ANNEX 7 – Report from the Mid-term Evaluation
1. Introduction:

The project *Support to Development of Agricultural Cooperatives* is funded by the European Union and implemented by CARE and Macedonian Enterprise Development Foundation (MEDF). The project started in December 2017 and will run until February 2021.

As overall goal, the proposed Action aims at contributing to higher productivity and competitiveness of agriculture sector, as one of the most important sectors of the Macedonian economy. In order to improve the current situation, predominantly in the segment of agricultural production of individual farmers, the project intends to utilize recommendations of the latest assessments of the efficiency of domestic agriculture and work on the specific objective: to increase market competitiveness and cooperation among farmers in Macedonia, through creating favorable conditions for the development of the existing and creation of new agricultural cooperatives. The projects’ key outputs or expected results are the following:

- **Op 1**: Legal framework regulating agricultural cooperatives is revised, through a joint work of the project team and associates, MAFWE and a cooperatives’ umbrella organisation.
- **Op 2**: Capacity of a selected umbrella organisation of agricultural cooperatives strengthened.
- **Op 3.1**: Increased awareness on benefits of cooperatives, among farmers, businesses and general public.
- **Op 3.2**: Data base created with information on existing agricultural cooperatives willing to expand and farmers’ groups willing to establish new cooperatives and receive support for development.
- **Op 4**: Technical and financial support provided for the development of 8 existing and creation of 12 new cooperatives

As agreed by the project team and described in the ToR, the mid-term review/evaluation was conducted in November and December 2019 by CARE Balkans Gender Programme Coordinator for the first 21 month of the project implementation with an aim to provide an answer on what has proved to be successful so far, what should be addressed and improved until the end of the project and which segments in particular have the highest sustainability potential.

The project was assessed through a lens consisting of the following criteria that have also served as a base for conducting the analysis and presenting the findings. The entire methodology as well as the report has been built following the same structure which consists of the following criteria:
• Relevance: The extent to which the project suited the priorities and policies of the target group, and donor;
• Effectiveness: The extent to which the project achieved its objectives and to which a specific technical approach or methodology used were relevant and successful;
• Efficiency: The extent to which project was managed to get value for money from inputs of funds, staff and other resources;
• Monitoring and learning: The effectiveness of project monitoring and learning processes;
• Management & partnership approach; contributions to women’s empowerment;
• Sustainability: To assess whether the benefits of the project are likely to continue after the project ends.

Executive Summary

The evaluation was structured and conducted in three phases over a three month period and included a) a desk review and preparation with the CARE project team (October-early November 2019), b) a workshop, face to face interviews and focus group discussions with the key stakeholders (late November 2019), on-line survey for all the project participants, but the beneficiaries in particular (December 2019) and c) report writing (January 2020).

Key findings

Relevance and design: Are highly relevant to the current needs in the agricultural sector in North Macedonia, the project logic has proved to be well designed and the expected outcomes mutually reinforce each other. The project dynamic has not been linear, which is a realistic reflection of the socio-economic environment.

Effectiveness & Efficiency: The overall results accomplished during the first 21 months of the project implementation have been assessed as positive the key being: 51 agricultural cooperatives successfully established; increase in the agricultural cooperative membership is evident; five policies/laws regulating the existence and working of the cooperatives have been designed as well as three by-laws; awareness among farmers, business and general public has been raised on benefits of cooperation’s; a data base to collect all the relevant data to serve as a monitoring and resource tool has been developed and finally, 18 agricultural cooperatives have been selected for financial support

Sustainability: Three years is period not long enough to see all of these changes take place and are being sustained since there are longer term transformational process ongoing that take a continuous focus over time to see change in the implementation of the laws and by-laws on agricultural cooperation being implemented and gaining results.

Project Management & Partnership & Approaches: The initiative has been recognized for its uniquely transparent, and flexible and the project management team as highly for their commitment and engagement. Yet, there is space for improvement identified in terms of additional focus on trust building and clarifying roles and responsibility.

Monitoring & Learning: There is a good system in place for collecting, analysing and reporting the quantitative data. However, a more creative way of monitoring and reporting what changes have happened in peoples’ lives as a direct result of the project still needs to be strengthened.

Methodology: A very low survey response rate (of less than 14%) suggest that the tool was not an adequate one for collecting the opinion of the wider project related audience and direct beneficiaries.

