Terms of Reference

Consultancy to conduct a mid-term project evaluation for the project "SI AGER-On the Move; Ensuring access to sufficient food and health services for sugarcane migrants in Maharashtra, India" financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Project name: SI AGER-On the Move; Ensuring access to sufficient food and health services for sugarcane migrants in Maharashtra, India

Project duration: ***01.11.2023 - 31.10.2028***

Project holders: Marathwada Gramin Vikas Sanstha (MGVS),

1. About Terre des Hommes Germany

Terre des Hommes Germany (hereafter **"TDH"**) is an international children's rights organization that promotes equitable development without racial, religious, political, cultural, or gender-based discrimination since 1967. Together with our local partner organizations in 37 countries, we support more than 240 projects in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Europe. TDH is an independent non-governmental organisation that promotes civic engagement and the participation of children and youths in all aspects of its work. TDH sees its mission in strengthening children and realising children's rights for all children because every child has the right to live and to develop in the best possible way. At TDH, we are convinced that sustainable development is possible for all people if the interests of children and future generations are respected and realised.

2. Background and Rationale

The said project is being implemented across 90 villages in Aurangabad, Jalna, and Beed districts of Maharashtra to address the challenges being faced by migrant workers in sugarcane industry. Maharashtra is the second-largest sugar-producing state in India, and the sugar industry provides livelihoods to millions of people. Despite facing chronic drought and water scarcity, the Marathwada region continues to host a large number of sugar mills. Recurring droughts, crop failures, rural poverty, and rising indebtedness have forced many small and marginal farmers from districts such as Beed, Jalna, and Aurangabad to migrate seasonally as sugarcane cutters and transport workers.

These migrant families face severe food, nutrition, health, and social security challenges. Since they move frequently during the harvesting season, they often lose access to government welfare schemes, including the Public Distribution System (PDS). Their diets are largely limited to cereals and pulses, with minimal consumption of fruits, vegetables, and protein-rich foods, leading to poor nutritional outcomes. Women and

children are especially vulnerable, experiencing food insecurity, poor health, and limited healthcare access.

Women workers face additional hardships due to gender discrimination and patriarchal decision-making. Pregnant women continue strenuous labour without maternity benefits, often giving birth under unsafe conditions and returning to work within days to avoid losing wages. Sugarcane workers also lack social protection benefits such as EPF and ESIC coverage.

Children suffer significantly from seasonal migration. They often miss five to seven months of schooling each year, leading to poor academic performance, school dropout, child labour, and early marriage. Living conditions at migration sites are generally poor, with inadequate sanitation, healthcare, and childcare facilities. Seasonal hostels intended to support migrant children remain insufficient and poorly implemented.

In response to these challenges, the project focuses on strengthening community institutions, improving access to health, nutrition, education, and social protection services, increasing awareness of government entitlements among migrant families, and enhancing coordination among government departments. With the overall objective of empowering migrant community to utilize all available resources through village structures to ensure the health and nutrition of women and children in particular, the project supports i)developing community based participatory structure for monitoring and supporting nutrition and health ii) migrant families are able to claim their entitlements to food and health services and utilize state social benefits, iii) migrant communities are strengthened and work independently to improve the quality of their nutrition and health and education for children and iv) engage authorities at different levels to effectively implement existing policies and programmes to ensure the health and nutritional well-being of migrant families and better educational opportunities for their children. The direct target group for this project include 34,500 community members from 7,500 families (the average family size in Maharashtra is 4.6 family members), including 4,000 pregnant and lactating women, 4,560 migrant women, 8,561 migrant men, 3,000 adolescent girls, 10.000 children (aged 6-14 years), 1,800 adolescents (aged 14-20 years), 600 SMC members, 1,800 migrant committee members (village secretary, village head, ASHA, Anganwadi workers, adult community members, etc.)

This evaluation is being undertaken to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of the project interventions and to generate evidence and lessons for future engagement.

3. Purpose, Objectives and Use of the Mid-term Project Evaluation

The overall aim of this project evaluation is the provision of an external, strategic review of the project's performance, achievements, and challenges to date and give recommendations, within the project's scope and limitations, for the remaining project

period to achieve the desired project goal. The evaluation is further commissioned in order to:

- Critically examine project implementation and its achievements and challenges and recommendations for remaining time period to all involved stakeholders / TDH Global Secretariat / TDH Regional Office in South Asia / implementing partners.
- Ensure financial and programmatic accountability and transparency.
- Identify the project's major successes, good practices, and innovative approaches, as well as challenges, structural gaps, and obstacles related to project design, implementation, and management and evaluate whether the applied strategies have met the desired results properly.
- Identify components that have contributed to or hindered the sustainability of project outcomes, including any unintended positive or negative effects arising from project activities.

The evaluation's results will be used by the TDH Global Secretariat, the Regional Office in South Asia and implementing partners to strengthen accountability and transparency vis-à-vis the project donor TDH/BMZ and to adapt corrective actions for further project implementation. The main findings and follow-up actions should also be shared with children and young people in a simple, accessible and age-appropriate manner, helping them understand how their feedback has informed the evaluation findings and subsequent project improvements.

