

Concern Worldwide

Terms of Reference

Final Evaluation of Concern’s Irish Aid Programme Grant (2017 – 2021) and Humanitarian Programme Fund (2019 - 2021)

Purpose of the evaluation

Concern is requesting the services of a highly experienced consultant or team of consultants to conduct an external evaluation of its flagship Irish Aid programmes, namely the Irish Aid Programme Grant II (IAPG II 2017 – 2021) and the Humanitarian Programme Plan (HPP 2019 – 2021).

The evaluation will assess the overall impact of the two programmes, the extent to which they achieved their stated objectives, the appropriateness of the current level of linkages between the two and provide recommendations for future programming.

The evaluation of the two programmes is a contractual deliverable required by Irish Aid, and the evaluation documents will constitute an independent assessment of the programmes’ performance as well as capturing programme learning. The primary audiences will be Concern management in Dublin and at country programme level and the relevant divisions within Irish Aid.

Description of the Context

Concern works in a broad range of countries and contexts. The selection of these countries is based on the humanitarian imperative to respond and a strategic commitment to work in the poorest and most vulnerable contexts, which we assess through the production of a Poor Vulnerable Index (PVI) every two years. This is reflected in the target countries for our IAPG and HPP programmes, as outlined in table 1 below.

Table 1 – Countries with IAPG and HPP Programmes

IAPG Only	IAPG and HPP	HPP Only
Bangladesh, Burundi, DPRK, Haiti, Liberia, Malawi, Niger, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Sudan	Afghanistan, CAR, Chad, DRC, Ethiopia, Somalia, and South Sudan	Lebanon and Syria/Iraq.

The challenges presented in our countries of operation vary between conflict, food insecurity, and vulnerability to inequality, lack of infrastructural and institutional capacity, climate change and cyclical disasters. These diverse challenges require responses that are context specific, and all of our IAPG programmes are developed based on a sound contextual analysis, which defines a set of potential programme options, and robust targeting processes that focus on identifying and working with people living in extreme poverty. Our HPP programmes are based on the identification of humanitarian need and are rooted in the fundamental humanitarian principles.

In the development contexts in which Concern works, like many of those reflected in the “IAPG Only” category, there are high levels of poverty and inequality, with populations vulnerable to a number of shocks and stresses. In these contexts, our IAPG programming often focuses on an enabling and facilitating role, providing technical support, partnering with government, bringing proven interventions to scale and delivering them to the most remote communities and households.

Fragile states feature strongly in our PVI analysis, reflected in the ‘IAPG and HPP’ category countries above. The particular needs and development challenges within these fragile and conflict affected states are different to other contexts, and may vary across locations in the country. Our added-value here is

the quality of our targeting and our commitment to exploring better solutions through deep contextual analysis and innovation. In these contexts, our programmes often focus on reducing the risks of future shocks and on working with people over the five years of the IAPG to reduce vulnerability and help them sustainably move out of poverty through building household and community resilience.

Concern's HPP funding for 2019 - 2021 focuses on assisting affected populations in nine countries with acute humanitarian needs and vulnerability to multiple, often recurring, risks. The programme focuses on a range of interventions including nutrition, NFI distributions, WASH, protection, food security, and a strong component of DRR.

Subject of the Evaluation

A brief overview of the subject of the evaluation, Concern's Irish Aid Programme Grant II 2017 - 2021 and Humanitarian Programme Plan (HPP) 2019 – 2021, is provided below.

Irish Aid Programme Grant II (IAPG II):

The IAPG II (2017 - 2021) is a performance-based partnership arrangement that Irish Aid has with a small number of major NGO partners. It provides trusted partners with flexibility and predictability to implement ambitious interventions aimed at delivering results and making holistic changes for poor and marginalised people.

Concern's IAPG II is broken down into 19 subsidiary programmes, one each in the following 17 programme countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burundi, CAR, Chad, DRC, DPRK, Ethiopia, Haiti, Liberia, Malawi, Niger, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan. The final two programmes are Ireland based and cover respectively "Public Engagement" and "Active Citizenship" (Development Education). Each of the 19 programmes has its own Theory of Change and Results Framework through which the achievements of the programmes are tracked from 2017 – 2021.

The objectives of Concern's IAPG II are as follows:

1. Extremely poor people gain or retain access to, and increase the return on, assets.
2. Social and political structures and norms that maintain inequalities in society, as experienced by the extremely poor people, are effectively challenged and overcome.
3. Extremely poor people's risk of experiencing a shock is reduced and their vulnerability to shocks that are likely to occur is reduced.
4. Concern will overcome systemic barriers and programme blockages through learning and policy influencing.

Humanitarian Programme Plan (HPP):

The HPP is Irish Aid's main humanitarian funding mechanisms for NGO partners, supporting a number of major NGO partners with proven capacity to deliver effective humanitarian responses. It supports humanitarian interventions in contexts experiencing protracted, predictable or recurring crises. Partners' HPP programmes may incorporate elements of preparedness, disaster risk reduction and early recovery. The previous cycle of the HPP programme was for two years (2017 – 2018) – the first time that Irish Aid had moved towards multi-annual funding for emergency responses – and was evaluated in 2018. In 2019, Irish Aid launched the current phase of HPP which will run until the end of 2021.

