lviv and Kyiv. It has a structure of 42 regional Caritas offices across the country. Caritas Ukraine has been working with people in need since 1992 (officially registered since 1999), regardless of religion, nationality or social status of those in need.

Caritas Ukraine is not only responsible for the overall management, coordination and monitoring of the project, but is equally involved in project activities, namely, intensive lobby and advocacy work on the national level. On the one side, CUA transfers the practices of regional Caritas organisations, beneficiaries’ needs and gaps in social provision to the legislative bodies of Ukraine, on the other side, all legislative changes and opportunities created by these changes are immediately transferred to regional Caritas organisations. In such a way, regional Caritas organisations react to the changing legislation and adopt their services in order to meet the state requirements towards social service providers.

Project donor: KZE, Renovabis, Caritas Austria.

Project partner: Renovabis, Caritas Austria.

**Former projects**

Caritas Ukraine has experience in implementing the PSS component in numerous projects funded by various donors.

Since 2014, Caritas Ukraine has been implementing a large number of projects aimed at helping children affected by the conflict in Ukraine. The evaluated project builds on the successes and achievements of Caritas' previous activities in the conflict-affected areas, in particular the project "Psychosocial Support (PS) for Children and their Parents/Guardians in the Buffer Zone in Eastern Ukraine" (2018-2021). The project aims to improve the well-being of children, increase the resilience and social cohesion of communities by providing psychosocial support and capacity building to children, their parents/guardians and teachers.

## **Context:**

In its eighth year, the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine continues to have a fundamental devastating impact upon the people, most notably on the mental health and psychosocial well-being of children, a particularly vulnerable group. With Covid-19 further exacerbating existing needs among the conflict-affected population, intensifying pre-existing psychosocial problems and exposing children to new vulnerabilities such as disruption in education and domestic violence, there is great need for assistance that addresses immediate needs whilst strengthening resilience to contribute to building longer-term, sustainable perspectives amid difficult circumstances.

This project aims to improve the well-being, resilience and social cohesion of communities by providing psychosocial support and capacity building to children, their parents/guardians and teachers so that they can support themselves and others in difficult life circumstances.

The project's activities involve the direct provision of psychosocial services to children affected by the ongoing conflict, as well as their parents and teachers. An important point was the transfer of the project from Donetsk and Luhansk regions to Ternopil, Khmelnytsky and Odesa regions, while maintaining the methodology, approaches and experience of working in eastern Ukraine.

At the current stage of project implementation, attention was paid to improving the quality of project implementation and ensuring the harmonization of methods and approaches.

Two outcomes are defined:

1. Children affected by the war in Ukraine (both displaced and local) from 12 target communities are resilient and able to cope with life challenges.

*Indicators:*

- 65% of children attending child-friendly spaces (7200) showed improved psychosocial well-being in a standardized psychological assessment at the end of the project.

- 80% of children who visit child-friendly spaces (7200) use positive coping mechanisms (coping mechanisms) (survey through psychological assessment).

2. Parents, guardians and school staff in 12 conflict-affected communities create a safe and supportive environment that promotes psychosocial well-being (9 schools in Khmelnytskyi, Ternopil and Odesa communities and 9 schools in the nearest territorial communities) (about 1800 parents).

*Indicators:*

-80% of schoolchildren covered by the project feel supported by their families and school community (survey through psychological assessment).

-70% of teachers trained in the Safe Space for Teachers methodology (180) report that they apply the knowledge and skills gained in their teaching.

-90% of teachers trained in the Safe Space for Teachers methodology (180) report that they are able to build positive relationships with children.

-90% of parents/guardians who participated in psychoeducational trainings indicate in at least one example that they can use the new knowledge about positive parenting and coaching methods.

The proposed project is being implemented under the leadership of Caritas Ukraine by three local organizations, namely Caritas Odesa, Caritas Khmelnytskyi, and Caritas Ternopil, in close cooperation with the Center for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support of the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (NaUKMA).

