

Suhareka/Suva Reka Smallholder Initiative – Local Development Fund (SUSI-LDF), Phase 2

Terms of Reference (ToR) for Final Evaluation

Project/Programme Title: Suhareka / Suva Reka Smallholder Initiative – Local Development Fund (SUSI – LDF), Phase 2

Country: Kosovo

Project/Programme Number: Project Number : 8303-00/2017

Name of Partner Organisation: Local Development Fund -LDF

1. Introduction/Background

Kosovo remains a largely rural country in which primary agricultural production predominates. About 54% of Kosovo's total area is agricultural land and 60% of the population lives in rural parts, the majority of them dependent on the agricultural activities for their livelihoods.¹ On the other hand, the contribution of the agricultural sector to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is about 12% and agricultural products comprise nearly 16% of the total exports.² The agriculture and rural development sector offers huge potential for growth and income generation especially in primary agriculture production and processing of agricultural products, as well as in rural non-farm sector. Cross country estimates show that GDP growth originating in agriculture is at least twice as effective in reducing poverty as GDP growth originating outside agriculture.³ Given the poverty in Kosovo is largely a rural phenomenon, focusing on agriculture and rural development sector is considered as the most effective strategy for reducing poverty.

Yet despite this potential, the agricultural sector is uncompetitive and unable to meet even domestic demand. Kosovo had negative trade balance of 455 million Euros (or about 8% of GDP) of agricultural and food products in 2015.⁴ These products accounted to 18% of total imports. The agricultural sector thus is seriously underperforming compared to its potential. This is largely due to the fact that most agriculture in Kosovo is carried out in small farms which are not organised properly and operate with little technical expertise, poor use of modern inputs and limited access to credit to invest and grow. Furthermore, there is lack of processing capacities where primary production can rely. All these factors account for low productivity and weak supply of agricultural products.

¹ According to the Agricultural Census conducted in 2014, by the Statistical Office of Kosovo, there are 130,775 agricultural holdings in Kosovo, which cultivate 413,635 ha of agricultural area and breed 261,689 cattle, 183,584 sheep and 28,430 goats. In average, an agricultural holding in Kosovo cultivates 3.2 ha of agricultural area and with cattle breed in average 3.9 cattle, 64 breeding sheep and 11.3 breeding goats. There are in total 362,700 persons working in agriculture and their labour input amounts to 86 620 Annual Work Units (AWU).

² Kosovo Agency for Statistic, Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Kosovo, 2015

³ World Bank (2009) World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development, The World Bank, Washington, DC

⁴ Kosovo Agency for Statistics, Foreign Trade Statistics for 2015.

The municipality of Suharekë/Suva Reka where the Project was focused also faces similar conditions. With 59,722 inhabitants according to the latest population census in 2011, the municipality of Suharekë/Suva Reka is largely rural and agricultural municipality, given its geographical position, climatic and soil conditions. For this reason, agricultural economy is an important segment of economic activity in the municipality. According to agricultural census results in 2014 in Suharekë/Suva Reka, there were 15,602 people working in 7,189 different agricultural holdings in 15,067 ha of utilised land, 6,246 ha of arable land and 10,469 livestock units. Suharekë/Suva Reka municipality has permanent grassland with 8,010 ha, crops with 735 ha, orchards with 225 ha, and vineyards with 501 ha.⁵ However, according to the same census results, about 49% of agricultural holdings in Suharekë/Suva Reka have less than 1 ha land for cultivation and another 22.4% of holdings have land between 1 to 2 ha⁶, while each agricultural holding dealing with livestock, on average, has 3.5 cattle, 51 breeding sheep, lower than national averages, and 15 breeding goats. On top of the small size farms, when farming practices are carried out with little technical expertise, poor use of modern inputs and production methods and limited access to credit coupled with very weak processing capacities then it is not surprise to see the municipality suffering from the same socio-economic conditions as other parts of Kosovo.

Extending the experience gained through phase one (which was implemented during 2015 -2016), SUSI Phase 2 project (which covers the period 2017-2019) was focused on smallholders with the aim of increasing their production capacity and transitioning to higher value-added agricultural products. The project positioning on smallholder farmers and facilitating their transition to semi-commercial farming represents the real added-value compared to other projects and interventions financed by the Government of Kosovo, and the international development community in the municipality of Suharekë/Suva Reka.

