

Invitation to Tender Sustainability Impact Evaluation of four Solidar Suisse Projects in the Area of Youth Employability 2019-2020

The purpose of this evaluation project is to carry out an impact assessment of four different projects which Solidar Suisse is supporting, all of which are in the area of 'Youth Employability' in the following countries: Bolivia, Burkina Faso, El Salvador and Kosovo. The evaluation shall focus on the *sustainability* of the outcomes and impacts generated, for the direct and the indirect beneficiaries but also for the implementing partners and the community at large.

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1. Background

1.1 About Solidar Suisse

Solidar Suisse is a non-profit civil society organization based in Switzerland, active in the areas of development cooperation and humanitarian aid, committed to achieving a socially, politically and economically just society. In its development cooperation work it is specialized on the topics of 'decent work' and 'democracy and participation'. Solidar Suisse presently has over 60 projects running in four continents. The Solidar Suisse development program (turnover 2017: CHF 13.2 million, 2018: CHF12.3 million) enjoys the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), amounting to CHF 5 million annually. Solidar Suisse in 2018 had a total annual turnover of CHF 16.8 million. The organization has been certified by ZEWO, the Swiss fundraising monitoring agency, which ensures the economic and effective use of grants and donations for their intended purpose. Solidar Suisse was founded by Swiss labour unions and the Social-Democrat Party. It is a member of the SOLIDAR Network, which comprises over 50 European relief agencies and development NGOs.

1.2 Solidar Suisse 'Focus on Outcomes and Impact' (FOI)

One of the priority topics for action of the Solidar Suisse Strategy for the period 2016-2019 is quality development. This includes, among other, a more systematic monitoring and analysis of outcomes and impacts. In the course of the last years Solidar Suisse has developed a 'Focus on Outcomes and Impacts' (FOI) concept which identifies four priority areas for action:

- 1. Global impact model with key indicators
- 2. Systematic reporting of structural effects
- 3. Good impact stories
- 4. Impact studies and dialogues

The FOI concept describes the framework in which the impact studies (point 4) are to be conducted. The studies should be targeted at the higher levels of outcomes and impacts. This means, in particular: changes of behaviour in the target groups, improvements in the living conditions of the target groups and the sustainability of these outcomes and impacts. Furthermore, the impact studies, according to the concept, shall be carried out on a regular basis (every 2-3 years) and they shall be science-based.

In 2015-2016 a first impact study was carried out on the topic '<u>Protection at Workplace and Social</u> <u>Protection Floors</u>'. For this study Solidar Suisse projects in Bolivia, Kosovo, Nicaragua, Mozambique and South Africa were studied.



2. Impact Study Brief

2.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this evaluation project is to carry out an impact assessment for four different projects which Solidar Suisse is supporting.

The evaluation shall focus on the *sustainability* of the outcomes and impacts generated, for the direct and the indirect beneficiaries but also for the implementing partners and the community at large. Our hypothesis is that the four projects which have been selected for this evaluation do indeed have a high degree of sustainability. But we would like this hypothesis to be critically analysed by an outside party, applying a sound methodology. We would like to learn which outcomes and impacts can be regarded as *particularly* sustainable and which to a lesser extent.

The reason for having this focus on the *sustainability aspect* of the outcomes and impacts is that we intend to increase the visibility of the impact of our work and at the same time to broaden the knowledge and application of best practices internally.

While the main purpose of this evaluation is to gain an outside view on the sustainability of a selection of projects for communication and fundraising purposes, we obviously also want to learn from the results of the study. We want to find out which approaches have proven to be particularly successful from a sustainability perspective. We want to better understand how and where we can improve the sustainability of the positive outcomes of our projects on the different levels.

Solidar Suisse projects are either implemented by local partner organisations or local organisations are partnering with Solidar Suisse local staff in the implementation. Therefore, Solidar Suisse has a broad view on the notion of 'sustainability'. We see this not only through the lens of the direct beneficiaries but also of the indirect beneficiaries (this can be the community at large) as well as the implementing / partnering organisations.