Target groups and Beneficiaries 7200 children, both local and IDPs, in 12 communities in Odesa, Ternopil and Khmelnytskyi regions (approximately 400 students per school), their parents/guardians (at least 1800 people), and their teachers (at least 180 people).

The implementation period is divided into three phases: preparation phase and two implantation phases.

Current state, reached on **30.11.2023**

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| **Result type: Input, Activity, Output, Outcome, Impact** | **Indicator(s)** | **Baseline** | **End of Project Target** | **Actual (30.11.23)** |
| Outcome 1: Children affected by the war in Ukraine (both displaced children and residents) from the 12 target communities have resilience and the ability to cope with life's difficulties. | % of children attending a child-friendly space (7,200), whose psychosocial well-being improved, according to the results of a standardized psychological assessment carried out at the end of the project. | 0% | 65% | 51% |
|  | % of children who visit a child-friendly space and use positive mechanisms for coping with stressful situations (coping mechanisms) (survey through psychological assessment). | 20% | 80% | 72% |
| *Output Expected Result 1.1: At least 7,200 children (both local and displaced) from the 12 target host communities receive psychosocial support and build trusting relationships with peers and adults (approximately 400 students per school).* | *# number of child- and parent-friendly Caritas spaces (CSS) created in the 18 schools of the 3 regions (6 schools in each target region).* | 0 | 18 | 18 |
|  | *# number of children who regularly visit child- and parent-friendly Caritas spaces (CSS)* | 0 | 7200 | 10784 |
| Outcome 2: Parents, guardians, and school staff in the 12 conflict-affected communities create a safe and supportive environment that promotes psychosocial well-being (9 schools in the Khmelnytskyi, Ternopil, and Odesa communities and 9 schools in the nearby territorial communities). | *% of teachers who took part in the training in the use of the Safe Space Methodology for teachers (180) and said that they were applying the acquired knowledge and skills in the teaching process.* | 0% | 70% | 72% |
|  | *% of students covered by the project, who feel supported by their families and the school community.* | 0% | 80% | 82% |
| *Output Expected Result 2.1: Employees of the 18 target schools care about the well-being of their colleagues and children.* | *% of teachers who took part in the training in the use of the Safe Space Methodology for teachers (180)  and said that they were able to build positive relationships with children (distributed by gender).* | 0% | 90% | 75,6% |
|  | *# of teachers covered by project services (safe space, open dialogs, supervisory sessions) (distributed by gender).* | 0 | 180 | 840 |
| *Output 2.2: Parents and teachers from the target communities create a favorable and caring family environment for their children. (about 1,800 parents).* | *# number of parents who are involved in psychoeducational sessions* | 0 | 1800 | 1014 |
| *Expected Result 2.2: Parents and teachers from the target communities create a favorable and caring family environment for their children. (about 1,800 parents).* | *% of parents/guardians who participated in psychoeducational trainings and provided at least one example of the fact that they were able to use new knowledge about positive parenting and coping mechanisms.* | 0 | 90% | 84,70% |

The budget of the project is approved according to the following scheme: Requested grant from KZE - 70.00%, requested grant from Renovabis - 8.00%, requested grant from Caritas Austria - 21.00%, own contribution - 1.00%.

# Objective of the Evaluation

The final external evaluationis planned to check whether the intervention logic and modalities of assistance to beneficiaries together with instruments and methods used in the project are appropriate and serve to achieve the project objectives. The evaluation should also provide an opportunity to plan a new project in order to more effectively respond to humanitarian crises. The evaluator will therefore also have the role of a consultant to give recommendations to Caritas and the partner organization on how to plan improved next project phase in conditions of on-going conflict in Ukraine, how to address identified weaknesses and build on existing strengths and how to further improve project effectiveness and ensure sustainability of the project services in educational system after the project ends.