Concern's HPP programme 2019 – 2021 is broken down into nine subsidiary programmes, one each in the following countries: Afghanistan, CAR, Chad, DRC, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Somalia, South Sudan and Syria/Iraq.

The objectives of Concern's HPP (2019 - 2021) are as follows:

- Saving lives and alleviating suffering in response to new and existing emergencies.

- Ensuring programmes maintain the dignity of disaster-affected populations.
- Identifying and building on existing community capacities to prepare for, respond to and recover from disaster, and build that capacity through interventions.

Evaluation Objectives and Scope

Evaluation Objectives

The overall objective of this consultancy is to provide an independent assessment of Irish Aid’s funding to Concern Worldwide through the two main mechanisms of the Programme Grant and the Humanitarian Programme Plan (HPP).

The specific objectives of this evaluation can be summarised as:

- To assess both programmes against relevant OECD-DAC criteria and other commitments, as well as, against key Concern policies and approaches.
- To provide evidence-based recommendations for informing and improving both emergency and development programmes, through the application of lessons to be learned and promoting good practice.
- To assess and advise on the appropriateness of the overall current relationship between the two funding streams.

Evaluation Scope

This evaluation will have several components reflecting the scale and diversity of the interventions, and the complexity of the interactions between the different components. The evaluation will cover Concern’s development programmes (under the IAPG) and humanitarian programmes (under the HPP), as well as the Public Engagement and Development Education (Active Citizenship) components in Ireland (which are also funded under the IAPG).

To bring all of this together, and ensure learning on a strategic level, this consultancy will need to research and develop the following three papers:

1. A **‘Chapeau Paper’** bringing together key learning from the different programmes and providing evidence-based recommendations for the future - for both Concern (as implementer) and Irish Aid (as donor)¹. As well as, providing a snapshot of performance in the two programmes, this paper should also focus on the relationship between the funding streams; the application of core policy documents; how Concern has enhanced programme quality through Head Office initiatives; and the management structures we have put in place.
2. An **Evaluation report on the Programme Grant** presented against the OECD-DAC criteria. This report should include:
 - An evaluation of the overall programme and whether it has achieved its stated objectives, incorporating the information contained in individual country-level evaluations, all conducted against the OECD/DAC criteria, as well as, a specific assessment of the Public Engagement and Development Education components that were implemented in Ireland. These country level evaluations and evaluations of the Public Engagement and Development Education components will be produced separately (see methodology section below).
 - An assessment of the decision making and planning processes (including country selection and targeting).

¹ This will include consultations with Irish Aid during the inception period of the contract

- An assessment of the application of, and adherence to, key policies.
- An assessment of progress in the application of a results-based management approach.
- An assessment of how systemic barriers and programme blockages are being addressed through evidence-based policy influencing and advocacy.
- Achievements in each of Concern’s core sectoral areas of education, health and livelihoods should also be assessed as well as an assessment on efforts to scale up Resilience, Graduation, Sustainable Systems Strengthening and Urban programmes, as outlined in the programme proposal.
- Recommendations that will improve and inform Concern’s future development programmes of a similar nature.

3. Evaluation report on the HPP following the criteria outlined in the document *Evaluating Concern’s Emergency Responses* of January 2020. This report should include:

- An evaluation of the HPP programme, and whether it has achieved its stated objectives, against the extended DAC criteria and drawing heavily on the HPP evaluation carried out in 2017 (see methodology section below). The evaluation will also take account of, and address, the Core Humanitarian Standard, the Sphere Standards, and the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief.
- An assessment of the decision making and planning processes (including country selection and targeting).
- An assessment of the application of and adherence to key policies.
- An assessment of the relationship between this humanitarian programme and longer-term development programmes where such a link exists, and the appropriateness of this link.
- Recommendations that will improve and inform Concern’s future emergency response programmes of a similar nature.

The following provides an overview of how these three reports sit together, and with the other evaluations scheduled to be undertaken at country level.

Level 1 Report	‘Chapeau Paper’ bringing together key learning from the different evaluations.	
Level 2 Report(s)	Evaluation report on the Programme Grant	Evaluation report on the HPP
Level 3 Reports	8 x Country specific reports produced by Concern Staff and others as standalone documents evaluating the grant in that country, using the OECD-DAC Criteria. 2 x Subject specific reports on Public Engagement and Active Citizenship (work with the Irish Public) conducted by external consultants contracted through a separate ToR	4 x Country specific reports based on the criteria outlined in the document <i>Evaluating Concern’s Emergency Responses</i>

Additional Reports	Mid Term Reviews, Results Frameworks	First phase HPP evaluations for eight of the nine countries included, Results Frameworks.
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Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions will be aligned to the OECD-DAC criteria (of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability), and the extended criteria for humanitarian programmes (of relevance, appropriateness, coherence, coverage, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and connectedness). They will address (among others) the questions defined by the donor under these criteria. These will include, but are not limited to:

Relevance: To what extent did the programme respond to the needs of participants/beneficiaries in the evolving context?

