

Terms of Reference

External Regional Evaluation of the Project

Project Title:	Professionalisation of Adult Education Centres in Europe
Project Number:	BMZ SSF / PN: 2024.2614.6/DVV0011
Funding Agency:	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Countries:	Republic Moldova and Ukraine
Format:	Fully or partially online is possible

1 Introduction

DVV International is the Institute for International Cooperation of the Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V. (DVV), the German Adult Education Association. DVV represents the interests of approximately 850 adult education centres (Volkshochschulen) and their state associations, the largest service provider of continuing education in Germany. As the leading professional organisation in the field of adult education and development cooperation, DVV International is supporting lifelong learning for more than 50 years. DVV International provides worldwide support for the establishment and development of sustainable structures for Adult Learning and Education (ALE).

Funded in a large part by the BMZ for the creation/strengthening of social structures (Sozialstrukturförderung - SSF), the Institute cooperates with more than 200 partners in more than 30 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. DVV International promotes, together with national, regional and global associations of adult education, the human right to education and lifelong learning. In doing so, DVV International contributes to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Global Agenda for Education (Education 2030) and the UNESCO International Conferences on Adult Education (CONFINTEA).

DVV International supports the exchange of information and interaction between professionals at European and global level through conferences, seminars and publications. DVV International's interventions cover three levels: *first level* – contribution to policies, strategies, standards and norms, as well as funding on national level (macro level), *second level* – institutional capacity building and capacity building of teaching staff (meso level), and, *third level* – piloting ALE models for the population with potential for replication at national, regional, and international level (micro level).

2 Background of the project

DVV International has been working in both countries that are subject to the evaluation for more than 15 years (since 2010) and is represented in Chisinau and Kyiv through offices (Regional or Country Offices).

The underlying objective of DVV International's engagement in the region is to strengthen systems for Adult Learning and Education (ALE), to empower people – mostly marginalised groups – to participate in economic, social and political life and, thus fight poverty and contribute to sustainable development.

The **overall objective** of the current project (2019 – 2027) is the promotion of professionalisation of partner ALE-institutions (ALE-Centres) and improvement of framework conditions for ALE in project countries.

The key **objective on the macro level** is to create favourable framework conditions for ALE, i.e. laws/regulations on ALE, financing mechanisms for ALE and effective governance systems for the sector. The key **objective on the meso level** is to improve the qualification of ALE-staff and strengthen the capacity of ALE-institutions. The key **objective on the micro level** is to make demand-driven qualitative offers developed by partner ALE-centres accessible to various vulnerable groups of population. The Project Planning Matrix for each of the country which are subject to evaluation and for each of the three-year implementation phases (2019-2021, 2022-2024, 2025-2027) are available.

ALE-Centres (public or non-governmental) are providers of ALE. They offer services to wide segments of society for affordable fees or free of charge. These services comprise orientation and career guidance, education and training in various formats and fields and empowerment for income generation and citizen participation. In both countries that are subject to the evaluation DVV International cooperates with ten partner ALE-centres (national associations of ALE-providers and other partners, which are not considered as ALE-centres are not counted here) in total.

DVV International encourages ALE institutions and their associations/networks to engage in lobbying and advocacy for better framework conditions (more public support of ALE through laws, policies, funding mechanisms, etc.) in own countries. Addressees of the lobbying and advocacy efforts are policy and decision makers both at the national and local levels.

For professionalisation of ALE-Centres DVV International uses mainly own tools for capacity building: “**Curriculum globALE**” – for training and professionalisation of the teaching staff of partners, “**Curriculum managerALE**” – for leaders/managers of ALE-institutions and “**Curriculum institutionALE**” for organisational development of partner structures engaged in ALE.

3 Evaluation goal and objectives

DVV International understands itself as a learning organization. To improve further project development, DVV International, as the implementing agency, would like to find out if its interventions were successful and how they are interrelated on macro, meso and micro levels. More specifically, the success of the project intervention (three level approach) **should be assessed by analysing achievements at three project implementations sites** (and with relation to three respective project partners at each of the sites), **two in Ukraine – in Mykolaiv and Poltava and one in Moldova – in Chisinau in the last five years (2022-2026).**

The evaluation should assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of DVV International's approach. It should include a reflection on lessons learned and generate evidence-based recommendations to DVV International for possible further programming, including the potential replication or scaling of successful approaches. In each project country a slightly different approach was used. The evaluation should take that into account.