Gender integration & Women’s Empowerment: There is evident lack of women being interested to take part or enabled and empowered to take more active part in the management and work of the agricultural cooperatives.
Recommendations:
The following steps have been recommended by the evaluator that could be accomplished until the end of the project:

1. Start developing the next project phase to continue building on the current initiative in order to ensure stability and sustainability of the accomplishments since the nature of the project’s expected results requires more time to evolve and take root.

2. For key project partners to continue the highly appreciated approach of transparency, participation, inclusion and flexibility. However, they should also come with a system that suits them all aimed at improved communication, collaboration and coordination of project activities leading to increased effectiveness of the overall intervention and additionally contribute the mutual trust building.

3. Continue a successful quantitative monitoring and introduce the most adequate new methods and techniques for quantitative change identification and presentation (like success stories, for example)

4. To give heads up to the external expert selected for the final project evaluation to come up with a different approach or tool for collecting the information from the beneficiaries and a wider circle of stakeholders due to a very low survey response rate.

5. Very little has been done on women empowerment and gender integration and therefore an analysis/research focused on different needs as well as obstacles to more women being interested in agricultural cooperatives should be seriously considered.

2. Methodology

The methodology applied consisted of a desk review and a series of discussions with CARE’s project team before the workplan was defined. As a result, the initial idea of having a two to three day workshop to collect the data was revised to have a more participatory and inclusive process but also diverse in terms of the input level as well as the number and type of actors included. Therefore, a day and half workshop was organized with the key stakeholders (two CARE staff, one EC representative, six MEDF partner – Macedonian Enterprise Development Foundation, Executive Director of MAAC-Macedonian Association of Agricultural Cooperatives, two representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry-MAWFE and three Executive Directors of Agricultural Cooperatives). Most of the participants had been familiar or actively engaged in all the four Outputs or Expected Results.

Further, two two-hour focus group discussions (FGDs) were held, one with the representatives of four newly established and one with those of three already existing agricultural cooperatives. Also, three semi-structured one-hour interviews were conducted with the representatives for the Ministry of Economy, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food and the Head a National Federation of Farmers. As far as the face-to face events are concerned, a total of 31 persons took part, five female and 26 male participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Event/F &amp; M</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>TOTAL:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group Discussions – new Coops.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group Discussion- ’old’ Coops.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition, this assessment process was used to find out what a wider stakeholder audience thinks about the project and this was done via as short anonymous Survey (ten questions, a combination of closed- and open ended ones). Although a survey was not originally planned, during the mid-term evaluation workshop a question was raised by a donor representative on how the voices of wider group of stakeholders and mainly beneficiaries might be heard at this point of the implementation. CARE gladly accepted and readily responded to the suggestion with introducing the survey (a very simple one) as a tool to quickly and anonymously collect the information. It had been sent in early December to 314 email addresses from the project data base, but due to a low response rate (31 responses), the dead-line was postponed, and the survey invitation repeated. However, only 12 more persons took the survey, which resulted in 43 responses in total or response rate of 13.7%.

Although the intention with the survey was to target more final beneficiaries that were involved in only one or two key project activities and hear their voice, like farmers, for example, the results show that about only 20% identifies as members of the agricultural cooperatives and farmers. Most of the respondents were involved in the working group discussions, on the spot visits and training events focusing on the business plan development.

As far as the key stakeholders attending the workshop are concerned, they all agreed that the project was in a critical phase from the expected results point of view and that a joint assessment of this kind was happening at the right moment to reflect and build on the lessons learned. They also expressed how necessary it was to keep an open mind not to miss the features presenting added value or those that might improve certain elements of the project implementation, mostly concerning the umbrella organisation.

It was made clear that although the process was a great opportunity to discuss the potential for the impact, it was yet too early at this stage of the implementation to measure the impact as such. However, the overall attitude toward the assessment was positive and most of the workshop participants as well as the focus group discussion members were active and engaged.

3. Key Findings

In order to present the overall impressions, sentiment and facts on the key project aspects, as laid out in the ToR, the opinions and inputs from all the sources have been collated, analysed and described below according to the agreed structure.

The following sections 3.1 – 3.6 summarize the findings the mid-term evaluation. A three-category rating has been applied here: Fully Achieved/Very Good, Partially Achieved/Good and Not Achieved/ Poor or Not Applicable.

3.1 RELEVANCE: To what extent have the objectives of the project intervention responded to the needs, priorities and policies of the target group and the donor?

Finding 1: The project has been assessed as very relevant (fully achieved) in view of the needs of the agricultural sector in North Macedonia.

