

Final Evaluation of Concern Worldwide’s Irish Aid Funded Programme – Terms of Reference

1. Background

Concern Worldwide has been the recipient of three multi-annual funding grants from Irish Aid. The current Multi-Annual Irish Aid funded Programme which runs from 2012 to 2015, addresses extreme poverty and vulnerability in 18 countries, 14 in Irish Aid’s priority region of Sub-Saharan Africa, three in Asia and in Haiti.

The focus of the work is on the Irish Aid priority theme of Hunger as well as on Health and Education.

The key results expected from the programme encompassed:

1. Outcome measures for assets, inequality and risks & vulnerability
2. Changes at micro- meso- and macro-level in each country, based on contextual opportunities
3. Tested and replicated models of innovative practice on specific challenges/contexts
4. Contribution to global policy and practice change on hunger and aid effectiveness in difficult contexts
5. Leadership and significant public engagement with the Irish public on development issues.

This diverse programme presents a greater degree of complexity in terms of evaluation but Concern is committed to evaluating the programme effectively which will result in both accountability to our beneficiaries, partners, Irish Aid and the Irish public as well as critical learning for improvement in Concern strategy and practice and for policy for future programmes.

The evaluation will look to question the programme logic as laid out in Concern’s proposal and the organisational Theory of Change derived from Concern’s Strategic Plan. At the country level, the evaluation will focus on the core components of the country programme as visually depicted in Figure 1 and evaluate the effectiveness of this model and implementation of the corresponding policy ‘How Concern Understands Extreme Poverty’. The evaluation is also expected to comment on the contribution of the programme to the achievement of Irish Aid’s Civil Society Policy Objectives.

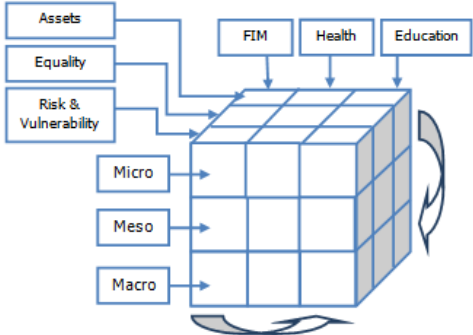


Figure 1. Core components of country programmes

2. Specific Objectives of the Irish Aid Programme:

In line with the strategic plan, Concern’s commitment to addressing extreme poverty is embedded in the overall goal and objectives of the programme:

Overall Goal of the Programme:

- To contribute to the achievement of sustainable improvements in the lives of extremely poor people, in the poorest and most vulnerable countries, through improving their asset base and addressing the key causes and maintainers of extreme poverty, namely inequality, risk and vulnerability.



Objectives of the Programme:

- Key assets of extremely poor people are sustainably protected and/or strengthened and their returns on those assets are increased. Assets are at individual, household and community level.
- Social and political structures and norms that maintain inequalities in society, as experienced by the extremely poor, are effectively challenged and positive changes are brought about.
- The capacities of extremely poor people and the institutions which support them to anticipate, cope with, respond to and recover from natural and man-made shocks and stresses are significantly increased.
- Evidence from tested models of effective, multi-dimensional response is used to enable government, civil society and the private sector to respond effectively to specific contextual and thematic challenges.
- Irish public engagement on development issues and international advocacy for policy and practice change are strengthened and better informed by overseas programme experience, learning and results.

3. Objective of the External Evaluation

The overall objective of the evaluation is to assess the impact of the Irish Aid Programme and Concern Worldwide's contribution to the achievement of sustainable improvements in the lives of extremely poor people, in the poorest and most vulnerable countries, through improving their asset base and addressing the key causes and maintainers of extreme poverty, namely inequality, risk and vulnerability.

4. Scope of the Evaluation

Evaluation of the Irish Aid Programme will have several components to reflect the scale and diversity of the interventions being funded. The evaluation will need to address the following components:

- The meta analysis of 26 individual overseas programme final evaluation reports, assessing the impact on extremely poor and vulnerable target groups of the programmes using the OECD DAC criteria and any other appropriate aid effectiveness standards (all overseas programme evaluations will have standardised objectives and key questions as a minimum).
- Undertaking short validation exercises in two country programmes as well as using available monitoring and evaluation data and reports, including individual programme evaluation reports from all of the country programmes to validate findings.
- Assess the overall effectiveness and influence of the Northern dimensions of the programme, by drawing from specific evaluations on advocacy and development education.
- Assess the contribution Concern has made to specific global sector knowledge in the areas where Concern has tested operational models to a high level. Evaluators will have to distinguish between the different levels of testing and targeted influence depending on the impact assessment methods used.
- Assess the effectiveness of a results based management approach including a review the use of digital data collection in terms of improvements made in data collection, analyses and management.