Project supported smallholder farmers' physical assets through a grant scheme (output 2) and upgrade farmers' technical capacity and skills through organising tailor-made technical training programs (output 1) through extension service providers. This in turn is expected to facilitate their transition to higher value-added products (such as labour-intensive horticulture products) and/or increased their production (outcome), profitability and higher incomes to grasp growth potential and promise for poverty reduction (impact). Furthermore, due to limited production capacities, for smallholders, producer organisations are essential to achieve competitiveness. For this reason, project supported interventions to strengthen producer organisations to induce cooperation and collaboration of joint actions (output 3) to provide additional benefits for small farmers (for entire log frame of the Project please see Annex 2).

Targeted groups and partners

- **Smallholder farmers:** the Project has targeted directly 60-70 smallholders to improve their physical assets and technical skills in order to improve their production base.
- **Women smallholders:** the Project directly targeted 24-28 women smallholders (or 40 percent of all targeted smallholders) with a grant scheme to improve their physical assets and technical skills in order to improve their production base.

⁵ The most common products that were cultivated in the municipality of Suharekë/Suva Reka are follows: There were 3,918 holdings cultivating wheat in 3,173 ha area; maize: 2,904 holdings in 1,044 ha area; Barley and barley for malting: 76 holdings in 45 ha area; Oat: 215 holdings in 137 ha area; Grain beans: 1,224 holdings in 116 ha area; Potatoes 1,406 holdings in 63 ha area; Fodder crops: 1,471 holdings in 839 ha area; Alfalfa: 1,224 holdings in 579 ha. Vegetables: 3,387 holdings in 325 ha area (Pepper 3,202 holdings in 70 ha; Tomatoes: 2,785 holdings in 45 ha; Cucumbers: 804 holdings in 16 ha; Onions: 2,642 in 75 ha; Cabbage: 787 holdings in 30 ha; Water melon 500 in 35 ha; Strawberries 230 holdings in 8 ha). Vineyards: 1,620 holdings in 501 ha. Orchard plantation: 742 holdings in 146 ha (Apple: 567 holdings in 78 ha; Pear 230 in 20 ha; plum 199 with 11 ha). Cattle 2,844 holdings with 10,088 cattle; Sheep 90 holdings with 4,609 sheep; Goats 81 holdings with 1,253 goats; Poultry 3,382 holdings with 104 926 poultry; beehives 345 holdings with 7,574 beehives

⁶ According to the agricultural census, from total 7189 agricultural holdings, 1,981 were from 0 and less than 0,5 ha land; 1,549 were from 0,5 to less than 1 ha; 1,614 were from 1 to less than 2 ha; 1,448 were from 2 to less than 5 ha; 401 were from 5 to less than 10 ha land.

- **Youth (18-30 years):** The Project directly targeted 21-24 youth smallholders (or 35 percent of all targeted smallholders) with a grant scheme to improve their physical assets and technical skills in order to improve their production base.
- **Public and Private Extension Services:** The Project targeted to support the public extension services in the municipality of Suharekë/Suhareka or DAFRD (Directorate of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development) to improve the effectiveness and outreach of advisory services, particularly to smallholder and in parallel to explore the potential of developing private extension service providers through processors, integrators, collection points or input suppliers.
- **Producers associations and/or cooperatives:** the Project included interventions to strengthen producer organisations and targeted to support for up to 5 producers' associations.

2. Purpose

The main purpose of the final project evaluation is to demonstrate accountability to stakeholders on the performance of SUSI-LDF project, and to draw key lessons from project interventions, which would both support and provide guidance in the development of the new programming cycle. The main stakeholders of this evaluation are: Austrian Development Agency, Municipality of Suhareka/ Suva Reka in particular Directorate of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development (MAFRD), beneficiary farmers, representatives of the association "Women Farmers – Suhareke and LDF.

3. Objective

Following three (3) years of implementation, the Project has foreseen to conduct an external final evaluation. The main objective of the evaluation is to assess and present project interventions and achieved results (output, outcome), conclusions, lessons learnt and recommendations. The final evaluation is intended to assess the (i) relevance, (ii) effectiveness, (iii) sustainability (iv) efficiency and (v) impact (if reliable data is available) of the Project interventions implemented by the Project Implementation Unit within the LDF. In addition, the external project evaluation will assess:

- a) the design and coherence of the project/programme including the design of the log frame matrix/programme theory and present the underlying theory of change and its assumptions;
- b) the strengths and weaknesses in terms of planning, management, implementation and monitoring;
- c) the extent to which cross-cutting issues (gender and environment mainstreaming) were applied;
- d) identify key lessons learned and to propose practical recommendations for follow-up programs.

