

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Interim Project Evaluation

1. Who is the German Cooperative and Raiffeisen Confederation?

The DGRV is the umbrella organization as defined by the Cooperative Act in Germany. The purpose of the confederation is to develop, promote, and represent the cross-sectoral interests of its members and their affiliated cooperative institutions, as well as to advance the cooperative sector, including cooperative auditing.

The DGRV advocates for cooperative-friendly framework conditions in society and politics- towards legislative and governmental bodies, committees, and other key institutions in business and civil society. This includes matters such as cooperative legislation, business formation, accounting and auditing, taxation, regulatory issues, and energy policy.

Internationally, the DGRV promotes the cooperative idea worldwide and supports the development of cooperative structures as part of German development cooperation.

2. Introduction

Project locations for evaluation: Eswatini, Mozambique, South Africa

Evaluation focus period: 2022 until today

Type of evaluation: Interim Project Evaluation

Planned evaluation timeframe: 15th May – 15th September 2026

This project, “Strengthening cooperative economic cycles in rural and semi-urban areas in selected countries in southern Africa (SUCOSA II)” makes an important contribution to strengthening decentralized cooperative economic cycles in rural and semi-urban areas in selected countries in Southern Africa. Focal countries are Eswatini, Mozambique and South Africa. DGRV cooperates with cooperatives and other member-based forms of cooperation especially in the agricultural, financial, IT and service sectors.

The most important instrument used are cooperative-specific advisory services to strengthen and stabilise these partners and target groups. Cooperative initiatives in various sectors are designed to enhance institutional processes and frameworks through training, advocacy, and consulting services. The project supports innovative developments, particularly in the areas of digitalization and inclusion.

The project contributes primarily to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals SDG 1.4, SDG 4.4, SDG 8.3, SDG 9.3, SDG 10.2 and SDG 13.3.

The project employs a multi-level approach in each country of operation, combining support for different cooperative model approaches at the local level (micro) with advising higher-level relevant institutions and networks at the regional and national level to create functional secondary structures (meso), as well as advocating and advising towards a cooperative-friendly and supportive framework through the public sector (macro).

To this end, the DGRV is working with cooperative associations and their multi-level network structures (networks, central cooperatives, associations or similar organisations), as well as with the responsible governmental bodies. Depending on the context, the project is working with various types of cooperatives.

3. Reason and Objective of the Evaluation

DGRV seeks proposals from a consultant or a consultant team to design and conduct an interim evaluation of the project “Strengthening cooperative economic cycles in rural and semi-urban areas in selected countries in southern Africa (SUCOSA II)”, which is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The interim evaluation is a routine component for optimizing ongoing and future project work.

The evaluation is to provide an independent and systematic analysis of the project’s achievements limited to the previous and current project phase in three representative countries (Eswatini, Mozambique and South Africa) against planned outcomes and quality standards, with a focus on identifying lessons learned and capturing best practices to further improve and refine the implementation of the running project. Of special interest are the challenges of the multi-level-approach and the intervention opportunities in the IT and youth sector. The evaluation shall provide operational and programmatic recommendations aimed towards adjustment in future project approaches according to contextual needs.

This means that the evaluation should:

(1) Assess the results to date

- document and evaluate the results achieved so far and compare them with the original or subsequently adjusted planning;
- determine whether the theories and assumptions underlying the project were appropriate and continue to be valid;
- assess the relevance, efficiency, coherence, effectiveness and sustainability of the measures implemented;
- identify lessons learned (what worked, what did not work and why);
- assess the role and involvement of the DGRV and its partners and recommend corrective measures if necessary.

(2) Assess the current orientation

- compare current orientation/project design and plans with lessons learned;
- compare current orientation/project design and plans with DAC criteria;
- if necessary, identify strategic levers to further increase impact and sustainability.

(3) Identify specific recommendations or develop proposals for change

- make country-specific and cross-country recommendations,
- develop proposals for change

4. Evaluation Questions

The evaluation consists of the following tasks:

- a) Collect qualitative evidence on the outcomes of the interventions of DGRV and its partners in the different thematic areas, as well as drivers and barriers to the effectiveness of the intervention through training, advisory and advocacy to improve the functioning of the co-operative sector in each country.

