

TERMS OF REFERENCE



Title: Project Final Evaluation
Location: Son La
Duration: July – September 2026
Reporting to: Portfolio manager and MEAL Advisor

Since 1989, CARE Vietnam has actively cooperated with many partner organizations to implement more than 300 projects in Vietnam. We recognize that the key to equitable and sustainable development lies in addressing the root causes of poverty, social injustice and inequality. We always work with our partners to support women smallholder farmers, workers, and women small and micro-enterprise owners in enhancing their capacity and confidence to participate in economic development activities, adapt to climate change, and increase resilience after natural disasters or major disasters. Together, we aim for a society that develops fairly and equitably for everyone.

Project background information

Son La province, in northwest Vietnam, has a high poverty rate (28.6%, GSO 2021). Climate change is reducing agricultural productivity, with ethnic minority women particularly vulnerable due to limited access to resources, decision-making, and heavy unpaid care responsibilities. Despite this, women play a key role in climate adaptation. The **SURE – Sustainable and Resilient Livelihoods for Women Coffee Producers in Son La** project supports 2,000 ethnic minority farmers in Muong Chanh, Nam Lau, and Muoi Noi communes to diversify climate-resilient livelihoods. Implemented from October 2023 to September 2026, the project is delivered in partnership with the Department of Agriculture and Environment Son La.

The project focuses on:

- **Outcome 1:** Ethnic minority women have increased climate-resilient productive capacity for new entrepreneurship and income generating activities.
- **Outcome 2:** Ethnic minority women have increased access to financial resources to invest in climate resilient alternative livelihoods.
- **Outcome 3:** Ethnic minority women have increased leadership and decision making in climate resilience.

Project Locations

Following the administrative merger in July 2025, the location names were updated to the communes listed below. However, the scope of project activities remains limited to the areas of the former communes as specified:

- Muong Chanh Commune: covering Muong Chanh and Chieng Chung
- Nam Lau Commune: covering Nam Lau
- Muoi Noi Commune: covering Ban Lam

Key Interventions

Outcome 1: Ethnic minority women have increased climate-resilient productive capacity for new entrepreneurship and income generating activities.

- Recruit community facilitators to co-lead discussions on livelihoods and climate resilience
- Train partners and community facilitators to form and support livelihood groups
- Establish smallholder producers in women-led -livelihood groups and help them identify suitable alternative livelihood models
- Deliver Farmer Field & Business School tools, focusing on climate adaptation, sustainable agriculture, business planning, record keeping and after-action reviews, to livelihood groups.

Outcome 2: Ethnic minority women have increased access to financial resources to invest in climate resilient alternative livelihoods.

- Establish and train VSLA groups on fund management and use of revolving loans
- Train community facilitators on the VSLA-DIGI and Farmer's Logbook mobile app
- Provide revolving loan funds to support livelihood investments
- Identify innovative private sector/social enterprise partners for high-value diversification opportunities
- Pilot market linkages and in-kind credit schemes with 1–2 livelihood groups

Outcome 3: Ethnic minority women have increased leadership and decision making in climate resilience.

- Facilitate gender dialogues to address norms and labor division, decision making
- Engage men and community leaders to support women's economic leadership through women's football tournament
- Provide small grants for women-led community initiatives to address community water and sanitation issues, natural resource management, disaster risk reduction, and environmental protection issues.

Partners

- Implementing partner: Son La Sub-Department of Crop Production and Plant Protection

Beneficiaries

- By targeted # male/female
 - 1500 women
 - 500 men
- By women-led livelihood groups:
 - 72 groups in total, 10 of which have been newly formed since April 2026.

Key Indicators

- # and % of people of all genders who have applied at least 3 practices to protect their livelihoods from negative impacts of climate related shocks and stresses
- 70% targeted households (1070 HHs) reported profiting at least 2 million VND per household from the project investment in the supported alternative livelihoods
- # and % of women actively participated in climate-relevant decision-making at the household level and community level
- % of men show their support on women's participation and joint decision-making in household climate-resilient livelihoods
- The productive capacity improvement/diversification of targeted households.
- Return on Investment (project level/livelihood impact)

Rationale and purpose

The final evaluation is intended to generate a credible, use-oriented assessment of the SURE project's overall achievement of impacts and outcomes, 'before' and performance and results at endline, and to explain how and for whom change happened across different intervention areas and participant groups. The evaluation will **assess improvements between baseline and endline against all the indicators of impact, outcome and results, besides assessing the project against the OECD/DAC criteria**—relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability—focusing on the project's three intended outcomes, delivery model, and implementation context in Son La.

