

MID-TERM EVALUATION OF SWISS SOLIDARITY UKRAINE CRISIS RESPONSE

Terms of reference

Background

Following the Russian large-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Swiss Solidarity (SwS) launched an appeal for donations and collected more than CHF 134 million. The Ukraine fund supports projects that respond to the needs of the people affected by the armed conflict in Ukraine.

By January 2024, 40 projects in Ukraine were approved for a total contribution of CHF 72.9 million. With a few exceptions, the projects are implemented by Swiss partner NGOs of SwS, either directly, in collaboration with local partners or with mixed modalities. They are active in 21 of the country's 27 oblasts.

Multipurpose cash assistance accounts for approximately 44% of total programming in terms of funding volume, followed by shelter/housing repair projects aiming to contribute to acceptable housing conditions that account for 38%. Overall, SwS partners have however been providing a multi-sectoral response trying to tackle the broad spectrum of existing needs. Cash assistance and shelter support have been complemented by in-kind assistance, health assistance, mental health and psychosocial support and protection interventions as well as demining and other activities.

A scoping mission focusing on cash and voucher assistance (CVA) and shelter/housing repairs was carried out in Ukraine in May 2023. The mission recommended issues and challenges that could be assessed in an upcoming evaluation. The report of the mission (available upon request) informed the elaboration of these Terms of Reference.

In the second half of 2023, the funding guidelines have been adapted, aiming at more targeted integration of CVA interventions into sectoral programming and a better tailoring of shelter solutions to short- and midterm housing needs.

The Ukraine crisis is one of the contexts in which SwS will deliberately promote locally led humanitarian action and will carry out a pilot initiative of direct funding to local and national organisations.

Purpose

The evaluation has a twofold purpose:

- It is intended to strengthen SwS's accountability as it will analyse whether the activities funded are relevant and are implemented efficiently and in line with the foundation's mandate and objectives, for instance to provide assistance based on need alone and to the most vulnerable.
- The evaluation process should provide learning opportunities to SwS, its accredited partners and the local/national organisations that lead and implement the activities. It thus aims to improve the relevance and quality of current and future projects funded by SwS in Ukraine.

Scope

The evaluation will review ongoing (if a meaningful portion of the project will already have been implemented) and completed projects that have substantial CVA and/or shelter/housing repairs components. At the time of establishing these terms of reference, the following projects appear to be relevant for the evaluation:

Reference	NGO	Project	From	To	Contribution (CHF)
318.055	Caritas	Warm 4 Winter - Ukraine (W4W-Ukraine)	01.11.22	31.05.23	5'070'632
322.015	Caritas	Vulnerable populations in Ukraine affected by the conflict have improved resilience and increased protection	01.05.23	30.04.24	5'000'000
317.012	Swiss Red Cross	Red Cross Humanitarian Response in Ivano-Frankivsk & Ternopil – Phase II	01.08.22	31.03.23	4'981'836
322.010	Swiss Red Cross	Red Cross Humanitarian Response 06/2023 - 05/2024	01.06.23	31.05.24	4'995'460
317.016	HEKS EPER	Support to conflict affected IDPs, returnees and host communities through integrated Cash and Shelter assistance	01.09.22	31.08.23	4'500'000
324.017	HEKS EPER	Responding to immediate and essential needs of vulnerable, conflict-affected populations in Hard-to-Reach locations	01.01.24	31.12.24	2'568'112
317.009	Helvetas	Repair Facilitation Ukraine	01.07.22	31.12.22	394'836
319.019	Helvetas	Repair Facilitation Ukraine - Phase 2	01.01.23	30.09.23	2'162'492
325.004	Helvetas	Supporting community-led shelter assistance	01.12.23	30.11.24	1'785'870
320.011	Medair	Multi-sectoral emergency assistance for affected population to cover post conflict emerging needs (2023)	01.04.23	31.01.24	3'500'000
316.028	Solidar	Humanitarian response in Ukraine	01.07.22	30.06.23	1'902'167
324.015	Solidar	Pathways to Inclusion (PATI): Humanitarian Response in Ukraine II	01.10.23	30.09.24	2'303'944
319.020	Terre des hommes	Covering basic needs & enhancing access to adapted shelter, education & quality child protection services for children & families	01.03.23	31.12.23	1'629'457

Evaluation questions

The following questions are relevant for both CVA and shelter/housing repairs focused projects:

1. What institutional setups and arrangements for project implementation prove the most efficient, both in terms of speed and costs, without compromising the quality of the assistance? This applies particularly for house repairs, where cost and speed should not be at the expenses of final quality and wellbeing. (Effectiveness and efficiency)
2. Do the projects reach people with vulnerabilities, are they accessible to them and to what extent do they consider their specific situation and needs? (Socioeconomic coverage and proportionality to needs)
3. Is there evidence of customized approaches to gender and inclusion that make the interventions more effective and impactful? (Gender and inclusion as a cross-cutting theme)