5. Evaluation Key Questions

The following broad questions should be answered at a minimum. These will be clarified and built on when agreeing the final methodology.

1. Have interventions made significant and systemic differences in the lives of extremely poor people in our target areas (exploring results and linkages from micro to meso)?
2. How has Concern Worldwide contributed to systemic and sustainable change for the target groups (exploring results and linkages from meso to macro)?
3. Has Concern Worldwide been effective in addressing extreme poverty in each country against the core components as defined in the policy 'How Concern Understands Extreme Poverty'?
4. Did we apply best practice in the implementation of integrated programmes?
5. To what degree have the impact assessments (or the results that are available at the time from each of Concern's research partners) of each of the tested models been used to influence Concern Worldwide internally and external audiences e.g. donors, UN agencies, peer NGOs and the policies and practice of CSOs and government in developing countries?
6. What effects has the application of results based management had on programme performance and quality?
7. What lessons can be learned from the management of a large-scale and complex multi-annual programme to deliver on a single high level objective?
8. What has been the impact of Concern Worldwide International Advocacy and Development Education programmes on both decision-makers and target groups in Ireland and other key actors in the global North? How well has Concern managed the connectivity of these programmes to each other and to Concern's experience in developing countries?

6. Evaluation Outputs:

The final evaluation report would be expected to highlight key learning to feed into any future multi annual grants, along with recommendations targeted at each of the different stakeholders and levels of management responsible for programme implementation. The final report findings will be shared with all stakeholders, including partners, Irish Aid and the Irish Public.

7. Timelines:

The appointed evaluation team will be expected to allocate a small number of working days (1-2 per month) for remote (and possible face to face meetings in Dublin) support during the individual internally led programme evaluations (May-Sep). The evaluations of the overall portfolio is expected to start in late October 2015 and be finalized by early 2016

8. Management:

Management of the process will be done by The Director of Strategy, Advocacy and Learning and the International Programmes Director, or those individuals delegated by them.

9. Process

Concern will tender for appropriate consultants/consultancy agency to conduct this piece of work. Particular known consultancy agencies and support organisations will be targeted, as well as proposals invited through an open application process. Please see section 11 below.

10. Estimated Resources required:

It is estimated that this consultancy will take a maximum of 60 days in total.

11. Application Process

Proposal Requirements

All proposals must include the following:

- Information on the principal consultant/s (contact and background information, current curriculum vitae) and any co-evaluators, if applicable.
- Abstract of the proposed evaluation project (maximum 250 words)
- Technical proposal that addresses the following:
 - Understanding of evaluation topic
 - Overall approach
 - Methodologies to be applied to answer the key questions. As indicated this should include a meta evaluation of individual programme evaluations and two country visits (to be identified)
- Detailed budget proposal

Submission of Proposals

Please submit proposals to Patricia McNamara (patricia.mcnamara@concern.net) and Anne-Marie Campbell (AnneMarie.Campbell@concern.net) by Friday 29th May. It is anticipated that proposals will be shortlisted. Those who submit proposals and who are shortlisted must be available for follow up discussion on proposals in the week beginning June 1st. A decision will be made and the successful proposer will be notified by June 5th.

Selection Criteria

Selection criteria will include a two stage process:

1. Technical proposal assessment
2. Price assessment

The technical proposal assessment would be awarded along the following criteria;

- Understanding the TOR, the aim of the services to be provided and the extent to which the proposal addresses the desired objectives of the evaluation
- The clarity of the Technical Proposal
- Appropriateness of the evaluation approach, methods proposed and analysis of the contexts (any internal consultations need to be cognizant of suggested timeframes)
- Ability to mobilise timely expertise, execute and finalise the report
- The relevant experience and evaluation record of the applicant(s)

On satisfactorily fulfilling these criteria, the proposal will proceed to Stage 2, a comparison of price bids that will be used in the final selection process.