

Terms of Reference
for
mid-term review of the SaWeL Project, Ziway-
Shalla site (Ethiopia) and the Programme
Implementation Unit
of the period from
1st of July 2019 to 30th of June 2021
(two years)



Contents

- 1 Project outline 3
- 2 Background and rationale for the SaWeL programme, Ziway-Shalla Implementation site and Programme implementation Unit. 5
 - 2.1 SaWeL Project..... 5
 - 2.2 PIT Lac Wegnia..... 5
- 3 Project description 6
- 4 Objective of the evaluation 7
- 5 Evaluation questions 8
 - 5.1 Relevance 8
 - 5.2 Sustainability 9
 - 5.3 Effectiveness..... 9
 - 5.4 Efficiency 9
- 6 Methodology 10
- 7 Deliverables 11
- 8 Composition of the evaluation team and skills required 11
- 9 Timetable for the evaluation 12
- 10 Submission procedure 12
- 11 Budget 13
- 12 Structure final report..... 13
- 13 Annexes to the MTR ToR (separate documents) 14

1 Project outline

SAWEL	
Country / region of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIT Ziway-Shalla: Ethiopia, Oromia region and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) • PIU: National (Malian and Ethiopian) and international (outreach of the learnings from project implementation)
Implementation period of the project	01.07.2019 – 30.06.2023 (48 months)
Period of the project for this evaluation	01.07.2019 – 30.06.2021 (24 months)
Budget of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIT Ziway-Shalla: CHF 2,995,805 • PIU: CHF 2,130,076 of which about 60% is funded by SDC Grant and 40% by other sources
Objective and goals of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIT Ziway-Shalla: food security and nutrition of communities living in the Ziway-Shalla basin in Ethiopia is improved by preserving the wetland through Ecological Sustainable Agricultural Water Management (=ESAWM). • PIU: Landscape-level approaches towards more ecologically sustainable, market-oriented, inclusive smallholder food production are mainstreamed and scaled-up in Malian, Ethiopian and wider Sahelian wetland areas
Expected results of the project	PIT Ziway-Shalla: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.1: Smallholder food producers apply/adopt ESAWM to improve water productivity and reduce ecological footprint of food production. • 1.2: Services providers and other system actors ensure that smallholders and governments at landscape level are able to access and actively use ESAWM options and services. • 1.3: Relevant landscape-level governmental entities have created an enabling environment towards ESAWM and wetlands management. • 2.1: Smallholder food producers enhance food and economic security through entrepreneurial, market-oriented and agroecological farming. • 2.2: Services providers and other system actors stimulate locally rooted, socially inclusive economic development by creating access to markets and commodity chains. • 2.3: Relevant landscape-level governmental entities have created an enabling environment for sustainable agriculture-based inclusive economic growth. PIU: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.1 National and international platforms take ownership of and actively promote ESAWM to governments in Africa and to investors use the program's learning and experiences 3 Landscape-level approaches towards more ecologically sustainable, market-oriented, inclusive smallholder food production are mainstreamed and scaled-up in Malian, Ethiopian and wider Sahelian wetland areas

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.2 Relevant national government entities in Mali and Ethiopia use ESAWM framework when designing, monitoring and implementing programs for wetlands landscapes • 3.3 Investors include ESAWM in the design, implementation and monitoring of their investments
Intervention area of the project	The Ziway-Shalla basin is a hydrological region of 4 endorheic lakes in the Central Rift Valley of Ethiopia that are interconnected with each other. Lake Langano, Shalla and Abijatta are saline and important biodiverse region. Lake Ziway is a freshwater lake and an important hub for agriculture in the region.
Beneficiaries of the project	<p>According to the population census in Ethiopia, the population in the Arsi and East-Shewa zone are 4.6 million in 2008. This are the two main zones around lake Ziway but excludes zones that are also partially present in the Ziway-Shalla basin.</p> <p>Numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.1: 7,840 Household • 1.2: 4 service providers, 4 system actors • 1.3: 2 policies • 2.1: 2,000 Households • 2.2: 4 service providers, 4 system actors • 2.3: 2 policies
Donor which will receive this assessment	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
Budget for this mid-term review is provided by	SaWeL project

