

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONDUCTING A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR “Where Futures Grow: Strengthening Child Nutrition and Climate-Resilient Local Food Systems in Somaliland”

CARE Deutschland e.V. and HAVOYOCO are developing a project aimed at strengthening sustainable and locally driven school feeding, nutrition and food systems in the Maroodijeex and Togdheer regions. Prior to finalizing the project design and submitting the funding application, an independent feasibility study will be commissioned. The study will provide CARE and HAVOYOCO with an evidence-based foundation for critically assessing and improving the proposed project concept. It will examine the prerequisites, opportunities, constraints and risks affecting implementation and determine whether the proposed intervention can plausibly achieve its intended outcome and contribute to anticipated longer-term impacts under the prevailing conditions. The study is not intended merely to confirm the proposed design; it shall critically examine the intervention logic, assumptions, proposed measures, implementation arrangements and alternatives and recommend modifications where necessary.

I. About CARE Deutschland e.V. and HAVOYOCO

Within the global CARE International confederation, CARE Deutschland e.V. was founded in 1980 and works closely with CARE entities and partner organizations. CARE Germany is committed to creating lasting change, with gender justice at the heart of its humanitarian and development programming. Its approaches include strengthening individual and community agency, supporting economic empowerment, strengthening civil society organizations and advocating for the rights and needs of marginalized populations.

The proposed project will be implemented with the Horn of Africa Voluntary Youth Committee (HAVOYOCO), a regional non-governmental, non-partisan humanitarian and development organization headquartered in Hargeisa and operational in Somaliland, Somalia and Ethiopia. HAVOYOCO will serve as the local project partner and will support contextualization, stakeholder engagement and implementation planning in the target regions.

II. Project Information

The project aims to improve the nutrition, health and learning outcomes of vulnerable school-age children in the Maroodijeex and Togdheer regions by establishing resilient, locally based, climate-smart school feeding systems using locally grown produce (Home-Grown School Feeding). The project intends to support schools, local authorities, and school nutrition committees to plan and implement gender-sensitive nutrition programs aligned with relevant standards. Smallholder farmers, particularly women and youth, are expected to be supported through climate-smart agriculture, market access, post-harvest processing and drought preparedness so they can supply nutritious food to schools and local markets. School gardens and farmer field schools are envisaged as practical learning environments for nutrition and sustainable agriculture. The project also promotes community participation, nutrition education, hygiene, and shared responsibility for sustainable, locally driven food systems.

III. Impact Population and Target Groups

CARE and HAVOYOCO have preliminarily identified vulnerable school-age children attending selected schools in Maroodijeex and Togdheer as the primary target group, particularly children affected by food insecurity, poverty, drought, limited access to nutritious diets and other barriers affecting educational

participation and well-being. The project also intends to work with smallholder farmers, particularly women and young people, who may be supported to produce, process and supply nutritious locally grown food to schools and local markets. Other relevant groups and stakeholders include teachers, school management and nutrition committees, parents and caregivers, community representatives, women and youth groups, farmer groups and producer organizations, local traders and processors, local and regional authorities, and relevant government institutions.

IV. Purpose and Objectives of the Feasibility Study

The primary purpose of the consultancy is to critically assess whether the proposed project approach can plausibly achieve the intended project outcome and contribute to anticipated impacts under the existing conditions in Maroodijeex and Togdheer. The study shall independently validate the evidence and assumptions underlying the project design, identify critical gaps and provide practical recommendations for refinement before implementation.

1. Feasibility Assessment

- Assess the technical, economic, social, environmental, institutional, security and operational feasibility of the proposed project components.
- Evaluate the proposed project according to the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact/significance and sustainability.
- Assess the plausibility of the causal pathways linking school feeding with nutrition, well-being and educational participation, and linking local procurement with local production, farmer income and resilient local food systems.
- Assess whether the proposed targeting, implementation arrangements, partnership roles, resources and timeframe are realistic under the prevailing context.

2. Risk Identification and Mitigation

- Review and validate the Do-No-Harm and risk analysis prepared by CARE and HAVOYOCO and assess whether relevant political, social, conflict-related, safeguarding, environmental, climate, institutional, financial and operational risks have been adequately considered.
- Identify critical gaps or additional risks emerging from the feasibility study and, where necessary, complement the existing analysis and recommend practical mitigation measures.

