



**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE
SKILLING IN AGRIPRENEURSHIP FOR INCREASED YOUTH EMPLOYMENT (SAY)
PROJECT**

1.0 Introduction

AVSI Foundation is an international NGO with headquarters in Italy, which has been active in Uganda since 1984. Its current activities are focused in the areas of agriculture and food security, education, health, livelihoods, social protection, nutrition, energy and environment, and refugee programs in Uganda.

Our Vision: AVSI Foundation works for a world where the person, aware of his or her value and dignity, is the protagonist of his or her own integral development and that of his or her community, even in crisis and emergency contexts. **Our Mission:** AVSI Foundation implements cooperation projects in various sectors with a preferential focus on education, meaning that the person is accompanied towards self-discovery and recognition that the other person is a resource.

Agricultural Interventions have been a key component of AVSI Foundation's presence in Uganda since 1984. Being a country, whose economic backbone is in agriculture, AVSI's interventions in the sector has been a significant contributor to community transformation and development as a whole.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development puts youth at the centre of the future of the world with the articulation that "The future of humanity and of our planet lies in our hands. It lies also in the hands of today's younger generation who will pass the torch to future generations". One of AVSI Foundation's strategies for youth engagement in agriculture is the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) engagement of the public sector for quality standards and systemic framework (capacity building) support and of the private sector for skill enhancement, resource mobilization, placement and job creation in the agriculture sector. AVSI Foundation's main objectives in youth engagement are improved skills and competence of youth, increased access to information, credit and other resources, and enhanced enabling environment for youth to engage in productive ventures and become protagonists in their respective communities. More information can be accessed at the following website: www.avsi.org.

1.1 Background of SAY Project

AVSI Foundation is implementing the 4-year "Skilling in Agripreneurship for increased Youth Employment" – SAY project funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in 31 districts across 5 regions of Uganda targeting 18,800 youth aged 18-30 years for immediate employment and 6,500 youth aged 13<18 years for increased engagement in agriculture. The SAY project aims to contribute concretely to increased agri-skills level of youth and their gainful employment in the agriculture sector in Uganda through agripreneurship skills and knowledge transfer involving local and international public and private actors as part of efforts to socio-economically spur Uganda to middle-income status.

Achieving the desired goal of the project will be conditioned to assumptions, management of anticipated risks, inputs and resources required for the project, and implementation of planned interventions to attain expected output results that will trigger intermediate outcomes that if sustained will lead to the desired high-level outcomes thus achieving the specific objectives of the project.

1.2 Project Goal: To contribute to increased Agri-skills levels and gainful employment of youth in the agriculture sector in Uganda.

1.3 Specific Project Objectives

- i. Employable agribusiness skills levels of 18,800 youth 18-30 years old in target areas in Uganda enhanced by 2024.
- ii. Skilled youth (aged 18-30 years) employment in well-paying agribusiness jobs and self-run agripreneurship in target project areas of Uganda boosted by the end of the project (2024).
- iii. Youth aged 13 <18 years (6,500) in target project areas of Uganda increased their engagement in agriculture for long-term career paths or key economic ventures by the end of the project (2024).
- iv. Enabling environment for market-responsive Agri-skilling and youth gainful engagement in agribusiness in Uganda strengthened by 2024.

The project contributes to the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands 2019-2024 Multi-Year Strategic Plan, Vision 2040 of Uganda, Uganda National Agriculture Policy 2013 and the TVET 2019 Policy with a focus on youth. It will furthermore contribute to the following Sustainable Development Goals: #1 No Poverty, #2 Zero Hunger, #5 Gender Equality, #7 Affordable and Clean Energy, #8 Decent Work and Economic Growth, #13 Climate Action, #15 Life On Land, #16 Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, #17 Partnerships for the Goals and will have a tangible impact to Uganda's SDG report card.