4 Main evaluation questions

The evaluation must be conducted in accordance with the OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluation of Development Assistance. It should make clear statements along the guiding questions in the following categories:

Relevance:

- To what extent was DVV International's engagement relevant to the professionalisation of the selected ALE-centres, especially in provision of ALE and serving of vulnerable groups of society, lobbying for ALE and extension of public financing for the ALE-sector?
- To what extent the used capacity building tools of DVV International were relevant for professionalisation of selected ALE-centres, especially with focus on quality of ALE (provision of ALE on micro level), lobbying and financing (framework conditions for ALE on macro level) on national and municipal levels?
- Is the type of the selected partner ALE-centres a relevant factor in the national ALE-systems of Moldova and Ukraine and are the supported centres an important player for local/community development?

Effectiveness:

- How effective was DVV International in strengthening the institutional capacity of ALE Centres?
- To what extent did the project contribute to policy development at local and national levels?
- To what extent did the project contribute to increasing public financing opportunities for ALE-sector?
- Are the selected partner ALE-centres reaching their objectives and do their services meet the needs of the learners in terms of subject/content, method/format, quality, accessibility, affordability?
- What are the key factors that facilitate and that hinder the performance of the ALE-centres?

Efficiency:

- Were resources of DVV International used efficiently?

Impact:

- Do the selected partner ALE-centres contribute to development of their communities/systemic changes and to the strategies/policy goals existing in their communities?
- Do the services of the selected partner ALE-centres have a meaningful impact on the target groups of their educational offers?
- Were there any unintended positive or negative effects?

Sustainability:

- To what extent are the selected ALE-centres institutionally and financially sustainable beyond DVV International support?

Finally, the evaluation should provide answers to the following general guiding question related to lessons learnt:

- Which experiences, success factors and failures should be considered for the further strengthening of the ALE-sector?

5 Evaluation approach and methods

The evaluation will consist of both desk and field study. The field study might be conducted online. A combination of primary data collection and secondary data review is expected during the evaluation.

Secondary data sources will be made available to the consultant. The following **secondary documents** among others will be provided:

- Project proposals
- Interim project reports
- Three-year project report
- External evaluation report
- Other project and partner related reports
- National and local policy documents

To collect information from **primary data sources**, the consultant/consultants will be free to propose feasible methodological approaches (quantitative and/or qualitative). We recommend taking the following groups into consideration:

- Representatives of the project management team (Country and Regional Offices and the HQ of DVV International)
- Public agencies/stakeholders from ALE-sector representing national and local levels
- Leaderships of the partner ALE-centres
- Group meetings with staff members and trainers, representing partner structures
- Learners (and their family members) for observation of changes as a result of the intervention

The evaluation will begin with an inception phase of reviewing documents provided by DVV International (desk study), and the preparation of an inception report. This is followed by a period of field study and the preparation of a draft report. The final report will consider remarks to the draft report made by the DVV International project management team (Country and Regional offices, HQ).

6 Indicative timetable and work input

The **indicative timetable** for the evaluation is as follows:

Inception report (draft):	28.06.2026
Field phase:	06.07. – 28.08.2026
Presentation of preliminary findings:	by 08.09.2026
Draft evaluation report:	20.09.2026
Final evaluation report:	09.10.2026

7 Target group of the evaluation results

The target group of the evaluation results will be the project management team of DVV International (head office, regional & country offices). The results of the evaluation will be shared with the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

8 Right of use

DVV International has the exclusive and unlimited right to use the results fulfilled by the contract. The transfer of this Right of Use is complete with the payment made to the Consultant.

The Consultant has right of use permission strictly limited for personal non-commercial purposes. Transfer of the Right of Use to third parties is excluded.

9 Tasks of the evaluator/ evaluation team

The evaluation team will be requested to fulfil the following tasks:

- Methodological design and planning of the evaluation in communication with DVV International;
- Desk study of relevant project documentation (application, annual plans and reports, other monitoring documents and project reports, training and PR material, relevant national policy documents);
- Design of data collection instruments for the field phase;
- Preparation of the inception report;
- Conduction the field phase with participation and involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the Republic Moldova and Ukraine;
- De-briefing sessions with project teams in Moldova and Ukraine;
- Presentation of key findings after the field phase;
- Compilation of the preliminary evaluation report, integration of comments and finalisation of the report.