3. Actionable Recommendations

- Provide clear, practical recommendations for refining the project design, including the Theory of Change/results logic, outcome, outputs, activities, targeting, implementation arrangements, partnerships, procurement approach, sustainability strategy, assumptions, indicators and risk mitigation measures.
- Provide an overall feasibility judgement and identify components that should proceed as proposed, be modified, be significantly redesigned or be reconsidered where feasibility cannot be demonstrated.

4. Key Feasibility Questions

- Is the proposed project Outcome and causal logic, including key assumptions and the links between project components, plausible under the current context in Maroodijeex and Togdheer?
- Which proposed components should be retained, modified, sequenced differently, scaled, or omitted based on evidence of needs, feasibility, risks, and likely effectiveness?

- Are the proposed target groups, targeting criteria, geographic focus, and participation mechanisms appropriate, inclusive, conflict-sensitive, and operationally feasible?
- Can the proposed interventions be delivered within the anticipated budget, staffing, timeframe, and institutional capacities, and are the planned resource allocations proportionate to the expected results?
- Does the local partner have the necessary capacities and ownership arrangements, and is an additional technical or implementing partner or other technical support required for any component?
- What are the critical assumptions and risks affecting feasibility or sustainability, and what changes to the Theory of Change, results framework, indicators, targeting, implementation arrangements, or risk mitigation measures are required?

V. Scope of Work

The study shall build on existing project-development work and available evidence. CARE and HAVOYOCO are responsible for providing the project concept and available contextual, needs, stakeholder, market, sector, risk and lessons-learned information. The consultant shall independently review and validate this information, assess its implications for feasibility, identify critical evidence gaps and, where necessary, complement the available evidence through targeted research or consultations. Primary data collection should focus on questions that cannot be adequately answered through existing evidence.

- **Context Analysis:** Assess the socio-economic, political, institutional, cultural, environmental and climate-related context at macro, meso and micro levels, including key factors affecting nutrition, food security, educational participation and local food systems. Assess the underlying causes of identified problems, which can realistically be addressed by the project, existing local capacities and structures, and critical contextual or systemic constraints affecting implementation.
- **Stakeholder Analysis:** Review and validate the stakeholder mapping and assess the roles, capacities, interests, incentives and influence of key stakeholders. Assess stakeholder support, potential contributions, coordination arrangements, competing interests and implications for implementation and local ownership, and identify any additional stakeholders or partnerships critical to feasibility.
- **Community Needs and Capacities Assessment:** Review and validate identified needs, priorities, coping strategies, capacities and self-help mechanisms, with particular attention to vulnerable school-age children, women, youth and smallholder farmers. Assess whether proposed targeting and selection criteria adequately reflect relevant differences within and between target groups, including gender, age, disability, socio-economic situation, capacities and other context-relevant characteristics, and whether proposed interventions respond to community priorities and build on local capacities.
- **School Feeding and Nutrition Assessment:** Review available information on school feeding and nutrition practices and assess school readiness for the proposed intervention, including nutrition and meal planning, food preparation and safety, WASH, storage, staffing and relevant school-management structures. Assess opportunities for nutrition education, participation and school gardens, and recommend minimum conditions for school participation.
- **Local Food Production and Market Assessment:** Review and validate available market and production information and assess whether local and regional supply chains can reliably meet anticipated school food demand in terms of quantity, quality, price, timing and food safety. Assess

production capacity and seasonality, prices, inputs, storage, processing, transport, supplier capacity and barriers affecting smaller producers, women and youth. Assess realistic procurement options, potential market distortions and contingency arrangements and, where feasible, compare estimated school demand with available supply for key commodities.