2.0 Description of the Assignment

As the implementation of the SAY project approaches its halfway point. AVSI Foundation is obligated to conduct a mid-term evaluation to measure the achievements against targets that have so far been attained and to assess the effectiveness of the various approaches applied in the implementation of the project. This assignment requires the engagement of a consultant; AVSI Foundation is seeking a competent consultant or firm to undertake a mid-term evaluation for the SAY project. This evaluation will involve the collection and analysis of primary and secondary qualitative and quantitative data from the project sites, inclusive of beneficiary categories to ascertain the level of progress on the achievement of set targets as outlined in the project log frame. The Mid-Term Evaluation will focus on the period from November,2020 to May,2023.

This Terms of Reference (ToR) outlines the scope of the assignment.

2.1 The Overall Objective of Assignment

To evaluate the progress of the implementation and achievement of the SAY project towards realizing its objectives and outcomes and draw out lessons for how SAY can be improved during the remaining period of implementation for more positive outcomes.

2.2 Specific Objectives of Assignment

The midterm evaluation objectives are:

- (a).To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the project interventions in terms of ;
 - How relevant (or not) are SAY interventions (skills development, provision of start-ups/booster packages, linkages to critical agribusiness services, access to finance, DIT assessment and certification, Public-Private Partnerships, co-financing, focusing on priority occupation and value chains, digitalization and ICT in agriculture, Climate Smart Approaches

and Earn as You Learn Model) in the operating context?

- To what extent have the interventions contributed to youth employability in Agriculture?
- To what extent (if at all) are assumptions (economic stability, partners' cost share, interest of the youth and government ministries to participate) in SAY project theory of change holding true? Are there any other emerging assumptions and risks that may either positively or negatively affect the project?
- How effective (or not) Public-Private Partnership approach in terms cost-effective delivery, good quality service delivery, customer focused services, enhanced incentive and motivation of the private sector, value for money, better utilization of project assets in achieving the overall goal of the project.
- To what extent (if at all) and in what ways are district stakeholders (Local government and CBOs) involved in SAY project activities?

(b). What are the opportunities and barriers for SAY project to contribute to sustainable youth employment in Agriculture?

(c). What have been the key successes, lessons learnt and recommendations from project implementation which can be capitalized on in improving subsequent project delivery towards enhancing youth employment in Agriculture?

2.3 Expected Evaluation Deliverables

It is anticipated that the consultant/firm will produce the following deliverables:

- a) An Inception report (to be submitted and accepted prior to commencement of field work including the following items:
 - A detailed methodological approach including, key research questions, defined indicators, sampling framework, review matrix and data collection tools.
 - The methodology should combine a wide range of methods (e.g. quantitative and qualitative), tools and information sources to allow triangulation of information and ensure impartiality.
 - The Inception plan should retain a degree of flexibility to allow the incorporation of any changes recommended from the inception workshop.
 - Inception meeting with the evaluation Steering Committee and other key AVSI Foundation staff.
- b) A one-day stakeholder validation workshop to review the early findings from the draft midterm report. This will be conducted at the end of the field mission.
- c) A final soft copy report not exceeding 50 pages is expected to be submitted to AVSI Foundation through email with data sheets and detailed analysis profiles as annexes to the main report. The report should have the following elements:
 - Executive summary
 - Introduction
 - Description of the intervention assessed
 - Methodology used for the evaluation
 - Analysis of information and findings compiled
 - Recommendations and conclusions
 - Appendices

2.4 Review Questions

The evaluation shall provide information especially in the following key aspects according to the project thematic areas including cross cutting issues:

- **Assessment of the Efficiency:** How well has the project used its resources (financial and non-financial) to produce target outputs? Has there been value for money for investment on; Climate Smart Approaches, Business Incubation, DIT assessment for females (40% payment) and Earn as You Earn Model). Is the project progress on track in delivering the set project outcomes within the remaining project life? Are there opportunities to improve efficiency??
- **Assessment of the Effectiveness:** What is the project status with respect to delivering target outputs (Youth skilled, youth with job competencies, youth in employment, youth linked to Business Support Services, behavior change, increased innovations, improved nutrition and food security, increased private sector involvement in skilling and employment, access to markets and finance, contribution to reforms and policy implementation) in terms of quantity and quality? What factors impede or facilitate the production of such outputs? How useful are the outputs to the needs of the direct beneficiaries? Is there general acceptance of the outputs by these beneficiaries? Is there a significant gender differentiation in the usefulness of the outputs to direct beneficiaries? Are the outputs contributing to the achievement of the immediate objectives of the project? Are monitoring and evaluation indicators appropriate or is there a need to establish or improve these indicators?
- **Quality of project design:** As presently designed, is the intervention logic holding true? Is the theory of change clear and appreciated by the project stakeholders if not, how can we improve on it? How well has the project design been adapted to make it more relevant?
- **Evaluate the Sustainability:** To what extent are the project's interventions likely to continue after the end of the project, looking at local ownership, at the given economic/ institutional/ environmental/ socio-political conditions that (not) support sustainability, or opportunities for scaling up or replication of successful component. What actions need to be taken to increase the likelihood of the project results being sustainable? How should the District Local government (DLG) be engaged to ensure there is continued government and community support to the project initiatives? To what extent are the project deliberate interventions (access to finance and markets, linkages to business support services, startup/booster packages) contributing to sustainability of youth business.

2.5 Cross Cutting Themes

- Comment on the impact of the project at the mid-term point: Are there any indications that the project is on track to achieve long term change?
- How sustainable are the youth agri-businesses and why?
- Assess the level of participation of beneficiaries in the project
- What are youths supported by the project and are not employed doing and where?
- Has the financial/non-financial support to the implementing partners been a value added? If support is to be continued in the future, should it continue in the current format?
- How successful has the project incorporated elements of gender into the implementation of its activities?

- How well has the project performed in creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the activities and uptake by both gender (male and female youth).
- Does the project assist beneficiaries (particularly female youth) to overcome barriers that might prevent them from exploiting the economic opportunities available to them following the acquisition of new skills and employment?
- How successful has the project incorporated elements of environmental protection to face the challenge of Climate Change into the implementation of its activities?
- Are there good quality results focused on Monitoring Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) system, allowing for periodic reflection and adjustment of activities if needed? Analyze the suitability of the existing data sources and indicators.
- What are the effects of the unintended results of the project on the youth and key stakeholders?

2.6 Operational/Management Capacity

- Does the project have sufficient operational and management capacity in place to implement /deliver project services and monitor, assess and respond to changes?
- How appropriate are the execution and implementation modalities? How well is the project managed? How adequate are monitoring and reporting mechanisms?
- Does the project have sufficient operational and management capacity, human resources in place to ensure effective and efficient use of resources?

2.7 Proposed Future Strategies

- What are the prospects for sustainability of SAY project results and which results are most likely to be sustainable and why?
- Are there any adjustments you would recommend for the project in terms of geographical coverage, targeted beneficiaries, enterprise choice etc.? State specific recommendations per region.
- Are there project synergies with other related programs/projects e.g. other EKN initiatives, Government initiatives such as the Youth Livelihood Program ,Parish Development Model etc.?
- What problems (if any) in project implementation need to be resolved?
- What are the flaws (if any) in design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation?

2.8 Assignment Coverage (Geographical location, target beneficiaries)

Given the extensive area of operations as shown below, we recommend that selection of the field visits /sites be according to the evaluation objectives and described evaluation questions. The evaluation should cover the project operational areas of Central, North, West, East and West Nile.