The evaluation will **pay particular attention to measure changes in relation to the project's theory of change for ethnic minority women's economic empowerment and climate resilience**: whether the combined package of group formation and facilitation, Farmer Field and Business School support, VSLA and revolving funds, market linkage pilots, gender dialogue, and women-led community initiatives contributed to stronger livelihood diversification, improved access to finance, and more equitable decision-making and leadership resulting in increased income, livelihood resilience, and women's leadership and decision-making.

The evaluation should also examine how results varied by gender and cohort of groups (including TEAL-origin groups in Muong Chanh/Chieng Chung, SURE-established groups in Ban Lam/Nam Lau).

Key evaluation objectives:

- 1) Assess the degree of improvement in impact and outcome indicators envisaged as per project goals and objectives.
- 2) Assess the extent to which the project design and implementation remained **relevant** to the priorities, capacities and constraints of ethnic minority women coffee-producing households in the target communes, including climate risks, market opportunities, unpaid care burdens, and barriers to women's participation in economic decision-making.
- 3) Examine the coherence of the project with government priorities, commune-level systems, CARE's broader women's economic empowerment programming, and pre-existing investments such as TEAL, including whether the project complemented or duplicated other livelihood, finance and gender interventions.
- 4) Determine the effectiveness of the project in achieving Outcome 1, Outcome 2 and Outcome 3, with specific attention to changes in women's climate-resilient productive capacity, access to financial services and livelihood investment, and leadership/household decision-making.
- 5) Assess the efficiency of the project's delivery model, including the relative value of community facilitators, group-based training, revolving funds, VSLA-DIGI, market linkage pilots, and small grants, and whether resources, timing and implementation arrangements were used in a timely and cost-conscious way.
- 6) Assess the likely impact of the project at household, group and community level, including intended and unintended changes in women's income opportunities, livelihood diversification, resilience to climate and market shocks, social norms, and women's voice in community processes.
- 7) Assess the sustainability of key results and systems beyond the project period, including group functionality, revolving funds, facilitator capacity, market relationships, women-led initiatives, and motivation to continue with creation of self-managed system, local ownership by partners and communities.
- 8) Generate actionable lessons and recommendations for CARE Vietnam, the implementing partner and donors on replication, scale-up, targeting, sequencing of interventions, and support needed for ethnic minority women and men in different contexts.

Key evaluation questions

Relevance

- To what extent did the project's combination of livelihood diversification, climate-resilient agriculture/business training, savings and loans, gender dialogue and women-led initiatives respond to the identified and intended needs and priorities of ethnic minority women coffee-producing households in the target communes?
- How well were the selected livelihood models (ducks, chickens, pigs, goats, cows, beekeeping and other alternatives) matched to local agro-ecological conditions, market potential, women's available time and care responsibilities, and household risk appetite?

Coherence

- How well was SURE aligned with commune/provincial priorities, relevant national target programmes, and the mandate of the Son La Sub-Department of Crop Production and Plant Protection?
- To what extent did SURE build on and complement previous CARE programming, especially TEAL, and other local initiatives related to livelihoods, women's economic empowerment, financial inclusion and climate resilience?
- Were there any overlaps, gaps or tensions between project components (for example between VSLA, revolving loans, market linkage pilots and gender activities) or with external programmes affecting implementation and results?

Effectiveness

- **Outcome 1:**
 - To what extent did ethnic minority women's participation meet the targeted/planned improvements

in the areas of knowledge, skills and confidence to adopt climate-resilient livelihood practices, livelihood resilience, strengthened/increased income and/or alternative sources of income, and independent management of production/business risks?

- What is the degree of difference against livelihood models and support modalities promoted, and what is the level of results, for whom, and under what conditions?

• **Outcome 2:**

- To what is the level of access and utilization of revolving funds and VSLA-DIGI resulting in increase in women's access to and control over savings, loans and investment capital for climate-resilient livelihoods?
- What is the increase in women's use loans or in-kind credit for productive investment that contribute to the income increase?
- To what extent did market linkage pilots and private sector/social enterprise engagement improve women's access to inputs, buyers, information or more profitable diversification opportunities?