- **Climate-Smart Agriculture and Resilience Assessment:** Review identified climate-related production risks, drought preparedness, water availability and environmental sustainability and assess the feasibility of proposed climate-smart agriculture approaches, including crop selection, water-efficient production, soil and water conservation, farmer field schools, school gardens and post-harvest management. Identify significant environmental risks and recommend appropriate design adjustments.
- **Policy and Legal Assessment:** Review identified relevant policies, regulations, standards and institutional frameworks relating to school feeding, nutrition, agriculture, food safety and procurement, gender equality, youth, social inclusion, climate resilience and environmental protection. Assess coherence with the proposed project and identify regulatory or institutional constraints affecting implementation.
- **Lessons from Similar Initiatives:** Review relevant past and ongoing interventions identified by CARE and HAVOYOCO and, where useful, experience from comparable contexts. Assess key lessons, good practices, challenges, synergies and risks of duplication and their implications for project design and implementation.
- **Partner Capacity and Partnership Gap Assessment:** Assess the capacities of HAVOYOCO and relevant implementation actors and determine whether additional technical or implementing support is required. Consider the rationale for partner selection and HAVOYOCO's ownership of and contribution to the project concept, roles and agreements, organizational strengths and resources, and priority capacity-development needs. Where gaps exist, recommend appropriate capacity strengthening, technical assistance, service-provider or partnership arrangements.
- **Review and Validation of Do-No-Harm and Risk Analysis:** Review and validate the existing Do-No-Harm and risk analysis, including social, conflict, security, safeguarding, operational, environmental, climate, reputational and partnership risks. Assess whether key risks, unintended negative effects, community dividers and connectors and proposed mitigation measures have been adequately considered and identify any additional critical risks emerging from the feasibility study.
- **Feasibility Analysis:** Assess the overall technical, economic, social, environmental, institutional, security and operational feasibility of the proposed project and whether planned activities can realistically be implemented with the anticipated budget, staffing and timeframe. Integrate findings from the thematic assessments, risk analysis and partner capacity assessment and explicitly assess the project against the six OECD/DAC criteria:
 - **Relevance:** alignment with priority problems, target-group needs, structural barriers and the local context.
 - **Coherence:** consistency with relevant policies, standards and other interventions.
 - **Effectiveness:** plausibility of the Theory of Change, assumptions, methods and activities in achieving the intended Outcome.
 - **Efficiency:** proportionality of resources, staffing, procurement/logistics arrangements and costs to expected results.
 - **Impact/Significance:** plausible contribution of the Outcome to wider effects and potential structural, replication or scaling effects.
 - **Sustainability:** likelihood that positive results can continue beyond external funding, considering institutional, financial/economic, social, technical and environmental factors.

- **Recommendations for Project Design:** Provide clear and actionable recommendations for refining the Theory of Change/results logic, project components, targeting, activities, implementation and partnership arrangements, risk mitigation, sustainability, monitoring approaches, indicators and results framework.

VI. Methodology

The feasibility study shall apply a mixed-methods approach combining desk research, field-based data collection, stakeholder consultation, participatory assessment, institutional capacity assessment and risk analysis. The methodology shall be conflict-sensitive, culturally and ethically appropriate, child-safeguarding compliant and adapted to the operational context in Maroodijeex and Togdheer. Existing studies shall be used where they adequately address relevant questions so that primary data collection focuses on remaining evidence gaps.

6.1 Desk Review

- Review relevant project-development documents, including the project concept, preliminary Theory of Change/results framework, proposed activities, targeting approach, preliminary budget and implementation arrangements, as well as relevant previous project documents, evaluations and studies.
- Review available contextual and sector evidence, including national and local policies and strategies, school feeding and nutrition documents, food-security assessments, agricultural and climate information, market and value-chain information, food-safety standards, gender and youth assessments, and relevant research or assessments concerning the target regions.
- Review available information prepared or identified by CARE and HAVOYOCO on community needs and capacities, stakeholder mapping, local food production and markets, Do-No-Harm and project risks, partner capacities, and lessons from previous or ongoing initiatives, as well as relevant documentation from government, UN agencies and other development or humanitarian actors.
- Assess the quality, relevance and currency of the available evidence, identify inconsistencies or critical information gaps, and determine which questions require further validation or targeted primary data collection.
- Use existing studies and assessments wherever they adequately address the feasibility questions, avoiding unnecessary duplication of previous data collection.