The beneficiary scope which includes Youths, Agribusinesses, Schools, Institutions, Remand Homes, Government bodies and Non-Government Organizations and Third-Party Organizations etc. is as follows:

Table 1:Table showing beneficiary scope

No.	Respondent category	Location	Numbers
1.	Enrolled youths	East, West, Central, North, West Nile	10,091 Enrolled
2.	Agri-businesses	East, West, Central, North, West Nile	30 engaged
3.	Secondary schools	East, West, Central, North, West Nile	15 engaged
4.	Institutions	East, West, Central, North, West Nile	9 engaged
5.	Remand Homes	Kampala, Gulu, Kabale	3 engaged
6.	Government bodies (ASSC,DIT,MAAIF, MoES, MGLSD, MTIC,NARO).	Kampala	6 engaged
7	Third party entities (Eye Opener Works, Aumoja Ladies Basketball Limited Club, Luigi Giussani Research Centre, Score Beyond	Kampala	4 engaged

2.9 Evaluation Steering Committee (SC)

The process will be guided by a Steering committee (SC) composed of 7 relevant staff from EKN, AVSI/ Foundation and an external person. The role of the Steering Committee in management of the evaluation process will include selection of the consultant or firm to undertake the exercise, participate in progress meetings in regards to the Mid-Term Review, quality checks and endorsement of final report.

The Steering Committee will play the following specific/separate roles and responsibilities in management of the evaluation process,

Table 2:Showing Specific Roles and Responsibilities in Management of the Evaluation

No.	Task	Entity responsible	Output
1.	Signing of the consultancy contract	AVSI Foundation	Signed contract
2.	Pre-evaluation inception meeting	Steering Committee	Consensus on the major components/expectations of the evaluation
3.	Submission of work plan (methodological approach including indicators, research questions, sampling process and tools, detailed work plan, budget, and Table of content for the final report	Steering Committee	Approved work plan

4.	Progress meeting	Steering Committee or AVSI Foundation	Feedback to consultant on issues that have come up during the implementation
5.	Validation meeting	Steering Committee including AVSI Foundation/EKN staff	Feedback on the preliminary findings of the Mid Term evaluation
6.	Submission of evaluation report	AVSI Foundation	Report submitted
7.	Quality check of end report	Steering Committee	Approval of report
8.	Discharge consultant	AVSI Foundation	Contractual obligations met by both parties

3.0 Methodology

Methodological thoroughness in the evaluation design will be valued, in order to ensure that the evaluation meets international standards. The consultant is expected to come up with an appropriate and feasible study design for the evaluation to meet the purposes and objectives of the evaluation and answer the evaluation questions. The consultant is required to use a robust and acceptable formula to determine the representative sample size that will be used during the survey. The methodology for collection of evidence should be implemented in three phases: (1) an inception phase based on a review of existing documents to produce inception report; (2) a fieldwork phase to collect and analyze primary data; and (3) a data analysis and reporting phase to produce the final evaluation report. The evaluation should use a mixed methods approach, drawing on both primary and secondary, quantitative and qualitative data to come up with an overall assessment backed by clear evidence. Data will be collected through surveys of all relevant stakeholders including Government institutions, development partners, civil society organizations partners, private sector, beneficiaries, etc.) and through focus group discussions. Further data on the project indicators will be used by the evaluation to assess the project progress and achievements.

Note: The evaluator will be given a list of recommended/potential persons/institutions to interview that will be prepared by the Project Team in consultation with the MEAL manager.

The evaluation methodology will include the following:

- (i) Desk review of project document, financial and monitoring reports (such as minutes, , Narrative reports, Steering Committee meetings resolutions, Programme annual Implementation Report, quarterly progress reports, and other internal documents including consultant);
- (ii) Review of specific achievements against set targets, including datasets, management and action plans, publications and other material or reports.
- (iii) Field verification where necessary, for some specific activities
- (iv) Interviews with key resource persons within the project and other government ministries (heads of units, focal persons, implementing technical persons...)

(v) Focus group discussions with selected beneficiaries.