The impact study shall demonstrate, in a concrete and understandable way:

- What specific changes have occurred and for whom (direct and indirect beneficiaries, implementing partners, community at large)
- What was the contribution of the projects financed by Solidar Suisse to the observed changes?
- How sustainable are the changes that have occurred?
- How did the changes occur, which were the decisive factors?
- Which of the different approaches applied by Solidar Suisse in 'Youth Employability' projects have worked best from a sustainability perspective? Did the respective set-ups of the four projects and did their respective embedding in the given socio-economic and political contexts of the respective countries make sense and contribute positively to the sustainability of the impact?

2.2 Scope of the study

The scope of the impact study is four different Solidar Suisse projects in the area of 'Youth Employability' in the following countries: Bolivia, Burkina Faso, El Salvador and Kosovo.

2.3 Overview of the Sampled Projects

2.3.1 Bolivia: Fuerza Jóven (project no. 3328)

Bolivia has experienced important and sustained economic growth rates in the last decade and a half. Extreme and moderate poverty rates have been declining, the country has become a middle-income country. Nonetheless, informal employment is widespread and affects up to 80% of working age population, especially young women and men.

The goal of the project for the project phase 2018 - 2021 is that young people, women and men from mainly urban municipalities (medium-size cities), have access to decent jobs and/or self-employment opportunities. To achieve this, the project focusses on three components: 1) individual capacity building via vocational education and training (VET), internships and development of soft skills. 2) facilitation of



and support for multi-stakeholder dialogue on municipal level (including national line ministry participation) to promote pro-youth labour market policies. 3) campaigns.

The project intervenes directly in two municipalities (Viacha in Dpto. of La Paz, and Cobija in the Dpto. of Pando), and facilitates knowledge management processes in another four, via exchanges of experiences and best practices, and common platforms). It also supports (local) media to design and implement public campaigns on youth employability and decent work.

Start of project: 2018 Annual project volume 2019 (CHF): 99'000

2.3.2 Burkina Faso: Basic training, training and professional integration (project no. 3530)

The project aims to create a link between basic training, vocational training and the labour market in Burkina Faso through the implementation of initiatives for out-of-school and out-of-school youth aged 9 to 15 on the one hand and young people aged 16 to 24 exposed to precarious employment and forms of exploitation (domestic work, work in gold mining sites) on the other hand.

The project consists of 3 pillars:

a) Basic training

Emphasis is placed on the opening of Intensive Literacy Training Centres for Young People Aged 9 to 15 for Development (AFI-D) for basic training. This gives young people who have lost their way to school the opportunity not only to catch up on their schooling but also to have opportunities for vocational training and professional integration. During their training, they are also introduced to production trades such as market gardening, animal husbandry and agriculture.

b) Vocational training

With regard to vocational training, two types of action will be developed:

- Long-term training: It consists in promoting the access of young people coming out of the AFI-D centres to a 2-year certified vocational training (Certificate of Professional Qualification, CQP), followed by a 3-month internship supervised by a master craftsman (the project offers this possibility to young people since the beginning of the project and a study has already been done in 2016 on what young people have become after the vocational training).
- Short-term training: Short-term training, on the other hand, consists in giving vulnerable young people the opportunity to improve their employability through short-term practical training (apprenticeship) of 3 to 12 months with a master craftsman. The training is provided in these workshops will be practice-oriented. A study carried out by Solidar Suisse in 2015 identified promising jobs in rural areas with high demand in the project area.

c) Professional integration

Following the training, young people determined to create and develop their own business will have access to entrepreneurship training and will be technically assisted in drawing up business plans and preparing applications for credit or financing from government funds or micro-finance institutions set up for this purpose.