2 Background and rationale for the SaWeL programme, Ziway-Shalla Implementation site and Programme implementation Unit.

2.1 SaWeL Project

Many smallholder-agricultural producers in the Sahel have limited linkages to value chains and markets and insufficient opportunities to generate income. This trend affects the resilience of community livelihoods, reduces the capacity of small-scale producers to invest in more efficient and environmentally sustainable food production practices, and widens the gap between their aspirations and prospects. In addition, access to options for improving agricultural practices is unevenly distributed among different groups; women, youth and other vulnerable groups often do not have the same opportunities for access to finance, information, technology, land and water, and policymaking like men and wealthier and influential groups.

The SaWeL Project addresses these issues. The project with the overall goal " to improve Food Security and Nutrition in the Sahel through the Conservation of Wetlands through Ecological and Sustainable Water Management for Agriculture" is being implemented in Mali (Lake Wégna and the Sourou Basin plains), Ethiopia (Ziway-Shalla) and has a national and international, linking and learning and outreach component through the Program Implementation Unit (PIU).

2.2 PIT Ziway-Shalla

The Project Implementation Team (PIT) Ziway-Shalla carries out the SAWEL project around Lake Ziway in the Central Rift Valley in Ethiopia. In the rift valley, the traditional management of wetland agroecological systems is being lost and replaced by unsustainable systems characterised by excessive exploitation of natural resources through an increasing population. A combination of inappropriate agricultural land and water management and unsustainable use by smallholders and producers is leading to rapid degradation of the wetland system on which they depend for their livelihoods. Water use is rapidly increasing through the installation of small-scale pumps on Lake Ziway. This overexploitation of water resources could lead to the lake becoming unusable for irrigation and drinking water, which threatens food security in the region.

On the catchment scale, under-capacitated water resources authorities also complicate the ecological balance of the region. Lake Abijatta, an important biodiverse hotspot for migratory birds, is dependent on the flow of water from Lake Ziway. This flow however is not guaranteed, due to the overexploitation of water resources and the building of a weir on the Bulbula river that connects the two lakes. If water does not flow out from Lake Ziway to Lake Abijatta, then this can lead to Lake Abijatta decreasing in size. On top of this, this flow is vital for Lake Ziway in order to flush the chemical elements building up in the lake such as salts. The site's intervention area comprises an approximate population of 245,160 inhabitants (121,450 males and 123,710 females) according to the 2015 census, with a growth rate of 3.6%.

2.3 PIU

The PIU (Program Implementation Unit) carries out the linking and learning part of the SAWEL project. The purpose of the linking and learning and outreach component is to learn from the implementation in Lac Wégna, Sourou and Ziway-Shalla and to identify those actors and factors that foster or impede effective scaling of applying sustainable and inclusive agricultural practices by smallholder farmers in Mali

and Ethiopia. How does our approach of simultaneously working with farmers, service providers and local governments help to achieve this? Would combining a so-called integrated landscape approach with a Markets for Development approach help to scale. Would such an approach be inclusive and also reach women and younger generation farmers and what sort of financial investments would be needed if you want this to scale up. Obviously, this is not the only project which works towards these goals and there is an ongoing global discourse on how to make agriculture more sustainable and create inclusive and healthy food systems with many relevant institutes involved including UN, CGIAR and academics and development partners like donors and international NGOs.

The linking and learning and outreach component will distil learnings from the field implementation shares this with relevant national ministries in Mali and Ethiopia, multi-stakeholder platforms both nationally and internationally and a number of donors that have keen interest in supporting these kinds of developments.

3 Project description

The SaWeL programme: Improving food security and nutrition in the Sahel through wetland conservation and sustainable water management for agriculture simultaneously addresses the following main themes, which are closely linked:

1. **Ecological sustainability:** wetlands are insufficiently recognized as agricultural production systems (agro-ecosystems) and are vulnerable to and degraded by agricultural production practices within and outside wetland boundaries.
2. **Livelihoods, incomes and inclusion:** Smallholder food production practices are insufficiently adapted to local contexts, including climate change, and insufficiently linked to markets, resulting in uncertain food production and incomes and precarious livelihoods. Access to opportunities is not equitably distributed among different social groups at the local level.