**Specific objectives of the Evaluation:**

The evaluation shall be done on national (Caritas Ukraine) and local (Caritas Odesa, Caritas Ternopil, Caritas Khmelnytskyi) levels with special attention to paid to beneficiary satisfaction, relevance and efficiency of assistance, feedback from different stakeholders on the proposed innovative approach in school system. Beyond that, the evaluation and its related recommendations are important measures to feed into the internal learning process on initiatives in education in emergency and child protection related activities in educational establishments on the local level.

The use of the evaluation results will serve for better planning of the next project phase with the engaged donors, adaptation of the project design and provide the recommendation for multiplication of project activities in the other Caritas.

Should the evaluation reveal the need of substantial changes of intervention activities, instruments and methods, in the next projects, the list of suggested improvements will be attached and constitute part of the evaluation report.

# Scope of the Evaluation

**Thematic coverage** shall be focused within a single project “Psychosocial support for school children in the Eastern Ukrainian war zone, 2021–2024”. All project impacts shall be taken into account.

**Time period**: evaluation shall be done for the period 15 March 2024 – 25 April 2024. The entire project period is evaluated, but the evaluation process must be conducted during the specified period.

**Geographical focus**: The project team of Caritas Ukraine based in Lviv will be evaluated in person, while face-to-face visits are planned for the local organizations Caritas Ternopil, Caritas Khmelnytskyi, Caritas Odesa. Visits to the project's 6 target educational institutions are also planned.

**Target group** shall include managers on the national level (Caritas Ukraine) and the local level (Caritas Odesa, Caritas Ternopil and Caritas Khmelnytsky), project employees (psychologists, social workers in schools), representatives of the direct beneficiaries (children, parents, teachers of the schools), local partners (representatives of the educational departments, directors of schools and national governmental stakeholders and governmental, municipal and non-governmental stakeholders on local level in the project locations.

# Evaluation Criteria and Key Evaluation Questions

As mentioned above, learning from this evaluation will feed into plans for the extension of this project. The evaluation should be strongly focused on recommendations for improvements relating to the central questions outlined below, and in particular if and how activities could be adopted to better achieve the project results.

This evaluation will focus on the five OECD- DAC criteria, which are: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, , Impact and Sustainability.

**Relevance:**

* - Which target group do you think needs the most psychological support at the moment?
* - Is it relevant to work with parents, what is the most optimal format of such interaction?
* - What components could be added to expand the impact on target audiences?

**Coherence:**

* Did the project activities integrate with school-wide educational activities? How?
* Does the project activity duplicate services provided by the education system?

**Effectiveness:**

* To what extent have the objectives been achieved so far?
* Have as many people been reached as planned?

**Impact:**

* Did the children participating in the project feel a significant difference between the atmosphere of classes in the equipped Caritas room and classes in other classrooms of the school? Did the Caritas room become a "special place" for the project participants? Was there any change in the children's interest in participating in the project activities?
* Are there any noticeable changes in the psycho-emotional state and motivational sphere of children who attended thematic clubs or safe spaces?
* Has there been an improvement in the staff's knowledge of special approaches and techniques for self-support and the ability to better understand children's behavior and reactions and ways to cope with their own stress?
* Has the school increased the demand for activities aimed at psychological support for children?
* Are there any noticeable changes in the psycho-emotional state and motivational sphere of children who attended thematic clubs or safe spaces?
* Іn your opinion, has the paradigm of the traditional educational process changed in the school where the project is being implemented, and how?

**Sustainability:**

* How will the termination of Caritas projects in the school affect the functioning of the Safe Space room in the future? Will the lack of opportunity to purchase materials for activities, the lack of separate salaries for staff to implement the Safe Space program, the likelihood of the Caritas room being converted into a classroom prevent effective psychosocial work with children, their parents and teachers in the future?
* Is there a need for similar projects in the community? Is there a need to multiply activities? Is it necessary to attract resources and partners to support and develop similar initiatives in the community?

# Approach and Methodology

The Evaluator is expected to perform the evaluation in a strictly methodical manner in order to produce verifiable information and make recommendations that are valid and reliable based on data accessible by the client.