Start of project: 2011 Annual project volume 2019 (CHF): 220'000

2.3.3 El Salvador: Violence prevention and decent work for youth (project no. 3220)

Gang violence by "Mara"-Gangs is a crucial problem. In 2015 El Salvador was ranked no. 1 on the UN country list of intentional homicides (outside of war zones). The gangs attract youth, mainly boys especially from very poor city quarters and communities. They are increasingly involved in drug trafficking business and organized crime. Youth not organized in gangs is also threatened and their scope of movement is restricted by different hostile gang territories. Main reasons for youth to join into a gang are the lack of any economic perspective and recognition.



Solidar works with 3 local well anchored partner organizations in violence prevention, building a culture of peace and youth employability. Youth from poor communities and city quarters organize in youth-groups and build a network on municipal level. The network organizes cultural and sports events and it participates in the elaboration of communal youth-policies in order to get more support from the local governments. In a second pillar, the project supports access to decent work for young people together with two local job centres, cooperation with the private sector, and vocational training courses for at least 240 young people. Selected small start-up businesses are also supported.

1300 young people from the 42 project communities directly benefit from the activities and advocacy work of the youth-network, improved services of job centres, 300 benefit directly from vocational training, job placement and start-up financial support.

Start of project: 2017 Annual project volume 2019 (CHF): 190'000

2.3.4 Kosovo: Pro Skills (project no. 3935)

According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) one third of the workforce in Kosovo is without job. The youth unemployment rate of 58 % is especially alarming and it is hard to believe that in some branches employers are desperately seeking for skilled workers. Every year in Peja Municipality approximately 1'500 students graduate at one of the six colleges (gymnasium or VET-schools). Approximately 40% of the graduates will continue their studies at one of Kosovo's Universities, as about 60% of the graduates will try to find a job. For many of them it is the first moment to get in contact with the labour market. Even if the curricula of many profiles at VET-schools theoretically include internships or other forms of work-based learning, most VET-schools do not give this part of the curriculum proper attention and neither do the students as practical skills are not examined at graduation. The lack of fundamental skills and know-how of graduated VET students is confirmed by employers who have difficulties to find skilled employees. As VET-school teachers primarily are pedagogues and very rarely have work experience as professionals of the respective occupational profiles, they stick to teaching theory and experience difficulties to impart skills and practical know-how. Neither vocational colleges nor universities maintain close contact to the world of employment in order to place young people into employment processes and/or learn about the specific requirements of the employers towards their work force.

The Solidar Suisse Project Pro Skills therefore supports work-based learning and thus the development of market relevant skills for VET students. The project develops and executes work-based learning programmes in local companies within the framework of regular vocational training of two public schools in Peja These pilot programmes use the leeway of the individual schools in the design of their curricula and include appropriate training programmes for vocational teachers and mentors in the training companies. Planning and implementation of the programmes are closely monitored by a local working group with representatives from authorities, schools and the private sector. The aim is to anchor the pilot programmes as sustainably as possible in the curricula of the public VET-schools. In addition, the project supports the working group in developing political initiatives to promote work-based learning and corresponding reform proposals.

Start of project: 2017 Annual project volume 2019 (CHF): 90'000

2.4 Specific Objectives of the Study

Through collection and analysis of evidence (qualitative and quantitative) from a wide range of sources, using appropriate methodology and drawing on existing data-sets for comparison where possible, the evaluation is expected to answer/address the following core study questions:

- 1) Identify and describe the outcomes and impact (positive and negative, intended and unintended) on the <u>direct beneficiaries/participants</u> and the sustainability of these outcomes and impacts:
 - a) To what extent have youths / young adults participating in the trainings/programs been able to integrate into the job market?
 - b) How do the skills and, where applicable, diplomas obtained facilitate this integration?