4. Evaluation Questions

Overarching question

- How effectively have the project's interventions improved seasonal migrant sugarcane workers' and their families' access to and utilisation of health, nutrition, education, social protection entitlements and livelihood opportunities, particularly for women and children? What changes have emerged so far, and what barriers or gaps continue to affect these outcomes?
- What challenges do young people face in continuing their education during seasonal migration, what are their future aspirations, and what support do they need to continue their education and achieve their goals?
- How has the project strengthened the capacities of migrant families, community institutions and government stakeholders to facilitate access to essential services and social protection entitlements?
- What contributions has the project made towards improving policy implementation, informing policy and programme development, strengthening government coordination mechanisms, and institutionalizing sustainable approaches to address the needs of seasonal migrant sugarcane workers and their families during the remaining project period and beyond?

The following evaluation questions can be derived from the overarching question, enabling an assessment of the project regarding the OECD-DAC criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability):

4.1 Relevance

- To what extent does the project respond to the actual health, nutrition, food security and education needs of seasonal sugarcane migrant families, particularly women, children, pregnant and lactating mothers, and adolescent girls?
- How relevant are the project strategies to the specific challenges faced by migrant families in both source and destination areas, including seasonal migration, lack of documentation and limited access to public services?
- How effective are the project's dialogues and engagement with government authorities in strengthening the implementation of existing government schemes and policies to address the health, nutrition and educational needs of seasonal migrant communities?

4.2 Coherence

4.2.1 Internal coherence

- To what extent are the project's outcomes to date aligned with TDH's Strategic Goal 2, "Forcibly Displaced Children & Youth," and ROSA's regional priority on nutrition?
- How well are the project's activities and approaches aligned with the strategies, capacities and ongoing interventions of the implementing partners?

4.2.2 External coherence

- How closely do the project's activities and interventions align with existing government schemes, policies and implementation requirements related to the health, nutrition, social protection and education needs of seasonal migrant communities?
- To what extent has the project established or strengthened coordination with relevant community structures, local self-government institutions and frontline workers to support the implementation of existing government schemes in source and destination areas?

4.3 Effectiveness

- How and to what extent has the project improved coordination among community structures, local self-government institutions, frontline health workers and authorities at block, district and state levels in source and destination areas?
- What changes have occurred in migrant families' access to nutritious food, government health and nutrition services, social protection entitlements and educational opportunities, particularly for women and children? How have

documentation support and migrant tracking contributed to improving access, and what factors have facilitated or constrained it?

- To what extent has the project contributed to enrolment and retention of migrant children in schools/ seasonal hostels? What factors have facilitated or constrained continuity of education among migrant children?
- What improvements have occurred in the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) of migrant households, and which project interventions have contributed most significantly to these changes?
- How have alternative skills development, income-generating activities and kitchen gardens contributed to livelihood opportunities, household food security and dietary diversity among migrant families? What factors have facilitated or constrained these outcomes?

4.4 Efficiency

- To what extent were project resources (budget, staff time, and materials) allocated and utilized cost-effectively in relation to the outputs achieved?
- How effective are the project monitoring and evaluation in tracking progress, identifying implementation gaps, and informing corrective actions?
- What measures, within the given scope of project, could improve the efficiency of project implementation during the remaining project period?

4.5 Impact

- What are the achievements so far that can be attributed to the project's networking and stakeholders' engagement initiatives in the context of improved coordination mechanisms, or service delivery of health, nutrition and other essential services to migrant communities? what adaptations are required during the remaining project period to achieve the desired objective of the project?
- What changes have occurred in institutional commitment and responsiveness to the health, nutrition and education needs of migrant families? What challenges have constrained progress in this regard? What adaptations are required during the remaining project period to achieve the desired objective of the project?
- How have project interventions addressed the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women, adolescent girls and children from migrant communities? What changes have occurred in their access to services and entitlements?

4.6 Sustainability

- Are migrant families, community institutions (NHMCs, youth groups, child groups, SMCs), and local stakeholders adequately equipped to sustain the project's achievements and continue accessing and promoting health, nutrition, education, and social protection services after the project support ends? What measures are needed to strengthen sustainability and different stakeholder groups' roles in perpetuating the project's outcomes?

- How likely are the benefits of key interventions, including access to entitlements, kitchen gardens, alternative livelihoods, seasonal hostels, and stakeholders' engagement, to continue beyond project completion? What factors may support or hinder their continuation and potential scaling up?
- What progress has been made towards integrating the project supported approaches/ mechanisms into existing government systems and programmes to ensure their continuation beyond the project period?

5. Methodology

5.1 Methodology

In order to respond to the questions above, the consultant(s) is (are) expected to conduct both desk study and field work in project areas, applying both qualitative and quantitative methods. In doing so, the consultant(s) shall create a holistic understanding and analysis of the project's output and outcomes.

Special attention should be paid to participatory methods of data collection, carried out in close cooperation with the partner organizations and representatives of the target groups. The data collection should always be child-oriented and highly sensitive to gender relations; methods must be adapted to target groups and local conditions. The consultant(s) is (are) encouraged to implement this methodology as creatively as possible. Children and young people should be meaningfully involved in the participatory data collection process, not only as participants but also by sharing their experiences, ideas, priorities, and suggestions for improving project implementation.