The program's Theory of Change assumes that both farm income generation and biodiversity conservation objectives can be achieved, when combined in well-planned and tailored diversified production systems. The key aspect of this intervention logic is the assumption that the two axes of the project are mutually reinforcing and strengthening.

To achieve the impact determined by the project in the Ziway-Shalla Basin, the overall objective was defined on the trajectory of change aimed at both environmental sustainability and community resilience. The expected results (outcome level) of the project contributing to the achievement of the overall objective, are articulated around three types of key actors: i) small-scale food producers; ii) service providers/others, iii) system actors; government, in order to contribute to the targeted systemic changes.

SDC's original project request is given in annex 1. The project proposal is given in annex 2. For each of the sites and for the linking and learning, separate logframes have been developed with its own set of assumptions and indicators (annex 3).

This regional programme is managed by a consortium consisting of Wetlands International (lead partner), Caritas Switzerland, Hydrosolutions Ltd. and the International Water Management Institute (IWMI). Wetlands International is the lead partner in the consortium. The programme is co-financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The SaWeL programme formally started on 1 July 2019

after a so-called Opening phase of about 9 months in which some assessments were carried out and the project proposal and contracting was finalized with the donor. The project started with a 6-month inception phase where mobilization and recruitment took place, and some internal policies (such as on security) were developed. Also, MoUs and approval with some of the project stakeholders were established. The project will end in July 2023. Possibly an extension of three years may follow this project through SDC, depending on the project's success and the ability of the consortium to secure sufficient additional co-funding.

The work in of each of the sites is managed through so-called Project Implementation teams (PITS). The linking and learning of the results to national and international platforms is managed through the Project implementation Unit (PIU). Issues like progress reporting, planning, and budgeting takes place in the Project Cycle Management Unit which is for its day-today operations supported by its secretariat. The Supervisory Board provides the overall strategic steering. The project governance structure with roles and responsibilities for the different governance structures and for the different consortium partners is given in annex 4.

The PIT Ziway-Shalla is led and by Wetlands International Ethiopia (WIE) office with staff in the Addis Ababa office and a field office in Ziway. WIE is implementing part of the interventions and coordinates the contributions of the other partners (CACH, IWMI and hydrosolutions) in the Ziway-Shalla basin. PIU is led by WIGO and strongly supported by IWMI. CaCH and hydrosolutions contribute to PIU.

The total project comprising all sites and the linking and learning is based on a 6 million CHF Grant form SDC. Additionally, the implementation partners use various sources of co-funding from secured funds from other donor and through pooling of resources and outputs from parallel programs which are implemented by the partners with similar thematic outcomes, with similar stakeholders and in the same geographies.

The Terms and Conditions applicable to the program and the ways of engagement between the consortium partners and between the consortium, donor and stakeholders in the implementation areas is defined in the Cooperation agreement (Annex 5). Each year based on the reported progress new annual plans are developed (Annex 6) through the PITs and the PIU and annual contracts with the Consortium partners are renewed.

Although the project implemented at the Ziway-Shalla site is linked to the larger regional programme that includes two other RAMSAR sites, both in Mali (Lake Wégna and the Sourou Basin) and the national and international linking and learning and outreach component, this mid-term evaluation will be limited to the Ziway-Shalla site and PIU only. The MTRs for the Sourou and Lac Wegnia have already been carried out.

4 Objective of the evaluation

Wetlands International, in close consultation with SDC and CaCH, opts for a mixed evaluation of the project at this stage to gain an external view of the project in its current phase, but which at the same time relies on the project team to stimulate reflection within the project. Although the different components of the programme (local interventions in Lac Wegnia, Sourou and Ziway-Shalla, national dialogues in Mali and Ethiopia and the international dialogue with governments, multi-stakeholder platforms and donors) are linked and mutually reinforcing, this particular mid-term evaluation focuses on the Ziway-Shalla site and PIU only.