- b) Explore the general relevance and added value of the interventions in the co-operative sector for the members and beneficiaries of the co-operative initiatives.
- c) Explore how the chosen “multi-level-approach” was meaningfully reflected in the design of the project and to what extent this multi-level approach is feasible and conducive to achieving the overall objectives.
- d) Examine what lessons learned emerged throughout the project and how can these be applied in the ongoing and future interventions.

Therefore, the following evaluation questions should be kept in mind and answered:

	Research Question	Evaluation Objective	Criterion
1	To what extent was the intervention through training and advisory services able to contribute to increasing the institutional performance of the intended target group / institutions? Do the project objectives match the partners' views on the needs of the cooperative sector to improve its performance?	a), b)	Relevance, Impact, Effectiveness
2	What key internal and external factors contributed to, affected, or impeded the effectiveness of the project's efforts?	a)	Effectiveness
3	To what extent and how did the established partnerships and collaboration networks influence the intervention's strategies and practices? How important were they to the intervention's outcomes?	a), c)	Effectiveness, Coordinated and complementary assistance
4	To what extent did the multi-level-approach amplify the project's outcomes? Was it feasible to apply and conducive to the project's goals?	c)	Efficiency and Effectiveness
5	To what extent were affected groups and other relevant stakeholders (such as local authorities, community based or civil society organizations who work with the affected populations, other NGOs or official development assistance actors) included and consulted in the project interventions?	c)	Relevance and Coherence
6	What are the key lessons learned and recommendations regarding the future of the project, its sectoral scope, scale, and sustainability and current partnership methodologies?	d)	Sustainability - Continuous Learning and Improvement

5. Scope of work and Methodology

The consultant team will develop an appropriate evaluation methodology based on their understanding of the requirements outlined in the ToR and agree on with the backstopping team and the project director. To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the project's objectives, achievements, and progress to date, the consultancy firm should review relevant project documents and products to gain an overview of the situation. The consultant team will then need to develop a detailed methodology and work plan that shows how the consultancy's objectives will be met and the support needed from DGRV. The evaluation methodology should rely on a mainly qualitative approach, potentially including key informant interviews (KIIs) with project staff, partners, and stakeholders in the project's interventions. The methodology should make use of the OECD DAC criteria as key reference standards for the evaluation process.

6. Duration, timeline

The total expected duration to complete the assignment will be no more than 40 working days, which includes the desk review, preparation, field data collection and report writing. While the working days do not need to be consecutive, the consultant team shall be prepared to start the assignment latest in May 2026. The data collection phase in South Africa, Eswatini and Mozambique should be realized between July and September 2026. Submission of a final draft is expected in the mid of September 2026.

7. Deliverables

The consultant team will submit the following deliverables as mentioned below; the indicated working days are an estimation of the maximum working days (total 40 working days):

Phase	Expected deliverables	Indicative description tasks	Maximum expected timeframe
Phase 1 Review & Preparation	Inception Report	<p>The consultant team should first review relevant project documents and outputs. Moreover, the consultant team should organize consultations with key DGRV staff to further orient the evaluation. Based on this, develop the inception report in English including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Detailed evaluation protocol based on the evaluation criteria and key research questions presented above 2) Target groups and sample sizes 3) Data collection tools (all focus group interview guide; semi structured interviews guide etc.) 4) Detailed workplan <p>The inception report and tools will have to be validated by DGRV prior launching the field phase.</p>	9 working days
Phase 2 Data Collection Phase	Raw data	<p>Please note that the consultant team is expected to train any interviewer who will conduct the data collection. The training purpose will be to review tools but also refresh on data collection techniques. Data collection as per the methodology outlined in the inception report is then to commence.</p> <p>All raw quantitative data (i.e. datasets) and translated transcriptions of qualitative data (including recordings of interviews where consent has been obtained) are to be</p>	11 working days 3 ESW, 4 MOZ, 4 ZAF