4. Subject and Focus

This evaluation will be conducted in Suhareka / Suva Reka Municipality, especially in mountainous area and villages since most of the financed farms and other beneficiaries under SUSI-LDF 2 project are located in the municipality or in surrounding areas of the municipality. However, the specific places will be selected by the engaged evaluation team foreseen to be constructed under this assignment. In particular, the evaluation team will be required to interview supported smallholder farmers including women, men

and youth, public extension services in the municipality or DAFRD (Directorate of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development) and Municipal authorities. In addition, the evaluation team is expected to interview representatives of the women farmer association which is being supported and created by SUSI-LDF Project (both phases).

As explained above, the scope of this evaluation will include an examination of the (i) relevance, (ii) effectiveness, (iii) sustainability, (iv) efficiency of the Project interventions implemented by the Project Implementation Unit within the LDF. If reliable data is available on comparison and treatment group, the evaluation team should also assess potential impact of the Project interventions. In such case, the evaluation team should interview not only direct beneficiaries (i.e. treatment group) but also those from the control group.

5. Specific Evaluation Questions

The evaluation assignment will intend to answer the following list of indicative evaluation question:

Relevance

- To what extent are the objectives of the project/programme still valid for the partner country, the partner organization and the beneficiaries?

Effectiveness

- To what extent has the project/programme already achieved its outputs and outcome(s) or will be likely to achieve it/them?
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the outcome(s)/expected results/outputs? (Also consider any which were possibly beyond the control of the project)
- Was the project/programme managed as planned? If not, what issues occurred and why?
- To what extent was gender mainstreaming included in the project/programme and to what extent were recommendations from the ADA gender-assessment considered and implemented?
- To what extent was environmental mainstreaming included in the project/programme and to what extent were recommendations from the ADA environment-assessment considered and implemented?

Efficiency

- If applicable, to what extent were all items/equipment purchased and used as planned under this project/programme?
- Was the project/programme implemented in the most efficient way (time, personnel resources)? Have any issues emerged, if so which ones and why?

Impact

- How many women, men, girls, boys and people in total have already benefited from the project/programme (immediate impact)?

- What exactly has already changed in the lives of women, men, girls, boys (immediate impact)?

Sustainability

- To what extent will the benefits of the project/programme continue after the withdrawal of the donor?
- What is the likelihood project to be integrated in local structures and/or funded by other sources?
- What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the project/programme?

6. Approach and Methods

The evaluation approach should be developed and implemented as presented below:

Contract and Kick-off meeting: Once the external evaluation team has been contractually engaged, LDF will organize a meeting with the team to discuss further steps. The relevant background documents, including available data, will be provided to the evaluation team.

Desk Study: During this phase, all relevant programming documents should be reviewed, as well as documents shaping the wider strategy/policy framework. On the basis of the information collected the evaluation team should re-construct and analyse the intervention logic/programme theory and theory of change and its assumptions.

Inception-Phase: During this stage an inception report shall be prepared which will describe the design of the evaluation and will elaborate on how data will be obtained and analysed. The inception report will also confirm the final time schedule for the assignment. Since data triangulation and quality control are very important these aspects need to be discussed in the inception report. The field trip will only take place upon official approval of the inception report by the contractor.

Field-phase: The evaluation team during this phase will conduct interviews and other data collection methods to gather relevant data as per evaluation scope and design. During this phase, the evaluation team is also expected to analyse and interpret all the data collected. It is expected that the evaluation will include quantitative and qualitative data disaggregated by sex.

Presentation: this phase includes organization of a presentation of key findings from the field phase with implementation unit and other key stakeholders. Such presentation is expected to be organized at the end of the field trip.

Final Draft Report: This phase is mainly devoted to the preparation of the draft report. If the project implementation unit considers the draft report of sufficient quality, they will circulate it to DAFRD in Suva/Suva Reka and ADC Technical Cooperation Office in Prishtina for comments. On the basis of comments expressed, the evaluation team has to amend and revise the draft report. Comments requesting methodological quality improvements should be taken into account, except where there is a demonstrated impossibility, in which case full justification should be provided by the evaluation team. Comments on the substance of the report may be either accepted or rejected by the evaluator. In the latter instance, the evaluation team is required to explain reasons in writing.

