

# Terms of Reference: Final Evaluation of ISF’s VAWG Prevention Projects in Somaliland

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# 1. Background and Purpose

The International Solidarity Foundation (ISF) is a Finnish development organization, established in 1970. ISF's vision is to play a leading role in advancing the rights and agency of women and girls in East Africa by 2030. It envisions a world where women and girls are empowered to shape their own futures, where their self-determination is fully realized, and where their right to bodily integrity is respected.

The goal of ISF's 2022–2025 programme is to strengthen the bodily integrity and livelihood resilience of women and girls in Kenya, Somaliland, and Ethiopia. The programme has five expected outcomes:

1. Judicial and moral duty bearers take action to mitigate violence against women and girls
2. Women and girls collectively claim their rights.
3. Women's sphere of influence has expanded
4. Women benefit from services and networks that support livelihood reform
5. Improved capacity of farm systems to mitigate and adapt to climate change

The programme is implemented through development projects led by local partners, including NGOs, community-based organizations, and women-led businesses. ISF's operating model focuses on empowering women and their organizations, strengthening the capacity of judicial and moral duty bearers, and reinforcing civil society structures.

This Terms of Reference sets out the engagement of an independent consultant to evaluate ISF's violence against women and girls (VAWG) prevention projects, with a particular focus on the prevention of three forms of harmful practices and violence: a) female genital mutilation (FGM), b) early and child marriage (ECM), and c) intimate partner violence (IPV), in relation to programme Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.

Furthermore, the consultant is required to evaluate EAW components incorporated into two livelihood projects, with attention to how they were implemented, the methods applied, and the extent to which they proved relevant and effective. The purpose of this evaluation is to provide ISF, its implementing partners, and donors with an unbiased assessment of the results achieved over the four-year programme period.

## 2. EAWG Projects to be Evaluated

### *Barwaaqo Voluntary Organization (BVO)*

- Project title: Reducing all forms of violence against women and girls
- Goal: Prevalence of early marriage and FGM decrease in the target villages
- Timeframe/Project phase: 2022-2025
- Geographical scope: Ceel-seme, Ceel bilicile, Hawlwadaag and Barwaaqo villeges in Odweyne district/Togdheer region
- Direct beneficiaries 2022–25: 4 500 (200 girls, 2 000 women, 500 boys, 1 800 men)
- Final beneficiaries 2022-25: 36 000 (14 000 girls, 9 000 women)

The project works to prevent VAWG—focusing on FGM, ECM, IPV and non-partner sexual violence—by engaging traditional and religious leaders in community dialogues and establishing grassroots committees for outreach. School clubs raise awareness among boys and girls through education and dramas, while women's self-help groups (SHGs) build skills in

literacy, business, tailoring, and menstrual pad production, alongside promoting women's decision-making in households.

#### *Network against FGM in Somaliland (NAFIS)*

- Project title: Accelerating efforts to combat FGM and early marriage
- Goal: Women, civil society, and duty bearers unified to mitigate VAWG in Somaliland
- Timeframe/Project phase: 2023-25
- Geographical scope: Togdheer and Sanaag region
- Direct beneficiaries 2024-25: 830 (750 women, 80 men)
- Final beneficiaries 2024-25: 3 760 (2460 girls, 1300 women)

The project engages NAFIS' member civil society organisations (CSOs), women's SHGs, women's rights organizations (WROs), and Cluster Level Associations (CLAs) in Togdheer and Sanaag. It strengthens their capacity to address VAWG and influence policymakers to enact protections for women and girls. CSOs and SHGs receive education on women's bodily rights and the harms of VAWG, particularly FGM, while SHG members advocate for their rights and coordinate with local authorities and CSOs. Regional authorities are also trained and sensitized on VAWG, fostering collaboration with SHGs and CSOs to strengthen community-level prevention. NAFIS has also advocated for the now enacted national Anti-FGM Bill.

#### *Somaliland Youth and Development Voluntary Organization (SOYDAVO)*

- Project title: Entrenching community mechanisms to mitigate SGBV/FGM
- Goal: Communities reject SGBV/FGM through attitude change and improved livelihoods
- Timeframe/Project phase: 2022-2025
- Geographical scope: Carmale, Yufle and Dayaxa villages in Sanaag region and Burao IDPs in Togdheer region
- Direct beneficiaries 2022-25: 4 280 (80 girls, 2800 women, 1400 men)
- Final beneficiaries 2022-25: 23 600 (15 000 girls, 18 600 women)

The project addresses harmful practices and VAWG through grassroots duty bearers (traditional/religious leaders), SHG, parents, and girls clubs. It empowers communities to reduce particularly FGM, IPV, ECM, and non-partner sexual violence—by increasing women's knowledge of legal/human rights, referral mechanisms, and support services. It strengthens collaboration between regional officials, village committees, and religious leaders, and establishes champions, girl clubs, and community anti-VAWG committees to challenge harmful norms. Men and boys are engaged to highlight their role in prevention. To address poverty underlying VAWG, women are trained in tailoring of menstrual pads, young men in masonry, and families in poultry. Livelihood work also engages men in dialogue on women's income generation and joint decision-making.