Phase	Expected deliverables	Indicative description tasks	Maximum expected timeframe
		shared with DGRV together with the final report. Timeframe: August to September 2026	
Phase 3 Analysis & Reporting	Draft report	Draft evaluation report in English within max 2 weeks after completing field data collection is to be submitted. DGRV will provide comments within 5 working days for the consultant team to finalize/adjust the report.	14 working days
Phase 4 Finalization	Presentation and Final Report	After feedback and comments are reviewed and addressed, a presentation (videoconference) of evaluation findings to DGRV will be held. Further inputs or comments may be provided at this time. A pre-final version of the report, addressing comments from the presentation and draft report should be provided at this point, for a final review and input from DGRV and partners. The final report should be submitted and maximum 15000 words, containing a summary (basic findings, conclusions and recommendations) with up to 1500 words. If needed, this version may be once more adapted before finalization. Submission of final draft: 15.09.2026	6 working days

The consultant team will provide all documentation in English via email in standard file formats (DOCX, XLSX, PPTX, PDF or ODF).

8. Eligibility, qualification, and experience required

Essential:

- The consultancy is open to firms and individuals with experience in monitoring and evaluation.
- Proven experience in external project evaluations
- Familiarity with the concepts outlined in these Terms of Reference
- Written and spoken fluency in English, Portuguese is an asset
- Proven experience in qualitative and quantitative research
- A demonstrated high level of professionalism and an ability to work independently and in high pressure situations under tight deadlines.
- Sound understanding of the challenges of capacity/institution building processes in the public and civic sectors in African countries.
- The team lead should have at least 5 years relevant professional experience.

Desirable:

- Knowledge of and experience with co-operative systems (preferred finance-, IT- or agricultural-sector)
- Experience with grants to promote social structure measures within the German development cooperation
- German reading skills

9. Technical supervision

The selected consultant team will work under the supervision of DGRV - Department for International Relations

10. Support and Responsibilities

DGRV will:

- Compile relevant project documents, and DGRV's existing monitoring and evaluation data for the consultant team's use.
- Facilitate access to targeted communities and partners provided an appropriate notice period is given (10 working days' notice).
- Review and provide technical feedback on the consultant team's proposal, inception report, and evaluation report.

The following WILL NOT be covered separately by DGRV outside of the scope of the initial financial proposal, wherefore the consultant team should make adequate provisions in the financial proposal:

- Transcriptions or costs for translations to/from English/ Portuguese for any qualitative data.
- Any transportation stipends or payments for participants in evaluation activities but it is expected that these to be provided by the consultant team in case attendance of data collection activities would place an undue financial burden on participants.
- Any costs for IT or Telecommunications.

11. Tender Details

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| 1. Request for proposal published: | 06.03.2026 |
| 2. Closing date for clarifications: | 31.03.2026 |
| 3. Contact for clarifications | Fedor Böhmert, boehmert@dgrv.de |
| 4. Closing date and time for receipt of bids per E-mail: | 15.04.2026, 08:00 am (CET) |
| 5. Tentative start of assignment | 15.05.2026 |
| 6. Data collection period in Eswatini, Mozambique and South Africa: | June and August to September 2026 |
| 7. End of assignment | 15.09.2026 |
| 8. The expected duration of this service shall be 40 business days (not necessarily consecutive), and the final delivery of the services shall not exceed 15 th September 2026. | |
| 10. Documents to be submitted: | |
| a) Company profile and registration (if applicable) | |
| b) CV(s) of involved evaluators and interviewers | |
| c) Two or more research work sample(s) of similar assignments | |
| d) Technical proposal (no more than 10 pages) including confirmation of timeframe | |
| e) Financial proposal | |

Have we sparked your interest? If yes, please send your Email with

Subject: "Consultancy - Interim Evaluation SUCOSA II"

To bewerbung.international@dgrv.de

DGRV – German Cooperative and Raiffeisen Confederation

International Relations Department

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