- c) Do the skills/competencies and where applicable other support (e.g. access to microfinance) help them in setting up their own small businesses? How sustainable are these small businesses?
- d) How is their self-esteem / self-empowerment affected? How their socio-economic status and their position in their family and community?
- 2) Identify and describe the outcomes and impact on the <u>indirect beneficiaries</u> and the sustainability of these:
 - a) Impact on the beneficiaries' families and communities? Changes in attitudes of family and community towards the beneficiaries?
 - b) Impact on institutions / partners specialized on job integration / youth employability issues, as well as on local government authorities and businesses? Changes in attitudes of these towards the beneficiaries?
- 3) Identify and describe the outcomes and impact on the <u>implementing partner organizations</u> and the sustainability of these changes:
 - a) Impact on capacity, knowledge, expertise, experience of implementing partner organizations in the area of youth employability / job integration?
 - b) Impact on the position / standing of partner organizations with regard to other institutions / partners engaged in job integration / youth employability issues, as well as with regard to local government authorities and businesses?
 - c) Impact on financial sustainability, networking capacity, advocacy capability, political vulnerability, degree of public recognition of partner organizations?
- 4) Identify and describe the impact on local or even national policies, programs, practices, services, attitudes in the area of youth employability and the sustainability of these changes:
 - a) Changes in policies, programs, practices, services, attitudes?
 - b) Financial and other resources made available in the area of youth employability by public entities?
 - c) Changes in public data collection, information systems, research, etc.?
- 5) Describe how the changes occurred and assess the chosen approaches/methods:
 - a) What caused or affected the changes?
 - b) What was the contribution of the projects / programs financed by Solidar Suisse to the identified changes?
 - c) Identify the decisive factors that enabled or prevented the changes but also the difficulties in terms of attribution to these changes and thus in term of outcome and impact statements. The study should develop suggestions or recommend measures to make outcome and impact statements possible and easier.
 - d) What worked (better), what didn't work?
 - e) Examine and assess the different work approaches and methods applied by Solidar Suisse (and its local partners) in the four different youth employability projects, including in terms of efficiency and effectiveness and their resulting outcomes or impact.
 - f) Did the respective set-ups of the four projects and did their respective embedding in the given socio-economic and political contexts of the respective countries make sense and contribute positively to the sustainability of the impact?
- 6) Recommendations to Solidar Suisse to increase the sustainability of the desired outcomes and impacts:
 - a) Measures that could be taken in future with regard to project design, partner identification, project set-up, project monitoring, project governance, etc.

2.5 Expected Deliverables

2.5.1 Inception Report

In line with the overall brief, the inception report will outline a detailed, finalised methodology, as well as a work-plan, suggested approach, data collection tools and timeline. The inception report will be developed



in collaboration with Solidar Suisse. A draft report should be developed first, and feedback incorporated, before the final inception report is submitted. The inception report should be around 8 - 10 pages excluding annexes (please avoid unnecessary annexes; only add them if essential).

2.5.2 Four individual Project Feedback Reports

A brief feedback report of 6-10 pages (excluding annexes) for each of the four projects reviewed, including project-specific data contributing to evidence of impact in line with the objectives in Section 2.4 above. Draft reports should be developed first, and feedback incorporated, before the final Project Feedback Reports are submitted.

2.5.3 Photographs

At least four informative, eye-catching and high-quality digital photographs of the work of each of the projects visited, each of which is accompanied by a text which tells us who is depicted in the photograph and what it shows. Each photo should also be accompanied by confirmation that the project leadership and those depicted in the photograph (except for large group photos) have consented to the photograph being used and published by Solidar Suisse for education, publicity, awareness-raising and/or fundraising purposes. At least one of the photographs and accompanying text should tell a significant story of change in the lives of the people depicted. Ideally also one short (3'-5') video film clip is made for each of the four projects showing the impact generated.

2.5.4 Final Report and Summary PowerPoint Presentation

A final report collating evidence, key observations and learning taking into account all four projects reviewed, also including targeted recommendations for each project. A draft report should be developed first, and feedback incorporated, before the Final Report is submitted. This final report should be around 12-15 pages and should include an Executive Summary. A PowerPoint presentation capturing the key insights and findings from the evaluation, both at the individual project level and, more importantly, in terms of overall learning (20-25 succinct PowerPoint slides: the photographs referred to above may be incorporated).