The project deals with the key gaps and obstacles for development and proper functioning of the agricultural cooperatives in North Macedonia thereby contributing to the increase of productivity and competitiveness of the agricultural sector. It comprehensively addresses inconsistencies of the regulations and recommends tailor-made measures for improvement. Adequate awareness raising activities have been created and implemented to raise knowledge and awareness among farmers, business community and general public to promote the advantages of this business operation model for
individual agricultural producers. The project has so far successfully increased the number and functionality of agricultural cooperatives and has provided both technical and financial support for the existing and newly registered cooperatives, as well as for the selected umbrella organization.

Finding 2: The intervention logic is clear and well-articulated, the indicators are SMART and the activities implemented until November 2019 have been well delivered (partially achieved since it’s the mid-term assessment)

The project has been planned and designed on the evidence/assessment conducted in 2016s,. The logic tested so far seems to be comprehensive and directly and clearly contributing to the project goal. The four expected results/outputs are mutually reinforcing thereby enhancing the scope and intensity of the expected impact. The action is implemented by CARE and its partner MEDF, organizations with large experience in work on agricultural development in North Macedonia and the Balkans, large experience in sub-granting, awareness raising, technical support and policy change. The intervention aim is perceived as relevant since the need for such project still exists focused on the same priorities that need to be implemented over a longer period of time to make them sustainable. The stakeholders find that there was an expectation that the agricultural cooperatives would focus more on marketing-oriented activities and external actions, not so much on the investments. In addition, the dynamic was very hard to predict in advance precisely in such a complex contexts and multi-layered projects, hence, the second project year did not seem to be as dynamic as the first one was.

It was repeatedly made clear by all of the involved that all the needs of the agricultural cooperatives sector cannot be met through one project only and that innovative, out of the box thinking should be applied in looking for best solutions that meet the needs of the sector, taking realistically the political and economic context in consideration (like the administrative requirements that are burdensome for farmers, the upcoming elections etc.). Several participants questioned the sequence of the intervention referring to the rationale of first establishing of the cooperative and then changing the legal framework which resulted in the cooperatives being established based on the old law that is not appropriate or functional.

3.2. EFFECTIVENESS – Under this section, it was examined what & how much has been accomplished so far (a), what has helped achieve the objectives (b) and what were the main obstacles on that journey (c).

a) To what extent have the objectives of the intervention been achieved?

Finding 3: Based on the achievements accomplished during the first 21 months of the project implementation, it is fair to assume that the project outcome will be fully achieved. The objectives defined by the project have proved to be realistic for the first half of the implementation period. The level of accomplishment for the overall objective is 96% whereby out of the planned 51
functional agricultural cooperatives 51 of them are being functional out of which 37 existing and 15 newly registered ones (eleven as a result of direct project support and 4 on their own). As far as the specific objective is concerned, to increase market competitiveness and cooperation among farmers in Macedonia through creating favourable conditions for the development of the existing and creating of new agricultural cooperatives, the number of members increased from 483 to 631 (48 being female). There are two outputs (Output 3 & 4) for which the indicators clearly show a high level of success, like the number of newly joined farmers to agricultural cooperatives (157, 35 of whom are female). Further, the financial support is being provided to 17 cooperatives, half of which are newly established. So far, there are 36 existing agricultural cooperatives included into the data base while a total of 15 farmers’ groups that are willing to establish cooperatives are being registered whereby the target at the baseline was 12. The longer term objectives will be assessed during the final evaluation.

As for the Outputs 1 & 2, the activities will be intensified in the coming period toward the legislation change and the capacity building of the umbrella organization. The extent to which the project achieved its objectives is further presented in detail in the updated Logical Framework below showing the level of accomplishment until start of November 2019.

The project has given us a well-rounded support we needed, now it’s up to us to utilize it all and work towards achieving results with our cooperative. If it weren’t for the project, we wouldn’t have been where we are today, with an established cooperative, planning to implement the activities laid out in our business plan.