#### *Somaliland Youth Peer Education Network (YPEER)*

- Project title: Zero tolerance to all forms of FGM and violence against women and girls
- Goal: All forms of FGM and VAWG decrease in project target areas
- Timeframe/Project phase: 2022-2025
- Geographical scope: Xaafis soomal, Dayacan and Caydhaha IDPs in Erigavo district/Sanaag region; Dayaxa and Nuura villages in Sheikh district/Sanaag region; Cadaw yurura, Ali-saahid, Ina dhakool villages in Buroa district/Togdheer region
- Direct beneficiaries 2022-25: 3 900 (10 girls, 2 900 women, 40 boys, 950 men)
- Final beneficiaries 2022-25: 20 800 (13 000 girls, 7 800 women)

The project aims to reduce VAWG, particularly FGM, in target areas. It engages regional and district leaders in advocacy, while religious and traditional leaders are sensitized to speak out against VAWG. Grassroots health and social workers, along with judicial staff, are trained to actively contribute to reducing all forms of VAWG. Judicial and moral duty bearers are engaged to challenge normative expectations, while rights holders—especially vulnerable women—are supported to access medical and judicial services. To address empirical expectations, community role models (women, men, girls, boys) are supported to make public declarations against FGM and other forms of VAWG. Awareness in remote villages, mobile pastoral communities, and IDP camps is raised through the ‘caravan model,’ where a mobile van with YPEER staff travels to hard-to-reach areas and delivers edutainment sessions on ECM, IPV, and FGM using music, dance, and drama.

### 3. Livelihood Projects with ERAW Components to be Evaluated

#### *Agriculture Development Organization (ADO)*

- Project title: Improving women's livelihood and strengthening agro-pastoralists' capacity to adapt to climate change
- Goal: Women and men farmers' improved livelihood resilience in Togdheer and Sanaag regions
- Timeframe/Project phase: 2022-2025
- Geographical scope: Boodhlay village in Burao district/Togdheer region; Xidh, Gaacidh, and Midhisho villages in Erigavo district/Sanaag region
- Direct beneficiaries 2022–25: 1 100 (550 women, 550 men)
- Final beneficiaries 2022-25: 7 300 (2 700 girls, 1 000 women, 2 700 boys, 900 men).

The project builds women's and men's climate resilience through community-based adaptation, improved resources, and training in climate-smart livelihoods. It also strengthens women's SHGs with skills, finance, and market access. As women take on more productive and decision-making roles, they may face an increased risk of partner or non-partner violence and harassment. To address this, the project facilitates discussion sessions highlighting the importance of women's economic roles for the family and strategies to prevent VAW.

#### *Youth Volunteers for Development and Environment Conservation (YOVENCO)*

- Project title: Improving women's livelihood opportunities in fishing industry in Berbera
- Goal: Promoting inclusive women's economic empowerment in fisheries sector
- Timeframe/Project phase: 2024-25 (planning phase 2023)
- Geographical scope: Berbera town in Sahil region
- Direct beneficiaries 2024-25: 160 (100 women, 60 men)
- Final beneficiaries 2024-25: 1 650 (250 girls, 836 women, 250 boys, 314 men)

The two-year project strengthens women's entrepreneurship in Berbera's fish market by building skills in fish vending, processing, marketing, and SHG development, alongside training in food hygiene and access to cold chain equipment. Women also receive training for employment in local fish factories. It also addresses violence against women by training authorities, employers, and community leaders on women's rights and safe work environments, and by providing peer-to-peer platforms for women to report and discuss experiences of violence.

## 4. Criteria, Scope and Methodology

### Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation will use the **OECD DAC evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability**. It will verify project achievements demonstrated through internal data collection, and provide insights, lessons learned, and promising practices in EVAWG, with a particular focus on FGM and child marriage.

In addition, the evaluation will illuminate **cross-cutting and thematic issues**:

- Coherence across levels: the extent to which project activities link and complement interventions at the individual, community, structural, and higher levels (government, civil society, policymakers, religious leaders).
- ISF's cross-project and cross-district contributions (especially in Burao), including diffusion of social norm change, scaling approaches nationally, and opportunities for better use of GBV service centers or legal aid points.
- Synergies between women's livelihood initiatives and VAWG prevention, particularly among projects combining small-scale livelihood and EVAWG components.
- Assessment of which methods and approaches most effectively strengthen women's roles and status beyond immediate VAW prevention or livelihood promotion, linking the 2022–25 programme outcomes to the 2026–29 impact level.
- Future directions and missed opportunities, considering ISF's evolving programme: work with new groups and methods, stronger engagement in vulnerable settings (e.g., IDP communities), male perspectives, intergenerational dynamics, and emerging prevention priorities such as sexual violence.

### Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation will cover the entire programme period (January 2022 – December 2025) across the target regions of Somaliland. In Togdheer region, data will be collected in the project district and villages through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). In parts of Sanaag region (particularly Erigavo), some KIIs and FGD participants may be transported to more accessible areas, or interviews may be conducted remotely (by phone) due to ongoing security concerns. Detailed plan will be done completed with the selected consultant. Note that no programme activities took place in Erigavo during 2025 because of the conflict.

### Respondents

The evaluation will target:

- Primary and secondary beneficiaries.
- Representatives of school clubs, women's self-help and savings groups, cluster-level associations (CLAs), anti-VAWG committees, religious and local leaders.
- Stakeholders, including implementing partners and NGOs/CSOs with similar projects, government representatives

## Mandatory Evaluation Questions

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Mandatory Evaluation Question</b>
<b>Relevance</b>	The extent to which the project is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group and the context.	To what extent do the achieved results (project goal, outcomes, and outputs) continue to be relevant to the needs of women and girls?
<b>Effectiveness</b>	A measure of the extent to which a project attains its objectives/results (as set out in the project document and results framework) in line with the theory of change.	To what extent has the project achieved its stated objectives, outcomes, and outputs? What factors facilitated or hindered achievement?
<b>Efficiency</b>	Refers to the relationship between outputs (qualitative and quantitative) and inputs. An economic measure of whether the project was delivered in a cost-effective manner.	How efficiently were resources (financial, human, technical) used to achieve results? Were there more efficient alternatives that could have been employed?
<b>Impact</b>	Assesses the broader changes that can be attributed to the project, including both intended and unintended higher-level effects.	What intended and unintended changes (positive or negative) have occurred as a result of the project? To what extent can these changes be attributed to the project interventions?
<b>Sustainability</b>	Measures whether the benefits of a project are likely to continue after project funding ends.	To what extent are the project's benefits, systems, and capacities likely to be sustained by communities, partners, and other stakeholders beyond the project period?

### Additional Questions

The consultant should develop additional evaluation questions building on the cross-cutting and thematic issues above to provide a comprehensive assessment and inform future programming.

### Methodology

The evaluation should collect and analyze qualitative data through the following methods:

- Desk study and review of all relevant project documentation including project documents, annual work-plans, quarterly and annual project reports, midterm evaluations and reviews
- KIs to gather primary data from key stakeholders
- FGDs with project beneficiaries and other stakeholders.
- Participatory methods and tools
- Observations during field visits

## 5. Deliverables and Timeline

The evaluation is expected to start in **November 2025** for an estimated duration of 20-30 working days. This will include:

- Desk review and submission of inception report
- Field visit(s) and data collection in Burao
- Data collection remotely or in an alternative location from Sanaag
- Data analysis and evaluation report writing
- Workshop to validate initial evaluation findings
- Submission of the final report

Based on the project documentation, the consultant shall submit an **inception report** to ISF no later than **6<sup>th</sup> of November**. The inception report serves as an agreement between parties on how the evaluation will be conducted, covering the following items:

- Research methodology, including qualitative data collection tools (e.g. FGD and KII questions), suggested target groups, number of informants, and ethical considerations
- Proposal for a learning event to validation of evaluation findings.
- Schedule of the evaluation activities incl. travelling (timeline)
- Detailed budget

The **draft evaluation report** should be sent for comments to ISF no later than **11<sup>th</sup> of December 2025**. The **final evaluation report**, which incorporates the ISF comments and suggestions done to the draft report, should be submitted to ISF no later than **1st of January 2026**.

## 6. Consultant Profile and Requirements

The profile of the individual consultants needs to meet the qualification requirements below:

- University degree in gender studies, anthropology, sociology, or another relevant social science, humanities, or development-related discipline.
- Extensive experience (minimum 7 years) in relevant fields, including gender equality, VAWG programming, or related areas.
- More than 5 years of experience in research and/or project development / management and review
- Experience of working with international organizations
- Evidence of quality outputs from previous assignments
- Fluent English and Somali
- Good qualitative and quantitative analytical skills
- Good reporting and presenting skills
- Punctuality and availability to complete the work on time

### How to apply and selection process

Requested information:

- qualification of the consultant (CV)
- a draft consultancy plan (2-3 pages) including a short description on initial methods and the duration of the consultancy (number of days)
- cost of the tender: facilitation fee/ day, other costs

ISF will choose the consultant in according to three main criteria's: a) the professional capacity of the consultant, b) the quality and content of the tender, c) the cost of the tender.

The selection of the consultant will be done by ISF. Only the selected candidate will be notified of the results of the selection process.

The tender must be submitted by **19<sup>th</sup> of October** to [isfsom@isf.fi](mailto:isfsom@isf.fi)