The overall objective of the evaluation is to inform relevant stakeholders and to attain a robust understanding of the successes and failures of the SaWeL programme within the Ziway-Shalla site and PIU. It is suggested that the evaluation team does this by pursuing 4 specific objectives:

1. Assess progress towards the programme's objectives of the Ziway-Shalla site and PIU.
2. Assess the implementation modalities, notably the partnership strategy for the achievement of results, the added value, as well as the arrangements made for the execution of activities and coordination at national and local level and its level of execution. This also includes the coordination of the other PIT partners CaCH, IWMI and hydro.
3. Assess the elements necessary to formulate strategic and practical recommendations for the targeted systemic change, the success of which will be largely determined by the institutional anchoring of the activities, the appropriation of the changes by the local communities and the strengthening of capacities by the target groups.
4. Formulate recommendations for the remaining years of the project (including which recommendations should be prioritized) and how the project may have to be adapted for the next phase.

Thus, it should highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the project in order to propose possible reorientations and suggest lines of thought with a view to achieving the objectives by 2023 and ensuring the sustainability of the actions undertaken after the project ends.

5 Evaluation questions

The evaluation will be based on a participatory approach that includes the different beneficiaries and actors involved in the project. It will be carried out in accordance with the principles for the evaluation of development assistance of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and will focus on the aspects: relevance, sustainability, effectiveness, and efficiency.

Following evaluation questions in section 5.1 can act as guidance.

5.1 Relevance

PIT Ziway-Shalla

- a) Do the goals of SaWeL and particularly PIT ZS meet the development issues in the basin and align with other development processes carried by other development partners and the Ethiopia government
- b) Is the scaling-up system through simultaneously working with smallholder farmers, system actors and local authorities relevant in the local context of Ziway-Shalla and in line with the priorities of the populations (men/women/youth)?
- c) Are the chosen indicators for the various logframe outputs and outcomes representative and measurable?
- d) How is the PIT Ziway-Shalla guaranteeing a sufficiently socially inclusive approach focusing on women and young food producers?

PIU

- a) Are the selected learning themes and targeted stakeholders within the Linking and Learning framework of the PIU relevant?
- b) Is the scaling-up system through simultaneously working with smallholder farmers, system actors and local authorities and through simultaneously working on environmental sustainability and market access and value chains relevant to the international discourse on sustainable and inclusive food systems.

5.2 Sustainability

PIT Ziway-Shalla

- a) What is the degree of ownership of the project by local authorities including the Rift Valley Lakes Basin Development Office (RVLBDO) and communities? How can the project concretely contribute to increasing the degree of ownership of the project by local authorities and communities?
- b) Do the governmental authorities linked to water resources management have sufficient capacity to adopt tools and work with information such that Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) information reaches local communities and smallholder farmers?
- c) A multi-stakeholder platform is established through the SAWEL project in Ziway-Shalla. Would this MSP sustain after project ending and would it be able to take up roles now carried out by PIT Ziway-Shalla

PIU

- a) Are the dialogues with the multi-stakeholder platforms on the national scale helping to bring transformative change?
- b) How does sharing of learning from project implementation through with relevant Ministries in Mali and Ethiopia lead to a change in their policymaking and planning of agricultural development?
- c) How do you guarantee sufficient sharing of lessons-learnt in the international discourse on sustainable and inclusive food systems?

5.3 Effectiveness

PIT Ziway-Shalla and PIU

- a) Does the institutional set-up of the project, particularly the set-up of the PIT Ziway-Shalla and PIU, allow the expected results to be achieved in an efficient manner?
- b) Is the coordination of the implementing partners in PIT Ziway-Shalla sufficiently managed.

5.4 Efficiency

PIT Ziway-Shalla and PIU

- a) Is the current budget sufficient and adequate to deliver the project outputs?

- b) Is the current budget division over the various costs categories (staff costs, direct costs, travel costs etc.) the most adequate and efficient utilization of the financial resources to achieve the project goals
- c) Is it clear where the co-funding of other projects comes from within the PIT Ziway-Shalla and PIU? What is the relevance of these projects to the goals of SaWeL?