Image and story redacted for privacy
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results chain</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Current value</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Accomplished (11.2019)</th>
<th>Sources and means of verification</th>
<th>Accomplished %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall objective impact</td>
<td>Overall objective: contribute to higher productivity and competitiveness of agriculture sector in Macedonia</td>
<td>Increase in the number of functional agricultural cooperatives in Macedonia</td>
<td>39 existing functional agricultural cooperatives in 2017</td>
<td>51 functional cooperative</td>
<td>36 existing + 15 newly registered agricultural cooperatives (49 functional)</td>
<td>MAFWE data, Project database</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific objectives: Outcomes</td>
<td>Specific objective: to increase market competitiveness and cooperation among farmers in Macedonia through creating favourable conditions for the development of the existing and creating of new agricultural cooperatives</td>
<td>% increase in the number of farmers (male/female) membership in cooperatives</td>
<td>483 members at the beginning of project implementation</td>
<td>631 members</td>
<td>157 members (91m, 35f, 13n/a)</td>
<td>Applications received, financial reports of the existing cooperatives, Project database</td>
<td>76.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outputs</td>
<td>Legal framework regulating agricultural cooperatives is revised through a joint work of the project team and associates, MAFWE and a cooperatives' umbrella organisation</td>
<td>Ind. 1.1 # of policies regulating agricultural cooperatives revised through the project organised process</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Project reports and documentation. Minutes of the Working Group meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ind. 1.2. # of policy documents designed with support from the project</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Project reports and documentation. Minutes of the Working Group meetings.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Capacity of a selected umbrella organisation of Macedonian agricultural cooperatives strengthened

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ind. 2.1</td>
<td>Increase in the number of cooperatives associated to the selected umbrella organisation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12 new associate cooperatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind. 2.2</td>
<td># of new initiatives for improvement of the conditions for the cooperatives raised by the umbrella</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5 officially submitted initiatives (including petitions, project proposals, etc.)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Increased awareness on benefits of cooperatives, among farmers, business and general public

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># of farmers newly joined members of agricultural cooperatives</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>200 farmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>157 farmers (91m, 35f, 13n/a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># of joint ventures between cooperatives and business sector developed with support from the project</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20 joint ventures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Data base created with information on existing agricultural cooperatives willing to expand and farmers' groups willing to establish new cooperatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># of existing agricultural cooperatives included in the data base</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>All existing agricultural cooperatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>36 existing cooperatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># of farmers' groups willing to form cooperatives</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20 groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15 groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Current status (CRM), List of members of the cooperative, Project database
- Project database, Field visits database, Applications for interest
- 100%
- 170%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>and receive support for development</th>
<th>included in the data base</th>
<th>% of cooperatives' (existing and new) business plans supported by the project realised successfully</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>8 existing and 12 new cooperatives</th>
<th>At least 80%</th>
<th>9 existing and 9 new cooperatives selected for FS</th>
<th>Project database, Application for technical support (phase 1 and 2) Application for financial support</th>
<th>90%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical and financial support provided for the development of 8 existing and creation of 12 new cooperatives</td>
<td>% of increase in the yearly turnover of the cooperatives supported for scale-up</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20% increase</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Annual financial report (CRM, PRO) of the cooperative</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of sales contracts signed by the cooperatives formed through the support from the project</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12 sales contracts</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The second part of the assessment on the EFFECTIVENESS evolved around the reflections on what worked well & what could have been done better.

b) What actors/procedures/implementation methods have proved to be crucial for achieving the objectives so far?

Finding 4: 

- **Actors**: Assessed as partially accomplished (due to the lack of genuine support from the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Labour and Social Policies) but crucially important and successful were: Collaboration with and contribution of the Ministry of Economy and the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food (actors);
- **Procedures**: Partially achieved (still waiting for the legal framework to be changed) but fully in terms of the results of the in-depth and comparative analyses, establishing a Single National Electronic Regulatory Registration, working groups, info sessions, public debates held and highly rated by the participants;
- **Methods**: Seen as very important: Ongoing consultations, the study tour, sharing & learning from good practice examples from the EU and the region.

Most of the comments related to the successful elaboration of a new law on agricultural associations and introduction of mechanisms for monitoring the operation of agricultural associations in the state. Further, the financial and technical assistance to the cooperatives as well as the establishment of the new ones is seen as crucial. The existence of the umbrella association should be recognized as a big step toward the sustainability, some have claimed.

In addition, participants have pointed out the raised awareness on the essence of the existence of the cooperatives and the need for small producers to unite for the purpose of economical operation and high yields as one of the key project results achieved so far. Impressible results include also over 50 grant applications and over 600 farmers attending the information sessions the number of applications exceeded those initially planned due to the success of the information sessions very well organized and conducted. One of the anonymous respondents sees the project intervention as improving the capacity of the agricultural cooperatives to lower their cost of production, increase economies of scale and higher quality products, thus strengthening the negotiations power and the market presence on the domestic and foreign markets.

c) What factors have hindered the achievement of objectives?