Study Stakeholder	Roles and main responsibilities
 Internal support and learning group, consisting of: Project leader for this impact study Team Leader Development Cooperation Internal FOI focal point Representative from Fundraising Dept. Representative from Communication Dept. 	 Determine scope of the 2nd Solidar Suisse impact study Approval of invitation to tender document Final selection of evaluator / evaluation team Approval of inception report Review and provide feedback on the project-specific reports Review and provide feedback on thematic learning report Finalization of the management response Participate in internal learning workshop
Project leader for this impact study	 Management and internal coordination of this impact study overall Organize meetings of internal support group Draft invitation to tender Send out invitation to tender Set up contract with evaluator / evaluation team Contact point for interested and selected

2.6 Study Stakeholders



Desk Officers: - Bolivia - Burkina Faso - El Salvador - Kosovo	 evaluator(s) Preparation of management response Organize internal learning workshop at the end of the impact evaluation study process Supply all relevant project information to the project leader and to the selected evaluator(s) Inform the country representatives and introduce the evaluator(s) to them Review and provide feedback on the project-specific reports Review and provide feedback on thematic learning report Participate in internal learning workshop
Solidar Suisse Country Representatives in: - Bolivia - Burkina Faso - El Salvador - Kosovo	 Provide the relevant information and contacts to the evaluation team Give logistical support to the evaluation team, where necessary Review and provide feedback to the project-specific reports Possibly participate in internal learning workshop
Management of Solidar Suisse	Approval of the management responseParticipate in internal learning workshop
External peers / institutional donors / experts / partners from research or other NGOs	 Receive the final approved version of the study Possibly they can attend a presentation of the study results (will be decided at a later point in time) Possibly participate in internal learning workshop
Donors / wider public	 It is intended to publish the main findings of the impact study in the Solidar Suisse Magazine 'Solidarität' no. 3/2020 in July 2020 It is intended to use the study in our contacts with donors (institutional donors, foundations) The study and a summary of the main finding will be published on the Solidar Suisse website

2.7 Timeframe

Phase	Timeframe	Activity focus
Publication of invitation to tender	End October 2019	
Deadline for submission	30 November 2019	



Selection of individual/ organisation to carry out the study	1 st week December 2019	
Contract completion	Mid December 2019	Signing of contract and transfer of the 1 st instalment (30% of total cost)
Phase 1: Inception	End January 2020	Includes inception meetings, initial interviews and first scan of strategic and project documents. The Inception Report submitted at the end of this phase will finalise agreed effectiveness criteria, methodology and assessment framework, data collection tools and project visit schedule, with provisional agreed dates for Phase 3.
Phase 2: Desk study	End February 2020	Review of key documents and establishment of key objectives to be verified, including both Solidar Suisse policy objectives and project-level output/outcome objectives.
Phase 3: Primary research and drafting of preliminary project feedback reports/ reviews	End April 2020	Two to three days of primary research with each of the sampled projects to assess effectiveness as per the specific objectives laid out in the brief and the finalised effectiveness criteria agreed in the inception phase. Each project visited will receive a short feedback report. These reports will be finalised after validation meetings with each project team, where key findings are discussed and feedback, where appropriate, is incorporated. It is critical for Solidar Suisse that the reviewers ensure meaningful participation and ownership of initial findings, while also allowing dialogue for learning with project partners.
Phase 4: Analyses and reporting	End May 2020	Analysis will combine the insights from the desk study, primary research and additional data collection. A draft Thematic Learning Report will be produced and submitted for comment to Solidar Suisse.
Phase 5: Validation and Report Finalisation	End June 2020	Final validation will take place with Solidar Suisse staff in Zurich after draft reports are submitted. Feedback from this validation session, where appropriate, will be incorporated before final reports are submitted.

2.8 Support from Solidar Suisse

Solidar Suisse will provide all relevant documentation for the evaluation, including Solidar Suisse strategy and policy documents (such as the FOI concept) and project documentation. Solidar Suisse will provide introductions to the respective Solidar Suisse Country Representatives (through the respective HQ Desk Officers) as well as to the implementing partner organizations (through the Country Representatives). In addition, Solidar Suisse will provide logistical advice, and support where possible, to the evaluator/ evaluation team.