Final Report: During this phase the evaluation team submits the final report after addressing comments. (Please, **see reporting requirements under point 9**).

For the different phases it is expected that data and information will be obtained through different methods such as: analysis of documents, structured interviews, semi-structured interviews face-to face or by phone, group discussions, online-survey (if applicable), others. All data collected needs to be disaggregated by sex.

It is expected that the evaluation/review team will present concrete recommendations which are addressed to the specific stakeholders. It is currently estimated that about 30 people to be interviewed. The Guidelines for Project and Programme Evaluations developed by the Austrian Development Agency need to be considered throughout the entire evaluation process.

Also see:

http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Evaluierungs_Leitfaeden/EN_Leitfaeden_Evaluierung.pdf

7. Timetable

A total of 12 working days is currently estimated for this assignment. The table below presents the key milestones and deadlines for achievement of these milestones:

Action	Responsible	Date
Submission of proposal/bid (electronically)	Contractor	30.07.2019
Contract signed and documents provided	Contract signed between LDF and consultant	06.09.2019
Kick-Off meeting	Meeting between contractor and consultant	13.09.2019
Desk Study	Consultant	20.09.2019
First interviews	Consultant	27.09.2019
Submission of draft inception report	Consultant	04.10.2019
Inclusion of comments in inception report	Consultant	13.10.2019
Submission of final inception report	Consultant	15.10.2019
Field Visit, interviews etc. and feedback workshop	Consultant	28.10.2019
Submission of the draft report	Consultant	11.11.2019
Presentation of final draft report	Consultant	18.11.2019
Inclusion of feedback in final draft report	Contractor	22.11.2019
Submission of final evaluation report (hard copy and electronic copy) to contractor	Consultant	29 November 2019

8. The Evaluation Team

The evaluation team can be consisting of one member or a team of members (national and international). Key Qualifications in the team should be:

- Master degree in relevant fields
- A minimum of 15 years overall professional experience and expertise in the sector of agriculture and rural development
- Senior consultant has conducted at least ten evaluations in the last five years in the field of economic or and regional or and agricultural context. Team member on the other hand, has participated in at least three evaluations in the field of economic or and regional or and agricultural context in the last three years
- Knowledge of country Kosovo with the focus on agriculture and rural development sector

- Working experience in Kosovo and in Balkans is desirable;
- Excellent understanding of M&E systems and project cycle management
- Excellent understanding of result-based management and analysing, preparing theory of change
- Experience and expertise in evaluating cross-cutting issues
- Experience in social science methods
- Excellent oral and written English skills and Albanian is preferable
- Sound MS Office and IT skills

The consultants must not have been involved in the design, implementation or monitoring of this project.

9. Reports

The consultants will submit the following reports:

- an inception report (10-15 pages without annexes),
- a final draft evaluation report (about 25-30 pages without annexes), including a draft executive summary **and the results-assessment form (part of the reporting requirement)**
- and the final evaluation report (25-30 pages without annexes), the final executive summary **and the results-assessment form (part of the reporting requirement)**

All reports need to be written in English.

The executive summary should summarize key findings and recommendations (three to five pages) and needs to be submitted as part of the final draft report.

The findings and recommendations of the draft final report and final report have to be structured according to the evaluation questions. An outline of the report's structure needs to be agreed upon during the inception phase.

The quality of the reports will be judged according to the following criteria:

- Is the results-matrix format part of the report?
- Does the report contain a comprehensive and clear executive summary?
- Were the Terms of Reference fulfilled and is this reflected in the report?
- Is the report structured according to the OECD/DAC criteria?
- Are all evaluation questions answered?
- Are the methods and processes of the evaluation sufficiently documented in the evaluation report?
- Does the report describe and assess the intervention logic (e.g. logframe, program theory) and present/analyze a theory of change and its underlying assumptions?
- Are cross-cutting issues analyzed in the report?
- Are the conclusions and recommendations based on findings and are they clearly stated in the report?
- Does the report clearly differentiate between conclusions, lessons learnt and recommendations?
- Are the recommendations realistic and is it clearly expressed to whom the recommendations are addressed to?
- Were the most significant stakeholders involved consulted?
- Does the report present the information contained in a presentable and clearly arranged form?
- Is the report free from spelling mistakes and unclear linguistic formulations?
- Can the report be distributed in the delivered form?