The June 2023 scoping report concluded that testing the relevance and/or coherence of the large scale MPCA programming that was prevalent in 2022 and 2023 does not come across as a priority concern. It is however of interest to investigate whether the intention of SwS to pivot to more targeted CVA interventions is being realised in the more recently approved projects:

4. What is the degree of integration of CVA initiatives into the intervention logic of the programs they are nested in? Is the theory of change of the project explicit, and does the cash intervention fit into it? (Effectiveness of targeted CVA components)

Regarding housing and shelter rehabilitation (including cash for shelter interventions), the evaluation should focus on effectiveness, connectedness and impact. This concerns the implementation arrangements covered in question 1 and includes the following more specific aspects:

5. For each type of shelter response, have partners ensured adequate accommodation and enabled families to live with dignity? (Appropriateness of shelter solutions)
6. How have partners tailored shelter responses to the various short and mid-term stay hosting needs? Which assistance delivers the greatest impact and sustainability for the different needs? (Connectedness)
7. What solutions for more permanent housing show the best chance of success in terms of social and economic inclusion of internally displaced persons? (Impact)
8. To what extent and how are partners in their projects enhancing and/or including self-recovery initiatives of local organisations or self-recovery efforts of affected people?

Methodology

The evaluation team is expected to use mixed methods in their approach that could include the following:

- A review of the project documentation (funding application, reports)
- Desk research that includes a review of existing literature and reports resulting from beneficiary accountability initiatives and available evaluations
- Project visits and interviews with affected people, project staff, local authorities, aid coordination bodies, local thematic experts and other relevant stakeholders
- Quantitative surveys, to prepare or to validate the qualitative fieldwork

It is the duty of the evaluators to propose and to justify a methodology and a sequence of activities in the bidding document. The evaluation team is then expected to present a more detailed methodology in the inception report.

Throughout the process, the evaluation team is encouraged to allow for interactions with the implementing organisations (international and local) and to keep them updated about the methodology and the process of implementation.

Outputs

The evaluation team is expected to produce the following outputs in line with agreed deadlines:

- An inception report
- A draft evaluation report
- A final evaluation report, including a short summary of evaluation findings suitable for public communication
- Presentation of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation at sharing and learning events, one in Ukraine and one in Switzerland



Steps and deliverables

1. Desk study of project documentation

The evaluation team will have access to the project files and to discuss with SwS staff (on site or online) to develop the list of projects to be considered as well as an initial schedule.

2. Inception report

The inception report will include the following elements:

- The list of projects to be considered
- The work plan for the evaluation team
- An evaluation matrix setting out: the subsidiary evaluation questions; the criteria used for assessing the questions; the planned sources for the necessary data and the methods used to collect the data
- The detailed methodology that the team plans to use
- The risks inherent in the proposed methodology as well as the broader risks that the evaluation may face
- The planned structure of the evaluation report

3. Field visits and data gathering

The SwS partners and their local partners (if any) that implement the projects will be requested to assist with information, data and interactions with project staff. The evaluation team is however expected to be autonomous regarding their transport and accommodation arrangements and their security management.

4. Draft evaluation report

The draft evaluation report will be of no more than 30 pages plus annexes. The report should be written in an accessible style suitable for humanitarian professionals.

The report should include a list of recommendations, categorized according to priority (high, mid, low). Such recommendations may go beyond the scope of the evaluation questions laid out above and hence relate to any of the OECD DAC evaluation criteria.

The raw results of the quantitative survey should be added as annex to the report.

The evaluators are encouraged to include vignettes of individual or family experiences of people coping with the situation in Ukraine and of the role of SwS funding projects in this regard.

The draft will be reviewed by the evaluation steering committee and the technical backstopping team. The evaluation manager will provide comments to the evaluators.

5. Final evaluation report

After receiving comments on the draft report, the evaluation team will prepare a final evaluation report incorporating those comments that they accept.

The final report should include a two-page summary drafted in accessible language suitable for a general public.



6. Sharing and learning events in Ukraine and in Switzerland

The evaluators will present and discuss the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation and lead discussions at events in Ukraine and in Switzerland for SwS partners active in Ukraine, local organisations they partner with and other stakeholders.

The evaluation team

Preference will be given to an evaluation group or company based in Ukraine and/or consisting of Ukrainian professionals.

The evaluation team will consist of a team leader and one or several team members.