6.2 Field Research, Stakeholder Engagement and Sampling

- Use an appropriate combination of key informant interviews, focus group discussions, structured or semi-structured interviews, school, farmer and market assessments, surveys where justified, community consultations, participatory methods and direct observation.
- Field research shall primarily validate existing information and address critical evidence gaps relating to school readiness, community needs and capacities, local food production and market conditions, climate-related constraints, stakeholder capacities and key feasibility risks.
- Ensure meaningful and safe participation of relevant groups, including children where ethically appropriate, parents and caregivers, teachers and school committees, women and youth, farmers and farmer organizations, market actors, community representatives, authorities, government institutions and relevant development/humanitarian actors.
- Sampling shall be purposive and designed to capture relevant variation across Maroodijeex and Togdheer, including differences in location, school readiness, livelihood and production

conditions, gender, age and market access. The study is not expected to generate statistically representative population estimates.

- The consultant shall propose the final sampling approach in the inception report. It shall explain participant selection, geographic distribution, diversity of respondents and how selection bias will be minimized.
- Any data collection involving children shall use age-appropriate and ethically appropriate methods and comply with applicable child-safeguarding requirements, informed consent/assent procedures, confidentiality and data protection.

The figures are indicative and may be refined by the consultant in the inception report based on the study methodology, available evidence, accessibility, security conditions, and budget. Any substantial reduction in agreed coverage should be discussed and approved by CARE.

Sampling dimension	Indicative target coverage	Selection considerations
Regions	2	Maroodijeex and Togdheer
Districts	2-4	Reflect project implementation areas and differing market/agro-ecological conditions
Schools / school-level assessments	6	Include different locations, sizes and levels of readiness; assess relevant WASH, food preparation/storage, food safety, gardens and management capacities
Communities / villages	4-6	Linked to sampled schools and/or farmer supply areas
Key informant interviews (KIIs)	12-18	CARE/HAVOYOCO, sector authorities, school leaders, market actors, development partners and other relevant stakeholders
Focus group discussions (FGDs)	6-8	Appropriately structured groups for parents/caregivers, farmers, women, youth and other relevant groups
Child consultations	2-4	Age-appropriate, safeguarding-compliant consultations with girls and boys where justified and ethically appropriate
Farmer / producer respondents	15-25	Include women, youth, different production scales and supply locations
Traders / processors / aggregators	6-10	Cover key commodity chains and procurement channels
Markets assessed	3-5	Include relevant local/wholesale markets supplying target schools and communities

6.3 Analysis, Validation and Reporting

- Triangulate findings from secondary data, existing studies, qualitative field research, quantitative information where available, direct observation and stakeholder perspectives.
- Distinguish clearly between verified findings, stakeholder perceptions, assumptions, evidence gaps and consultant interpretation.
- Present preliminary findings to CARE and HAVOYOCO and, where appropriate, selected stakeholders for factual validation and discussion of implications. Validation shall not compromise the consultant's independence or require evidence-based findings to be changed.

VII. Deliverables

- **Inception Report:** Detailing the proposed methodology, work plan, stakeholder engagement approach, sampling strategy, and data collection tools for the feasibility study. The work plan should specify milestones for the desk review, fieldwork, validation, draft report, and final report, as well as the proposed allocation of consultant working days.
- **Feasibility Study Report:** Up to 30 pages, excluding annexes, including an executive summary, methodology, main findings, feasibility analysis, conclusions, and practical recommendations, in English. The report should include the recommendation/action matrix and clearly identify proposed adjustments to the Theory of Change/results framework, assumptions, indicators, targeting, and implementation arrangements.
- **Data Handover:** Submission of all quantitative and qualitative data collected during the study, including completed tools, datasets, interview and focus group notes, and other relevant supporting documentation, in line with data protection, confidentiality, safeguarding, and informed consent requirements.
- **Presentation of Main Findings and Recommendations:** Presentation of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations to CARE, HAVOYOCO, and relevant stakeholders.

VIII. Timeframe

The assignment is expected to take place between 21 September and 1 November 2026. The indicative sequence may be refined in the inception report, subject to agreement with CARE.