6 Methodology

The methodology proposed by the consultant should be participatory by including in the evaluation process the different beneficiaries and actors involved in the project (stakeholders). In order to strengthen the ownership of the project by the Project Implementation Team and the PIU, the evaluation will be carried out from an "internal" perspective, i.e., integrating the members of the PIT Ziway-Shalla and PIU into the evaluation team.

In order to strengthen the ownership of the project by the implementation team, the evaluation will include an "internal" perspective by integrating members of the project team into the field team. The consultant(s) will use the following data collection methods:

Document review: Key documents related to the project will be reviewed. These include:

- Annex 1: SDC project description
- Annex 2: Project proposal
- Annex 3: PIT Ziway-Shalla and PIU Logframe and indicators
- Annex 4: SAWEL project governance structure
- Annex 5: Cooperation Agreement
- Annex 6: Ziway-Shalla and PIU annual work plans
- Annex 8: Progress reports including financial progress
- Plus various kinds of working papers or other documents produced during the implementation such as monitoring reports, mission reports, consultants' reports, reports of studies carried out, presentations, training reports, etc.

Key informant interviews: The evaluation will include interviews with key stakeholders of the project: the agricultural cooperative Meki Batu Union, the water authority Rift Valley Lakes Basin Development Office, the agricultural stakeholder platform, key woreda officials.

Beneficiary consultations: Consultations (focus group discussions and interviews) with groups of beneficiaries, i.e., grassroots community organizations (members of cooperatives, small-scale producers, women, youth, members of farmers' organizations, relay producers).

Internal feedback and reflection sessions with the PIT and PIU to feed and enrich the analyses. To maintain an internal perspective, the field team is actively involved in all stages of the evaluation.

Other participatory evaluation methods: The consultant(s) may propose other participatory methods to answer the evaluation questions (in the inception report, see below).

The evaluator(s) will use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods for data analysis. There will be a clear emphasis on participatory methods for the qualitative assessment of the information provided by the project beneficiaries. It should be noted that a more detailed methodology, work plan and evaluation matrix will be developed and proposed by the evaluation team in the technical proposal of the tender.

7 Deliverables

At the end of the external evaluation, the main deliverables for WIGO are the following:

- **draft report:** A final draft of the mid-term evaluation report is sent to WIGO, which will share it with the project team and SDC (before the debriefing, see below). The draft report is due one week after completion of the fieldwork.
- **Debriefing** (with a PowerPoint presentation): An online debriefing will take place with the PIT Ziway-Shalla and PIU, presenting the draft mid-term evaluation report so that the sponsor and the project team can react to any questions and ambiguities. The PowerPoint presentation contains the main interim findings of the mid-term evaluation study and evidence-based recommendations to inform operational and strategic decisions for the future of the project. Based on the debriefing PIT and PIU will make recommendation for finalizing the draft report.
- **Evaluation report** (short and concise, max. 20 pages, without annexes, following the structure in annex 8, three physical copies, one electronic copy): The evaluation team is required to produce a report presenting the results of the mid-term evaluation as defined in the ToR within three days after the debriefing. The report should provide findings (statement of facts), conclusions and recommendations in line with the evaluation targets and questions (see above, chapter 5) including the scenario analysis of different forms of continuation in the Sourou. More general recommendations concerning the field of activity, country or region are welcome.

8 Composition of the evaluation team and skills required

The principal consultant (m/f) is responsible for the conduct of the evaluation mission. As such, he/she is responsible for meeting the deadline and producing the results of the mission. He/she must organize the team and be the contact person for WIGO in person of Jeroen Jurriens, project coordinator. He/she prepares the details, coordinates the mission, sets the timetable and is responsible for the finalization of the reports (draft report and final report).

The consultant(s) (m/f) must demonstrate experience and training in evaluation methodology and participatory research techniques (interviews, questionnaires, methodological elections, operationalization of indicators, etc.).