4.0 Timing and Reporting

The assignment is expected to take 30 working days from the time of signing the contract and this is inclusive of inception, data collection and analysis, validation and report finalization. The consultant will be expected to submit proposal outlining the approach and methodology, cost (broken down into as much detail as possible), work plans and timeframe in response to this Terms of Reference.

5.0 Review Team Composition and Qualification of the Consultant

The consultant will be sourced both locally and internationally, this may be a firm or an individual. To be eligible to conduct this midterm review ,the consultant(s) on the review team should have no vested interest in the SAY project. The lead consultant shall possess:

- A team of at least two people combining profile and experience.
- Should hold a PHD or minimum a Masters in Food security, Education Planning Management and Administration, Economics, Development studies, Business Administration, Natural Resources Management, Project Management or related field.
- Well qualified and demonstrated experience in conducting similar evaluation processes with other development agencies.
- 10 years' extensive experience and proven track record in undertaking donor project evaluation focusing on NGO/government partnerships (CVs of person/s who will actually carry out the evaluation survey and report writing).
- The team must have a strong knowledge of all the components of the project (private sector engagement, public-private partnership, skills development, value chain development, youth engagement/employment, organizational capacity building, gender mainstreaming among others);
- Strong knowledge in social research techniques, both quantitative and qualitative.
- Proven experience with logical framework approaches and other strategic planning approaches, M&E methods and approaches, information analysis and report writing.
- Demonstrated ability to provide timely, evidence-based, quality assured technical reports. (A sample of past reports written by the consultant is required).

6.0 Evaluation criteria

The bids submitted will be scored with a possible total of 100 points, broken down as follows:

- a) Technical quality of the proposal and its suitability for the purposes fixed: 40 points.
- b) Make-up of the work team: 40 points.
- c) Financial bid and proposed payment terms submitted: 20 points.

7.0 Contract

The consultant/firm will be contracted by AVSI Foundation. A contract document will be signed by the both parties before the start of the exercise. Payment of the initial, 25 % installment is subject to successful approval of the methodology and work plan by the Steering Committee and submission of a full inception report. 25% upon submission of the inception report and 50% upon approval of the final report. The corresponding contract will be signed within 15 days following receipt of the final-award notice.

The successful bidder undertakes to execute the contract in its own right, as any third-party assignment or subcontracting is prohibited. Furthermore, the contractor shall be liable for any consequences derived from any inaccuracies in statements made in respect of compliance with the obligations under this Terms of Reference(TOR) and the subsequent contract entered into.

8.0 Budget Indication for the Midterm Review

The budget for the activity should not exceed €60,000. The consultant's fee shall be inclusive of all expenses (including travel costs and all applicable taxes). AVSI Foundation will meet the cost of the validation workshop.

9.0 Role of AVSI Foundation

This evaluation is commissioned by AVSI Foundation under the Leadership of the Country Representative delegating direct process management to the SAY Chief Party, Deputy Chief of Party and MEAL Manager who will be responsible for ensuring the compliance with the Terms of Reference of the evaluation. AVSI Foundation role will be;

- Participate in the mid-term evaluation steering committee meetings.
- Write a letter introducing the consultant/consultancy firm to the different respondents.
- Provide funds for the mid-term evaluation
- Provide the relevant project documents for review.
- Provide technical oversight, quality assurance and control for the evaluation as necessary
- Provide feedback on draft inception report and confirm approval before any data collection.
- Mobilize project beneficiaries and other key stakeholders to effectively participate in the evaluation.
- Provide logistical support, data collection and communication equipment
- Provide the venue and equipment for the presentation and dissemination of the findings.
- Facilitate the dissemination meeting before the final report is signed off.

10.0 Mode of Submission of bid document

Interested firms should submit their proposals; including technical and financial proposals, relevant CVs and a motivation letter. Applications sent via email to HR; hr.kampala@avsi.org and addressed to the attention of the Chief of Part SAY Project, AVSI Foundation: in a zipped folder.

Deadline for applications is COB Thursday , 18th May, 2023.