The evaluation will adopt a participatory, transparent and solution-oriented approach. The evaluation process, as well as the final results should be gender-sensitive and human-rights-based. The evaluator will use mixed-methods that are suitable to address the primary evaluation questions, as well as properly support its derivative conclusion and recommendation.

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

* Prior to the field visit:
  + **Review of project documentation (Desk Research):** An array of major documents that should be studied (e.g. project documents, monitoring tools, project reports, as well as statistical data in the project database, internal documentation relevant to evaluation questions). The evaluator is invited to request additional documents that may be needed for the completion of the evaluation.
  + **Preparation of the interview guides, preparation of own quantitative survey.**
  + Kick-off workshop with local project managers (could be on-line).
* During the field visit:
  + **Interviews and focus groups with beneficiaries, project staff, representatives of the stakeholders and partners:** (semi-)structured interviews with beneficiaries and project staff should be supported by interview protocols and a list of respondents. Caritas could assist in organizing the interviews with beneficiaries on the local level (5-7 interviews with key local partners and stakeholders). Caritas may require the evaluator to conduct additional interviews in case of data inconsistency or lack of data or comprehensive analysis. While the designing of the information collection the age appropriated instruments should be used to ensure child participation in the survey.

The selection criteria should be based on gender, age, beneficiaries/non-beneficiaries and geographical spread in the project region.

The exact sample size should be proposed by the evaluator and discussed together with Caritas Ukraine before the start of the evaluation.

# Direct observation during field visits:

# Direct observation during field visits: Caritas Ukraine organizes field visits to different project schools in Ternopil, Khmelnytskyi regions, and Bilhorod-Dnistrovskyi district of Odesa region. The work in the schools with direct beneficiaries (children, parents and teaches) can be assessed through group interviews, the feedbacks from the representatives of the educational departments, school directors, representatives of national and local governmental structures, other stakeholders will be collected during individual interviews and conversations during the field visits.

# Deliverables and Timeframe.

Deliverables for the evaluation should include the following:

1. Inception Report:

An inception report will be submitted by the evaluating consultant/company in order to demonstrate his/her understanding and planning of the evaluation, which will be reviewed and discussed in cooperation with Caritas Ukraine and the donors (Caritas Austria and Renovabis).

The inception report should include the overall evaluation design and methodology with a detailed description of the data collection methods and data analysis techniques, as well as a proposed timeframe for the activities and deliverables. The evaluator is free to suggest additional methods for the evaluation.

1. Final debriefing Workshops/ Meeting:

Upon the field visit and online interviews, the evaluator shall conduct a Final debriefing workshop for triangulation/validation of the collected date, review of conclusions and development of practice-relevant recommendations. The final workshop should also be used as an entry point for reflecting on the results and learning from evaluation.. Stakeholders are invited to make recommendations for amending the review.

1. Draft Report:

The evaluator is expected to submit the primary findings resulting from their evaluation, as well as their initial recommendations to the desk officer of Caritas Ukraine. The draft report should be presented after the field work has been concluded, and should incorporate comments supplied by Caritas Ukraine and its partner organizations.

1. Final Report:

The final report shall be used to illustrate relevant evidence that addresses the problems, questions and evaluation criteria listed in the Terms of Reference. The final report should take into account all aspects discussed during the validation workshop and is subject to approval by Caritas Ukraine.

The proposed structure of the report is from 25 to 40 pages (excluding appendices). The report must contain the following sections: executive summary, description of the project being evaluated and its context, as well as the reason and objectives of the evaluation, methodology section, presentation of the results of data collection and analysis, evaluation of the information collected, general conclusions and recommendations.

The Final Report shall be written by the evaluator in Ukrainian and English language and submitted to the Caritas Ukraine responsible person signed in paper or PDF and Word formats for further usage internally.

The information of the survey and the report is considered to be and ownership of Caritas Ukraine and could be used for further project design or other purposed within Caritas activity.

All documents and tools should be written in English and Ukrainian.