- Did the Theory of Change/Logic of Intervention hold true?
- Were the assumptions valid?
- Did the organisation adapt appropriately in response to changes in the context and lessons learned during the implementation of the intervention?

Effectiveness: Is there evidence that anticipated results are being achieved at the current stage of the programme? To what extent can the emerging results be attributed to Programme Grant/HPP funding?

Sustainability²: To what extent did the organisation build institutional capacity of local partners?

- Did the programme enhance local ownership and capacity to influence policy?
- Where relevant, did the programme contribute to localisation of humanitarian aid?
- What has worked well/not worked well and why?

Concern and the chosen evaluator(s) will finalise these questions during the inception period of the contract. The evaluation questions are expected to be answered in an evidence-based manner using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data.

Methodology

Concern will provide the selected evaluator(s) with relevant information, documentation, contacts and guidance during a briefing meeting in the inception phase.

Through their application, the selected evaluator(s) will propose the exact methodology they will use for conducting the evaluation. However, the evaluator should note the follows:

- Individual country evaluations will be carried out for eight of the 17 countries participating in the Programme Grant by two person teams, drawn from both Concern HQ staff and independent consultants in Quarter 3 and 4 2020. These evaluation reports will be made available to the consultant.
- Likewise, four of the nine HPP programmes will also be evaluated by a mixture of Concern staff and external consultants and reports will be made available to the consultant.

² The sustainability questions will only be applied to IAPG, as it is not one of the extended DAC Criteria for evaluating Humanitarian interventions, instead for HPP the focus will be on connectedness. Connectedness refers to the need to ensure that activities of a short-term emergency nature are carried out in a context that takes longer-term and interconnected problems into account.

- Country level evaluations will be done using the OECD-DAC criteria and extended DAC criteria; the consultant is expected to input into country specific Terms of References and refinement of evaluation questions for these evaluations (in Q2 2020).
- Validation visits to at least two countries benefiting from both HPP and PG will need to be undertaken by the consultant.
- Individual evaluations of the Public Engagement and Active Citizenship components will be carried out by evaluators contracted through a separate ToR and these reports made available to the consultant.
- Monitoring and evaluation data and reports will be available for all programmes.
- Cross-cutting themes of equality, protection, HIV and AIDS, partnership, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and environmental impact should be considered throughout the evaluation.

Any proposed methodology is expected to assess the quality of available data, and then apply standard evaluation methods to get additional information required to effectively evaluate the programme and to identify the core reasons for success or failure. Some methodology principles that we expect of all evaluators to adhere to include:

- Data collection and analysis should adhere to good practice in research methods.
- The methodology must be participatory and allow for the inclusion of viewpoints of representatives of key stakeholders, including beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, implementing partners, government stakeholders, our donor (Irish Aid) and Concern staff.

Expected products/outputs

Concern requires that the external consultant(s) conducting the evaluation of HPP and IAPG II produce three main documents as the final outputs and deliverables of this evaluation:

1. An overall ‘Chapeau Paper’ to provide an overall assessment of Irish Aid funding to Concern Worldwide
2. A standalone evaluation document for Concern’s IAPG II programme
3. A standalone evaluation document for Concern’s HPP programme

Reporting Lines

The process will be led by the International Programmes Director, the Emergency Director and the Strategy Advocacy and Learning Director. The Humanitarian Adviser and Irish Aid Programme Funding Coordinator will be responsible for the overall coordination of the evaluation process, the first being responsible for the HPP evaluation component and the latter for the IAPF. The Senior Programme Approaches and Learning (PALU) Advisor will provide technical input.

Timeline for Delivery

The appointed evaluator(s) will be expected to allocate a small number of working days (1-3 per month) for remote and face to face meetings in Dublin during the initial phases of evaluation design (April - May) and to input into country level evaluation terms of reference. Draft copies of the three documents outlined above should be submitted by mid-February 2021.

Evaluation Team’s Skills and Experience

The evaluation team should have the following skills and experience:

- 5 years + of experience in evaluation of overseas development and humanitarian programmes utilising the DAC criteria and production of high-level evaluation reports

- Experience in conducting evaluations of complex programmes across multiple countries
- Technical expertise in the fields of livelihoods, health and education, and emergency responses in complex crises
- Experience of programming contexts in Africa, Asia and the Middle East
- Ability to analyse budgets, results frameworks, M+E reports and surveys, and other documents to assess programmatic value for money
- Ability to evaluate and assess the quality of programmatic data collection systems and excellent understanding of results-based management approaches.
- Commitment to participatory approaches to evaluation, and strong facilitation skills

Applications for this contract from qualified consultants must include the following:

- Evaluation Plan (including a timeline) / Methodology.
- Evaluation Team, their Roles and Responsibilities and Level of Effort.
- CVs of evaluators and examples of previous similar work.
- Comprehensive budget and costings.

Applications must be submitted to Mark Furlong (Mark.Furlong@concern.net) and Elisa Marcon (elisa.marcon@concern.net) by 31st March, 2020. Concern Worldwide expects to be in a position to select the successful applicant no later than the 30th April 2020.