10 Deliverables

The following deliverables are expected:

- **Inception report:** The consultant(s) present a report giving detailed information about methods and specified questions (evaluation matrix); all data collection tools need to be presented beforehand. In case of applying quantitative data collection methods, a pre-test will be required. This report will be presented to DVV International; DVV International will provide feedback in due time and may request amendments. The Inception Report needs to be approved by DVV International before the data collection commences.
- **Debriefing with the project teams in the countries:** By arrangement with the DVV International Country and Regional Directors, the consultant(s) present the preliminary, country-specific results of the evaluation and will answer questions in this regard, documenting the discussion, which shall form part of the final report.
- **Preliminary presentation of key results:** Following the field phase, the consultant(s) present their preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations to DVV International in an online session.
- **Draft evaluation report:** DVV International will receive a first draft of the final report, which will be examined on the basis of the DAC Evaluation Quality Standards; on this basis, comments will be made on the rough draft before it is returned to the consultant(s).
- **Final evaluation report and Executive Summary:** The final report will take into account the comments on the draft about the entire evaluation process and all results and recommendations. The Executive Summary is a four- to five-page report that summarizes the main evaluation findings and recommendations.

The evaluation report should be produced **in English** and submitted to DVV International **electronically**. A respective template for the final report will be provided in the inception phase to the consultant(s).

11 Responsible people at DVV International

DVV International will serve as the contracting authority for this evaluation. Ms. Maja Avramovska, the Senior Manager for Monitoring and Evaluation at DVV International Headquarters in Bonn, will oversee the contracting process and the overall coordination of the evaluation.

DVV International's country offices will provide (where necessary) all relevant documents and support the consultant(s) in the field with arranging logistics, project visits and interviews.

The final report will be accepted by the Senior Manager for Monitoring and Evaluation of DVV International in Bonn.

12 Evaluator eligibility criteria

The consultant(s) should demonstrate experience in evaluating organisational and capacity development projects. Additionally, fluency in English language and profound report writing skills are expected. Previous work experience in the countries which are subject of the evaluation would be an asset.

The consultant(s) we are looking for should demonstrate in their CVs and references

- at least 5 years of experience in the field of evaluating development projects;
- sound knowledge of evaluation methods and instruments;
- experience of assessments in education sector, preferably – in the field of adult learning and education and/or non-formal learning;
- analytical and writing skills;
- possibly previous working experience in the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine;
- fluency in English.

13 Quality standards

The candidate(s) should propose an appropriate evaluation design and methodology, well adapted to the project objectives and the ToR for the evaluation, in order to achieve the evaluation's objectives.

The evaluation must comply with the following standards and guidelines: OECD-DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance.¹

14 Budget

The tender price may not exceed **20.000 EUR**. This amount should cover all possible costs of the assignment (*honorarium, interpretation & translation, taxes, per diems, travel and transportation costs, insurances, etc.*), including necessary costs for interpretation, as the majority of potential local stakeholders, who might be approached for interviews, are not fluent in English and therefore, conversations in these cases should take place in Romanian and Ukrainian.

15 Application

The Application procedure is as follows:

- Applicants may submit questions regarding the application procedure to Ms. Maja Avramovska until 18.05.2026.

¹ <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/qualitystandardsfordevelopmentevaluation.htm>

- Answers to these questions will be made available also on DVV Internationals website by 25.05.2026.
- The full proposal is to be submitted by **31.05.2026, not later than 23:59**. It should be written in English and include the following documents:
 - a) CV(s) of the person(s) to be involved in the assignment in English (using Annex 1)
 - b) Technical proposal (max. 5 pages)
 - Narrative overview displaying an understanding of the task
 - Detailed methodology
 - Work Plan, including detailed proposed steps of implementation
 - Consideration of any specific requirements envisaged for the evaluation
 - Consideration of the specific context (country, topic)
 - Internal Quality Management
 - c) A detailed financial proposal with all expected costs (using Annex 2 and submit with **a hand-written signature**)
 - d) List of reference projects

The proposal is to be submitted via e-mail (to avramovska@dvv-international.de).

Only complete, signed and timely offers can be considered.

- The selected candidate will be notified by **12.06.2026**. Candidates, who were not selected will be notified by **15.06.2026**.

17 Evaluation criteria of proposals

The proposals will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- **Qualifications of the evaluation team** (counts 33%, based on criteria mentioned above)
- **Technical proposal** (counts 33%, based on criteria mentioned above)
- **Financial proposal** (counts 34%, best cost-effective service)

Annexes:

Annex 1 CV Template

Annex 2 Template Financial Proposal