10. Co-Ordination/Responsibility

All requests for clarification, logistic details should be arranged with the implementation unit of the SUSI-LDF 2 project, Ms. Blerta Kuçi, Project Manager.

Contact details:

Phone: +383 44 479877

E-mail: blerta.kuci@ldf-ks.org

Please send your proposal latest by 19th of July, 2019 at Mr. Egzon Elshani, Project Coordinator , egzon.elshani@ldf-ks.org

11. Annexes:

- Results-Assessment Form to be filled in by the evaluation team
- Log-frame/results framework of the Project

Once the evaluation team has been contractually engaged, the Project Team will submit all relevant background reports.

Annex 1: Results-Assessment Form for Final Project Evaluations

This form has to be filled in electronically by the evaluator/reviewer. No evaluation report will be accepted without this form. The form has to be included at the beginning of the evaluation/review report.

Title of project/programme (please, spell out):	
Contract Period of project/programme:	
ADC number of project/programme:	
Name of project/programme partner:	
Country and Region of project/programme :	
Budget of this project/programme:	
Name of evaluation company (spell out) and names of evaluators:	
Date of completion of evaluation/review:	
Please tick appropriate box:	
a) Evaluation/review managed by ADA/ADC Coordination Office	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Evaluation managed by project partner:	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please tick appropriate box:

a) Mid-Term Evaluation

b) Final Evaluation

c) Mid-Term Review

d) Final Review

Others: please, specify:

Project Outcome (Please, include as stated in the Logframe Matrix):

For Final Evaluation/Review⁷: Project Outcome: To what extent has the project already achieved its outcome(s) according to the Logframe Matrix? Please, tick appropriate box

Outcome(s) was/were:

Fully achieved:	Almost achieved:	Partially achieved:	Not achieved:
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Please, also explain your assessment: What exactly was achieved and why? If not achieved, why not? (Please, consider description of outcome and relevant indicators)

For Mid-Term Evaluation/Review⁸: Project Outcome: To what extent do you think the project will most likely achieve its outcome(s) according to the Logframe Matrix Please, tick appropriate box

Outcome(s) will most likely be:

Fully achieved:	Almost achieved:	Partially achieved:	Not achieved:
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Please, also explain your assessment: (Please, consider description of outcome and relevant indicators)

⁷ Please, only fill in in case this is a final project evaluation/review.

⁸ Please, only fill in in case this is a mid-term evaluation/review.

Project Outputs: To what extent has the project already achieved its outputs⁹ according to the Logframe Matrix ? Please, tick appropriate boxes

Output 1 (Please, include as stated in the Logframe Matrix):

Output was:

Fully achieved:	Almost achieved:	Partially achieved:	Not achieved:
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Please, explain your assessment: (Please, consider description of output and relevant indicators)

Output 2 (Please, include as stated in the Logframe Matrix):

Output 2 was:

Fully achieved:	Almost achieved:	Partially achieved:	Not achieved:
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Please, explain your assessment: (Please, consider description of output and relevant indicators)

Output 3 (Please, include as stated in the Logframe Matrix):

Output 3 was:

Fully achieved:	Almost achieved:	Partially achieved:	Not achieved:
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Please, explain your assessment: (Please, consider description of output and relevant indicators)

⁹ In case there are more than three outputs, please, add them.

In case there are more than three Outputs please, state as above.

Impact/Beneficiaries:

How many women, men, girls, boys and people in total have already benefited from this project directly and indirectly? Please, explain

What exactly has already changed in the lives of women, men, girls, boys and/or institutions from this project? Please, explain:

Which positive and/or negative effects/impacts in terms of gender can be possibly be attributed to the project? Please, explain:

If applicable, which institutions have benefitted from this project/programme and how?

Mainstreaming cross-cutting issues:

Gender: To what extent was gender mainstreaming included in the project? To what extent were the recommendations - if any- from the ADA internal gender-assessment considered and implemented?

Environment: To what extent was environmental mainstreaming included in the project? To what extent were the recommendations - if any- from the ADA internal environment-assessment considered and implemented?

Which positive and/or negative effects/impacts in terms of environment can be possibly be attributed to the project? Please, explain

Social Standards: To what extent were the social standards monitored by relevant partners? Have any issues emerged? Please, explain

Overall/Other Comments:

Annex 2: Log-frame/results framework (to be added)