Phase	Main activities	Indicative timing
1. Inception	Kick-off, document review, methodology, stakeholder mapping, sampling framework, tools and inception report	Week 1
2. Field research	Field data collection in Maroodijeex and Togdheer, including school, farmer, community and market assessments	Weeks 2–3
3. Analysis	Complete fieldwork, data cleaning, supply-demand/market analysis, triangulation and preliminary findings	Week 4
4. Draft report	Prepare and submit draft feasibility study report	Week 5
5. Validation and finalization	Validation discussion, incorporation of factual/consolidated comments and submission of final report/data	Week 6

IX. Management and Reporting

The consultant will report to CARE Deutschland e.V. CARE will provide overall contractual and technical coordination, while HAVOYOCO will support access to relevant contextual information, stakeholders and project locations. CARE and HAVOYOCO may provide factual and contextual

feedback on draft deliverables; however, responsibility for the analysis, conclusions and recommendations remains with the independent consultant.

X. Required Skills and Qualifications

Educational & Professional Expertise

- Advanced university degree in international development, nutrition, food security, agriculture/agricultural economics, economics, education, climate change/environmental studies, rural development, social sciences, or another relevant field.
- Demonstrated experience conducting feasibility studies, evaluations, needs assessments, market or value-chain assessments, or project design studies in relevant sectors. Experience conducting feasibility studies for BMZ or comparable institutional donors is an advantage.
- Proven professional experience in relevant areas such as school feeding/Home-Grown School Feeding, nutrition and food security, agricultural production and smallholder livelihoods, local food systems, market access, procurement and supply-chain analysis.
- Experience integrating gender equality, youth inclusion, vulnerability and social inclusion into assessments and project design.
- Familiarity with the socio-economic, institutional, cultural, agricultural and environmental context of Somaliland/Somalia, with relevant experience in Somaliland and/or the proposed project regions considered a strong asset.
- Previous experience working in fragile, drought-affected or climate-vulnerable contexts, including application of conflict sensitivity, safeguarding and Do-No-Harm principles.

Technical Competencies

- Strong understanding of school feeding and nutrition programming, including Home-Grown School Feeding approaches, school readiness, food safety, nutrition education and community participation.
- Ability to assess local food production, agricultural markets and procurement systems, including production capacity, seasonality, prices, supply reliability, storage, processing, transport and participation of smallholder farmers in institutional markets.
- Knowledge of climate-smart agriculture, drought resilience, water-efficient production and environmental sustainability in arid or drought-affected contexts.
- Strong qualitative and quantitative research skills, including key informant interviews, focus group discussions, participatory consultations, school/farmer/market assessments, direct observation and triangulation.
- Familiarity with Theory of Change, results frameworks, indicators and OECD/DAC criteria, including assessment of causal pathways, assumptions, risks, sustainability and unintended effects.
- Ability to apply participatory, inclusive and safeguarding-sensitive research approaches when engaging women, youth, farmers, vulnerable groups and, where relevant, children.

Communication and Team Composition

- Fluency in written and spoken English is required. Knowledge of Somali and/or other relevant local languages within the consultancy team is a strong advantage.

- Excellent analytical and report-writing skills, with the ability to synthesize complex qualitative and quantitative evidence and present findings and recommendations in a clear, concise, and practical manner.
- Strong facilitation and consultation skills, including the ability to engage schools and school committees, parents and caregivers, farmers and farmer organizations, women and youth groups, traders and processors, community representatives, local and regional authorities, government institutions and development/humanitarian actors.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and demonstrated ability to work respectfully and independently in culturally sensitive, fragile and climate-vulnerable environments.

XI. Application Requirements

1. A technical proposal, including understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology and sampling approach, team composition and division of responsibilities, work plan and quality-assurance approach.
2. A financial proposal clearly indicating consultancy fees, anticipated travel and field costs, accommodation where applicable, data-collection costs, translation/interpretation costs where applicable and any other anticipated costs.
3. Curriculum vitae of the consultant and/or all proposed team members.
4. Examples of relevant previous assignments, preferably feasibility studies or comparable studies.
5. Contact details for relevant professional references.
6. A statement of independence and disclosure of any potential conflict of interest.

Applications shall be submitted to **vergaben@care.de** no later than **14 September 2026**.