3. Tender Outline and Assessment Criteria

Tender proposals shall not exceed 10 pages (but annexes may be added as extra) and should be structured according to the following assessment criteria:

3.1 Evidence of relevant expertise (max. 10 points)

- Methodological experience
- Excellent written and spoken English
- Good/sufficient Spanish and French language skills



- Provide a CV for every member of the evaluation team, including any external consultants with whom the tenderer may be partnering

3.2 Experience conducting impact evaluations of development projects (max. 10 points)

- Experience conducting multi-country evaluations
- Experience conducting evaluation projects in the youth employability area
- Experience evaluating the sustainability of development project outcomes/impacts

3.3 Demonstrated understanding of the brief (max. 20 points)

- Tender proposal, overall, must demonstrate a detailed understanding of what an impact evaluation is, the strategic purpose and specific objectives, as well as Solidar Suisse's expectations and intended use of deliverables.

3.4 Quality of proposed methodology (max. 20 points)

- Robustness of proposed methodology and data collection technique
- Meaningful participation by key stakeholders

3.5 Clarity and feasibility of proposed plan (max. 20 points)

- Provide a detailed, phased work-plan with milestones, key dates and a timeline for completion of all tasks.
- If the tenderer intends to sub-contract parts of the execution of the evaluation to third-parties, like local consultants based in the four countries the projects were carried out in (in order to increase cost-effectiveness and reduce the carbon footprint) it is expected that the tenderer can demonstrate/assure that these subcontracted third-parties are familiar with and will adhere to the methodology and data collection technique chosen by the tenderer.

3.6 Proposed budget / consultancy days / value for money (max. 20 points)

- The fee proposal submitted shall be in the form of a lump sum in Swiss Francs (CHF) inclusive of VAT and all expenses (including travel costs and including any sub-contracting to individuals or organisations partnering in the tender) with a detailed breakdown of logistical costs, expenses and billable consultancy time (cost per day and number of days required for each task, the daily or hourly rate for all members of the proposed evaluator/evaluation team, as well as the amount of hours/days each member will contribute to each task).
- The subcontracting of parts of the execution of the evaluation to third-parties in the four countries in order to increase the value for money by reducing travel costs and time (and thus also reducing the carbon footprint of this study) will be rated positively.

4. Terms

4.1 Budget

The total budget, including fees, VAT and all other expenses ((including travel costs and including any sub-contracting to individuals or organisations partnering in the tender) are to be in the range of **CHF 30'000 – 40'000**. The overall fee will be paid on a phased basis as follows:

- 30% upon signing of contract
- 40% upon completion of Phase 3
- 30% upon acceptance by Solidar Suisse of all deliverables.



4.2 Copyright and Ownership

Copyright and ownership of all documentation relating to this evaluation must be assigned to Solidar Suisse. All documents produced by the successful tenderer in connection with this appointment and submitted to Solidar Suisse will be considered the property of Solidar Suisse and may be used by us at any time, including for other projects, without prior approval.

4.3 Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct

The evaluator(s) will be expected to adhere to the Solidar Suisse Child Protection Policy and will be required to sign the Solidar Suisse Code of Conduct.

5. Tendering Procedure

Requests for additional information can be made via e-mail to **impact@solidar.ch** in advance of submitting a tender proposal. A log will be kept of such queries and any additional information provided will be shared with other prospective tenderers. Preliminary indication by e-mail of an intention to submit a tender proposal will ensure you are on this communication list.

Tender proposals will not exceed 10 pages in length, excluding appendices, if relevant, and will form part of the Terms of Reference in addition to this invitation to tender document. It is envisaged that the preferred tenderer will be selected within 2-3 weeks of submission deadline and contracts signed immediately thereafter (by mid-December).

Tender proposals must be submitted by e-mail to **impact@solidar.ch** with the subject line "Tender Proposal: Sustainability Impact Evaluation Solidar Suisse".

Submission deadline for tender proposals is **30 November 2019**.