The evaluation leader is expected to

- have significant experience of humanitarian evaluation using a range of methods
- have excellent writing skills in English
- have an extensive experience of the Ukrainian context

The team as a whole should have

- strong experience in Ukraine, detailed context knowledge and a thorough understanding of the social fabric in Ukraine as it has evolved since the beginning of the full scale invasion
- strong expertise in qualitative methods and ability to analyse quantitative data
- experience in and knowledge of cash and voucher assistance
- experience and knowledge in shelter and housing interventions, with appropriate technical background in architecture or engineering
- experience and knowledge in gender approaches
- experience and knowledge in participatory approaches
- good presentation and communication skills for the purposes of the sharing/learning event

Evaluation management arrangements

This is an independent evaluation. The evaluation team will keep SwS informed of any threats to the independence of the evaluation.

a. Evaluation manager

The evaluation will be managed by a steering committee formed by staff from the programme department in SwS.

b. Technical backstopping

Technical experts from the SwS project commission will be called upon to advise the steering committee. The experts will provide recommendations on the evaluation process and outputs.

c. Reference group

A reference group will be drawn from operational and evaluation staff of SwS partner NGOs that are active in Ukraine. The group will discuss and provide comments on the inception report and on the draft evaluation report and make recommendations to the steering committee. The final decisions on the outputs rest with the steering committee.

Insurance and security

The evaluators are responsible for their own insurance coverage and security management.



Communication

The results of this evaluation are meant to be accessible to the public. However, the mention of individual partners and projects or details that allow to identify individuals, partners or projects is being avoided if it is not relevant for the understanding of the evaluation's results.

SwS may be conducting communication activities highlighting examples of the results and the impact of the foundation's work. The evaluation leader or a member of the team is expected to provide input to such communication activities in terms of their time, up to a maximum of one working day, to be interviewed, in Switzerland and/or in Ukraine, as needed. During such media interviews the evaluators are expected to retain their independence and to be frank and truthful in any interviews that they give. There is no expectation that they will present anything else than an accurate picture of what the evaluation found.

The final evaluation report will be published in English and in Ukrainian.

Timeline

The following broad timeline is proposed for the process:

Publication of call for expressions of interest	March 2024
Recruitment of the evaluators	April 2024
Initial document review and desk research	May 2024
Inception report	May 2024
Fieldwork/survey	June to August 2024
First draft of evaluation report	31 August 2024
Final version of evaluation report	30 September 2024
Sharing and learning events	September – November 2024

Bid instructions

Bidders should submit the following:

1. A letter confirming that the bidder has contacted the proposed team members and that they can carry out the evaluation in the timeframe given in the ToR. The letter should also indicate the bidding company or group's experience with evaluations of this type.
2. A short (no more than two page) proposal on the methodology
3. A budget (in Swiss Francs) for the evaluation, setting out the full cost of the evaluation. This should include:
 - a. The daily cost and number of days (by task) for each expert
 - b. The daily cost and number of days for other personnel (if required)
 - c. The costs of per diems by location and number of days
 - d. The costs related to the quantitative survey (if subcontracted to a survey firm)
 - e. All other costs for the evaluation (the team will be responsible for their own transport, accommodation and security management)

The costs of hosting the sharing and learning events will be covered directly by Swiss Solidarity and are not part of the evaluation budget.



4. CVs for the proposed team members (no longer than 4 pages per CV)
5. A table showing which of the team members meet the skill requirements (see chapter “evaluation team”: please use scores (0 - no experience, 1 - some experience, 2 - significant experience, 3 - very significant experience)
6. Two examples (or links to examples) of reports drafted by the team leader
7. Two examples of previous evaluations managed by the bidding company or group

In the event of the score of two or more of the highest tenderers being close together, a second stage is foreseen. Short-listed tenderers may then be asked to submit a more detailed methodology proposal.

The final selection will be made after interviews.

Costs

The budget for this evaluation (including contingencies and taxes) shall not exceed CHF 100'000.

Assessment criteria

Aspect	Criteria	Points
Locally led evaluation	Evaluation company or group is based in Ukraine or includes Ukrainian professionals, with detailed knowledge and a thorough understanding of the context in Ukraine	20
Team leader	Significant experience of humanitarian evaluation using a range of methods	15
	Excellent writing skills in English	10
Whole team	Expertise and technical background in cash and voucher assistance and in shelter/housing repairs and rehabilitation	15
	Ability to analyse quantitative survey data	5
	Experience and expertise in gender and participatory approaches	5
Methodology	Extent to which the proposed methodology is fit for the purpose of responding to the evaluation questions	15
Price	Score = $15 \times (1 - (\text{this bid} - \text{cheapest bid}) / (\text{most expensive bid} - \text{cheapest bid}))$	15
	Maximum possible score	100

Submission of offers

Bids should be submitted by 08:00 (Geneva time) on Monday 20.04.2024 to: jobs@swiss-solidarity.org