• **Outcome 3:**

- To what extent is the improvements in equitable division of labour, joint or independent decision-making, and women's leadership in household and community climate resilience actions?
- What extent did gender dialogues, engagement of men/community leaders and women-led small grants contribute to improvement?

Efficiency

- What is the input and output ratio? What is the delivery cost of one unit of output (here groups)
- Were project resources, staffing, facilitation arrangements and timelines adequate and used efficiently to reach 72 groups and targeted households across the communes?
- What was the comparative efficiency and cost-effectiveness of key delivery mechanisms, such as revolving loan funds, and small grant modalities, in reaching the two groups and targeted households across the communes? This will include an assessment of return on investment by comparing the profitability of supported enterprises against the cost of delivery.
- ?
- Did implementation sequencing and timing enable participants to translate training, savings and loans into livelihood outcomes within the project period, including for the 10 groups formed late in April 2026?

Impact

- What broader changes, positive or negative, intended or unintended, can be observed at household, group and community levels as a result of the project?
- To what extent has the project contributed to women's economic empowerment, including greater self-efficacy, income opportunities, reduced vulnerability to shocks, and stronger voice in household and community decisions?
- Did the project contribute to changes in community attitudes or practices regarding women's economic roles, natural resource management, water/sanitation, disaster risk reduction or environmental protection?

Sustainability

- How likely are the results achieved under each outcome to continue after project completion, particularly group functionality, savings and loan management, loan revolving, technical practices, market relationships and women's collective action?
- What capacities, incentives and ownership and motivation have been built among community facilitators, local authorities, group leaders and members to continue support without direct project funding?
- What additional support, partnerships or adaptations would be required to sustain or scale the most promising models for ethnic minority women in Son La?

Evaluation methodology

Approaches:

- The evaluation should adopt a participatory approach, engaging CARE staff, the implementing partner, community facilitators, women participants, male household members, local leaders and other relevant

- stakeholders in validating preliminary findings and interpreting recommendations.
- The approach must be gender-responsive, culturally appropriate and sensitive to ethnic minority contexts.
- Data collection tools and protocols should be designed to ensure women's safe participation, privacy, informed consent, and the inclusion of relevant ethnic minority languages/translation support where needed.
- The final report should present disaggregated analysis by sex, ethnicity, commune/former commune, and relevant participant cohorts, and should distinguish between evidence that is strongly substantiated and evidence that is suggestive or perception-based.
- The final methodology should include quality assurance procedures.

Methodology:

The evaluation will use a cross-sectional quasi experimental study design using mixed-methods, theory-based endline design that combines quantitative and qualitative evidence to assess performance against the OECD/DAC criteria and the project's theory of change. The design should use available project documents, baseline and monitoring data, routine administrative records (including VSLA and revolving fund records where available), and primary data collection with participants, non-participants/comparison informants where feasible, partners and other stakeholders.

✓ **Qualitative component.**

At minimum, qualitative work should include ethnic minority women group members, husbands/men engaged through gender activities, community facilitators, group leaders, commune/provincial authorities, implementing partner staff, CARE staff, and relevant private sector/social enterprise actors involved in market linkages. Where appropriate, the evaluator may include outcome harvesting or most significant change techniques

Triangulation and analysis.

✓ **Quantitative component:**

- The evaluator should implement a structured survey with project participants, focused primarily on women VSLA/livelihood group members and a complementary subsample of male spouses/partners.
- Sampling and sample size requirements. The consultant must present a representative sample size, following appropriate sampling design and methodology in the inception report. The quantitative sample should be powered using the primary outcome indicator(s) and should take the larger sample generated by: (a) a precision-based calculation for estimating key endline proportions at 95% confidence level, 5% margin of error and 80% power and 10% non-response; consider 10% change of variable of interest over life of project; and (b) a comparison-based calculation where subgroup analysis is required (for example legacy TEAL-origin groups versus SURE-established groups, or groups with different levels of exposure/intervention maturity). In the absence of a better prior estimate, the calculation should assume $p=0.50$, apply a design effect appropriate for clustered group-based sampling (minimum 1.5 unless justified otherwise), and include at least 10% allowance for non-response. The consultant should justify the minimum detectable effect used for any subgroup comparison and show all assumptions.
- The sample should be sufficiently large to report participant-level results separately for women and, where surveyed, men, and to produce meaningful analysis for key project cohorts, including older versus newly formed groups. The consultant should clearly define the sampling frame, selection stages, replacement rules, and procedures for reaching absent or hard-to-reach respondents.