We therefore propose a principal consultant, with at least seven years of experience in evaluating international development projects in the Global South with in-depth knowledge of:

- design, monitoring and evaluation of development projects executed through international NGOs and with donor support
- development projects on matters of food security, agricultural production, value chains and participatory natural resource management;
- development projects that take a participatory approach with communities, local development partners and governments
- development projects that address gender and social inclusion and conflict sensitivity
- Support to development through NGOs, especially with regard to sustainability and replicability of projects and institutional capacity building.
- Analytical and writing skills.

The MTR involves interacting with local stakeholders in Ziway-Shalla area and Ethiopia. Therefore, the principal consultant may (when necessary) be supported by a co-team member who may carry out the research with him/her. The co-team member will have at least 5 years of experience in and in-depth

knowledge of the functioning of agricultural systems in Ethiopia and possibly more preferably in Ziway-Shalla area and be fluent in Amharic.

9 Timetable for the evaluation

The evaluation period is scheduled for Dec-Jan 2021. The final evaluation report should be available on 15 Dec 2021.

10 Submission procedure

- 1) **Technical proposal** (Max 6 pages) that details:
 - The applicants' understanding of the TOR;
 - Work plan;
 - Experience with similar previous assignments,
 - in annex: at least two sample reports of similar assignment which will be treated confidentially;
 - In annex: CVs of consultant(s) and possible track record
- 2) **Financial proposal** showing the *total* cost, professional fees and reimbursable expenses (e.g., travel costs, field work, materials; etc). The financial proposal must cover *all* costs associated with this evaluation; costs incurred outside the terms agreed in the financial proposal and final contract will not be reimbursed.

Technical and financial proposals must be received by midnight 17 November 2021. The proposals will be scored according to the following criteria:

	<u>Max. score</u>
Technical proposal (60%):	
Proposed methodology and approach	30
Experience of National and International expert	20
Writing and presentation	10
Financial proposal (40%):	
Value for money	40
<hr/>	
Total:	100

Proposals have to score at least 45 points on the technical proposal to be considered further.

Proposals can be send to Jeroen Jurriens (Jeroen.jurriens@wetlands.org).

11 Budget

The budget will be proposed by the consultant as part of the technical and financial bid and will be an element of selection. We expect that the MTR will take about 25 man-days by the consultant(s) and have a budget range in mind of 10,000 to 20,000 Euros.

12 Structure final report

The main output of this work is a final evaluation report, not exceeding 20 pages, excluding annexes. To this end, the report should include at least the following elements:

1. Title and start pages
 - Name of the evaluation intervention
 - Timing of the evaluation and date of the report
 - Country of the evaluation intervention
 - Names of evaluators
 - Names of the organisation initiating the evaluation
 - Acknowledgements
2. Table of contents
 - Include boxes, diagrams, tables and annexes with page references.
3. List of acronyms and abbreviations
4. Executive summary (max 2 p.) with main conclusions and recommendations in English
5. Introduction
6. Objectives and scope of the evaluation (very brief)
7. Methodological approach to evaluation
8. Data analysis
9. Results and conclusions
 - Overall results and conclusions by answering the evaluation questions or criteria
 - Results and conclusions by component
 - Overall conclusion
10. Recommendations
 - General recommendations
 - Specific recommendations
 - Prospects for the future
11. Lessons learned
 - What are the main lessons that can be learned from the experience and that may have generic application

- What are the best and worst practices in terms of design, engagement, monitoring and evaluation of outputs, activities and partnerships around the outcome?

12. Report Annexes

- Evaluation TOR
- Inception Report / Evaluation Matrix
- List of people or groups interviewed or consulted, and sites visited
- Summary of field visit
- List of documents used

13 Annexes to the MTR ToR (separate documents)

- Annex 1: SDC project description
- Annex 2: Project proposal
- Annex 3: Logframe and indicators
- Annex 4: SAWEL project governance structure
- Annex 5: Cooperation Agreement
- Annex 6: Ziway-Shalla annual work plans
- Annex 7: PIU annual work plans
- Annex 8: Progress reports including financial progress