# Timeframe for Deliverables

The actual evaluation work is to be carried out from 15.03.2024 to 25.04.2024, resulting in a total of 30 days.

The timeline for the activities consists of the following phases:

Preparation Phase: 10 days

* Analysis of relevant project documents, as well as further research
* Preparation of inception report and exchange with Caritas Ukraine

Field Phase: 10 days

* Briefing with Caritas Ukraine and other relevant actors in Caritas Kyiv, Caritas Ivano-Frankivsk, Caritas
* Field visits
* Validation workshop involving Caritas Ukraine

Synthesis Phase: 10 days

* Draft evaluation report
* Produce final report including revision as per feedback

The key products expected for the evaluation are the following:

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| **Deliverable** | **Dates** |
| Workshops/ Meeting | **05.04.2024** |
| Draft Report | **13.04.2024** |
| Inception Report | **15.04.2024** |
| Final Report | **25.04.2024** |

The evaluator should present a detailed work plan and timeframe of all activities including the relevant resource allocation.

# Roles and Responsibilities

Caritas Ukraine is responsible for organizing and facilitating logistics in Ukraine. Caritas Ukraine and Caritas Ternopil, Caritas Khmelnytskyi, Caritas Odesa will provide access to all relevant project documents.

The consultant will work under the supervision of the Caritas Ukraine Project Manager and report to him during the evaluation phase.

# Guiding Principles & Donor concepts

The consultant is to conduct the evaluation in accordance with the principles outlined in the “Caritas Internationalis management standards” document, the “Caritas Code of conduct”. The evaluator will be provided with a copy of these documents.

The evaluator 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 ideally contribute to organizational learning and accountability.

# Professional Qualification and Experience

The evaluation consultant should meet the following, required skills and competence profile:

* The consultant should be a reliable and effective **evaluator** with experience in conducting evaluations and a proven record in delivering professional results. (The consultant will be asked to send samples of relevant evaluation)
* In-depth knowledge and experience in humanitarian assistance programs; Required
* Proven experience in developing and testing logical frameworks as well as quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods; Required
* 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; Required

* Strong expertise in using participatory tools; Required
* Fluency in written and spoken Ukrainian and English, ideally in conjunction with good skills in spoken Ukrainian and Russian; Required
* Country and regional experience in Ukraine; Required
* Good understanding and appropriate sensitivity in regards to different cultures and traditions; Optional
* Minimum qualification of a master’s degree or equivalent combination of education and relevant work experience; Optional

# Terms of Payment

The evaluator is to receive payment from Caritas Ukraine in 2 installments:

* **1st Payment**: 20% upon signing of the contract
* **Final Payment**: 80% upon the submission of the first draft of the evaluation report and final evaluation report, subject to its acceptance by Caritas

Caritas Ukraine will not settle any payment unless the consultancy institution accomplished all the tasks in a timely fashion. The basis for payment scheduling is to be determined during contract negotiations.

# Application Procedure

Interested candidates should submit their application material by 10.02.2024

The application itself should include the following components:

* Curriculum Vitae (CV) including 3 professional references, and indication of daily rates
* Cover letter transparently summarizing relevant experience in social sphere legislation and development of Logical Frameworks as well as practical experience in planning and conducting project evaluations
* Track record of conducted studies, research, publication and references
* A technical proposal for the evaluation, including the proposed evaluation methodology and work plan
* Financial proposal[[1]](#footnote-1) underlying the evaluation, including proposed fee for a maximum of 30 working days

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

Sheet title e-mail: RFP20240123.01\_Оцінювання проєкту

Clarifying questions: Marina Martynenko, project manager: [mmartynenko@caritas.ua](mmartynenko@caritas.ua%20)

Homepage: [http://caritas.ua/](http://caritas.ua/?fbclid=IwAR0ZpBO7UxmGBnCwFRMCxnA-B9yAjZxMEMWuJ4RcvDW9yFHzizkbWC8uBkg)

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)