Scope of work and key deliverables:

Scope of work

- Desk review: Analysis of existing and relevant documents.
- Develop a Final Evaluation proposal including methodology, sample size calculation, and sampling strategy, data collection tools, detailed fieldwork plan, analysis plan, quality control plan, and timeframes for key management inputs and decisions.
- Field data collection process:
 - Developing quantitative and qualitative interview tools in accordance with the key informant types in the design. The tools will need to be approved by CARE team before commencing.

- Conducting all the expected qualitative interviews in the field.
- Data analysis and interpretation using relevant software for the qualitative interviews.
- Producing codebook and good quotation document.
- Consolidating all the quantitative and qualitative data analysis results to develop the full report and a presentation on evaluation key findings (PowerPoint format).
- Produce draft evaluation report for review and feedback with an Impact brief follow the CARE template
- Incorporated comments and feedback on the report and finalize with power-point presentation;
- Conduct the debriefing for a CARE and project staff on the results of evaluation results.

Deliverables:

Tentative Timeframe and No of consultancy days:

Timeframe (2026)	Activity	Team lead	Team member
	Contracting	n/a	n/a
July	Design and finalize evaluation tools	5	5
July	Field preparation	n/a	n/a
July	Field work	8	8
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data analysis • Key Findings – Version 1 • Present the key findings Presentation • Drafting the first version of narrative report 	10	7
Week 4 Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CARE to feedback for the key findings • Consultant team submit first version of narrative report 	n/a	n/a
Week 1 Sep	CARE to feedback for the draft report Consultant team submits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The second version of narrative report - The 1st version of the Impact brief 	2	2
Week 2 Sep	Consultant finalizes the report	2	2
Total		27	24

Selection criteria

The evaluator can be a team of Vietnam national or international experts with relevant education and working experience.

Required attributes:

- a. Strong experience and skills in evaluations; knowledge of the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria and ability to apply these meaningfully within complex development projects.
- b. Proven capacity and extensive experience in management and conduct of evaluations, including strong analytical skills and experience in evaluating Women economic empowerment, Sustainable livelihood, Nutrition and food security, Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation projects.
- c. Sound experience working with ethnic minority women
- d. Demonstrated written communication skills, including the ability to communicate complex concepts in plain English and develop relevant, useful recommendations.
- e. Have a strong understanding of national target programs, including their implementation processes and phases. They also have established networks and knowledge of relevant government ministries and agencies related.

Preferred attributes:

- f. Experience in facilitating community-level engagement, participatory validation processes, and integrating beneficiary feedback into evaluation findings.
- g. Track record of delivering high-quality evaluations on time and within budget, including experience managing evaluation teams.
- h. Commitment to ethical research standards, particularly with regard to informed consent, privacy, safeguarding, and do-no-harm principles.

Application procedure:

Interested candidates should submit the following documents in English, clearly stating the title of the Terms of Reference to email: procurement2@care.org.vn by 12 July 2026. Please note that for large files, please do not send compressed .rar files or files larger than 30MB. Zip files or shared links with access permissions enabled are acceptable.

Applications including:

1. Consultants (firm) CV or profile.
2. A list of relevant past work
3. At least one written example of a past evaluation
4. A draft conceptual framework for the evaluation including a description of the methodology and tools
5. Financial proposal with a daily rate for the consultancy
6. Deliverable and time plan.

CARE is an equal opportunity employer committed to a diverse workforce. Women, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Thanks for your interest in CARE! We are committed to each other and to the protection of the people we serve. We do not tolerate sexual misconduct within or external to our organisation and imbed child protection in all we do. Protection from sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse and child protection are fundamental to our relationships, including employment, and our recruitment practices are designed to ensure we only recruit people who are suitable to work with other staff and the people we serve. As well as pre-employment checks, we will use the recruitment and reference process to ensure potential new consultant/supplier understand and are aligned with these expectations. To find out more, please contact the Human Resources Team Leader.