5.2 Methods

Accordingly, the consultant(s) is (are) expected to apply the following methods when conducting the project evaluation:

- A desk study, i.e., an analysis of the project's background documents, including, but not limited to,
    - the project proposal
    - the project feasibility study
    - policies and strategies
    - etc.
- Key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders
- Focus group discussion(s) with relevant stakeholders
- Individual interviews with local population
- Child- and youth-friendly methods with children and young people, using simple and creative approaches such as drawing, storytelling, and group discussions to help children of different ages and backgrounds share their experiences, perspectives, and suggestions comfortably.
- Particular attention should be paid to ensure that children and young people feel safe and comfortable when sharing their experiences. Their participation

must be voluntary, their privacy and confidentiality respected, and they should be able to express their views freely without fear of negative consequences

Whenever the projects' target groups are involved in the research process, particular attention must be paid to the poorest, most vulnerable, and most remote members of the target groups in order to give them an opportunity to participate in the evaluation. Ideally, community members / groups are invited to validate the evaluation data and analysis before finalizing the report. The (results from) focus group discussions and interviews are to be transcribed in English to be available for analysis in the long term.

In addition to a standard content analysis, the analysis of the data obtained should include the following methods of analysis:

- A scenario analysis, analyzing the project's overarching developmental impact and sustainability, gender and power analysis, equity and inclusion.
- A SWOT analysis, pointing out the internal and external opportunities as well as challenges regarding the project's sustainability.

6. Key evaluation methods, deliverables, responsibilities, and tentative schedule

	Evaluation measures	To dos / deliverables	Responsible institution	Deadline / schedule	Consultants' Working days
Preparation phase	Clarification of tasks & responsibilities	Provision of materials for desk study	- TDH HO -TDH South Asia office - - Consultants	14 November 2026	
		Information about TDH child safeguarding policy			
		Clarification of open questions			
	Desk study	Familiarization with explicit knowledge regarding the project	- Consultants	20 November 2026	
		Analysis of strategies, project proposals, previous evaluations, etc.			
		Writing of desk study as part of final evaluation report			
	Inception report	Drawing up of concrete workplan & schedule	- Consultants	22 November 2026	
		Definition of tasks & responsibilities within evaluation team			
		Detailed description of methodology			
	Inception workshop	Moderation	- Consultants	26 November 2026	
		Active participation	- Project Partners -TDH South Asia office - TDH HO		
		Adaptation of inception report	- Consultants		

	Evaluation measures	To dos / deliverables	Responsible institution	Deadline / schedule	Consultants' Working days
Field work phase	Travel organization	Planning & organizing field phase, including arrangements for meetings etc.	- Consultants	1-5 December	
		Organization of required travel documents, tickets, etc.			
	Data collection	Key informant interviews	- Consultants	5-20 December	
		Focus group discussions			
		Observations			
	Closing workshop: Presentation & discussion of preliminary findings	Preparation	- Consultants	30 December 2026	
		Moderation			
		Documentation			
		Active participation	- TDH HO -TDH South Asia office - Partners organization		
Analysis & concluding phase	Preliminary draft of evaluation report	Following the instructions & structure provided in TDH evaluation report template (attachment No 1)	- Consultants	15 January 2027	
	Feedback on draft	Written statement	- TDH HO -TDH South Asia office	25 January 2027	
	Final evaluation report	Following the instructions & structure provided in TDH evaluation report template (attachment No 1)	- Consultants	31 January 2027	
	Follow-up workshop	Preparation	- Consultants	5 February 2027	
		Moderation			

		Active participation	- TDH HO -TDH South Asia office - Partners organization		

The evaluation is managed directly by the TDH regional office in close consultation with the Desk Officer responsible and the MEAL officer (supported by TDH MEAL Youth Fellows[1]) at the TDH global secretariat. If (a) local consultant(s) is (are) chosen to conduct the evaluation, the respective contract is signed between the consultant(s) and the regional office. In case an international consultant is chosen, the head office is responsible for contracting.

All services must be carried out between 14 November 2026 and 5 February 2027.

7. Requirements for bidders

- Experience of conducting evaluations and research in the context of migration using a mixed methods approach, including participatory and child sensitive methods
- University degree in the field of Economics and/or Social Science
- Profound knowledge and experience with the socio-economic situation in the project country/ area
- Very good oral and written proficiency in English, and Hindi/ Marathi
- Acceptance of and compliance with TDH's Child Safeguarding Policy (attachment No 2)

8. Specification for offers

Offers will be accepted until **5 November 2026** and should include:

- A narrative / technical proposal of no more than 3 pages, including relevant experience, planned methodology, timeline, and staffing for the evaluation
- A detailed financial proposal for the evaluation
- A separate list of expected travel expenses, which will be reimbursed upon presentation of proof
- Two sample reports; published or unpublished reports approved by the respective clients focusing on the same sector along with written permission from them to share

Attachments:

1) TDH Child Safeguarding Policy