Finding 5: Certain external and internal factors were identified as having negatively affected the operations to a smaller degree and the appropriate mitigation measures have been undertaken or will be over the next year.
In the workshop, the stakeholders identified the following issues: Problems in harmonising and coordinating the target groups; Political situation in the country (EU campaign, lethargy, elections, referendum, cautiousness of the target group towards cooperatives); Age structure of the target groups (lack of young farmers); Lack of strategical approach. The focus group discussion members emphasized two main factors and those were: the timeliness – some of the activities could have been developed/implemented a bit faster, in particular around awarding grants. One respondent related the issues with the grants awarding timeframe, presenting the fact that the procedures had been ‘imported’ from another country and weren’t adapted adequately to meet the local requirements. In addition, on a few occasions, beneficiaries were asked to deliver some information on very short notice. The others mention a heavy administrative workload and an issue of the compliance capacity. While many praise the project’s transparency, a very small number think that there had been a lack thereof.

One survey participant sees a challenge in the general lack of trust among farmers, while another one shared an insight referring to the whole group mentality. Given that the number of young farmers is insignificant, the number of adult farmers who apply the same model of functioning is big. It seems there is still a lot of work that needs to be done to raise awareness on the benefits of cooperatives.

A representative of the Ministry of Agriculture found it difficult to convince those involved into a ‘think change’ mode. One respondent believes that the real challenges would actually most likely start when the new text of the law is passed.

3.3 EFFICIENCY – Has the relationship between the devoted resources and results been appropriate and justifiable?

Finding 6: To what extent has the project achieved the best value for money? – almost fully successful for evaluation period

The project design, as well as the resources devoted to each of the project segments, has been assessed more fully than partially successful by the workshop participants based on a group work analysis and other stakeholders who highly value CARE’s participatory approach and flexibility to meet the needs and limitations on the ground.

- The funds designated for the Legal framework segment found well spent: the amount of 15-18.000 EUR spent for two analyses; five legal documents amended; five public debates organized and held as a series of the working group sessions and a study visit in Slovenia.
- For the umbrella organisation – well spent: 28.000 EUR for the evaluation of the umbrella, mentoring and coaching for the development of their business plan as well as first transfer for the implementation of the Business plan. In the period to follow additional support will be given to the umbrella especially taking into consideration best practice examples from EU/region and further implementation of the business plan.
- For the monitoring software-well spent: the software is in the final stages of development and soon it will be given to MAFWE for testing. In the following period the software will be presented to the cooperatives and a discussion took place on whether an access should be granted to the umbrella organisation.
Areas in which a slight improvement in terms of the increase would be welcome:

- For the financial assistance: more similar investments in the future should be made available; while the size of the grants was seen as appropriate for the workshop participants, several survey respondents argued the grants size was too small in funds and too short in duration for any more significant change to be accomplished.
- More focus on promotion and awareness raising would be recommended: to identify candidates for a human interest or success story, develop and disseminate them in order to inspire and thereby facilitate even greater involvement of other stakeholders (MAFWE, MAAC, etc.).
- The donor representative argued that the expertise provided should have been more international, with lessons learned and extensive experience in the specific field of agricultural cooperatives. This could be implemented through introducing good practice examples from the marketing and study visits experiences, for example. Foreign expertise has been involved to a degree in the activities like comparative analyses, the Law on Cooperatives was also reviewed by foreign experts as well as the ToR for the monitoring software.
- At the project start, there were some comments going around about the project being overstaffed. However, the fact that not all personnel are engaged on a full time basis should be kept in mind and that the dynamics of their engagement depends on the type of the activity and the point of time in the project implementation.

3.4 MONITORING & LEARNING: How effective has the project monitoring and learning processes been so far - assessed as moderately successful.

Finding 7: There is a monitoring mechanism in place for tracking and collecting both quantitative data gender disaggregated data; more focus should be put on collecting the qualitative data/stories of change as well as unintended positive and negative changes – partially achieved

While it is clear that CARE is responsible for the overall monitoring – MEDF is monitoring their own activities, the partners cross check the data to ensure accuracy and timeliness. There is a website that vast majority of the beneficiaries have rated as informative and useful, very much contributing to the overall impression of the project and the project management being transparent. Some claim that the website and social media information sharing and promotion has so far not been used as much it could have been.

On feedback or complaint mechanism – the project website offers an opportunity for people to send questions. Thus, it has been established that a direct contact via phone or face to face is being preferred to any kind of written communication.

The following has been identified as most significant change in the so far implementation of the project:

- The workshop participant agreed that in spite of some slight differences in the background and roles, there is an overall positive energy about the project at play and the majority of beneficiaries fell enthusiastic about the project activities and results accomplished. This is quite a positive trend that needs to be amplified through the institutional support/EU support. The project should be use as a solid ground for the further investment and the sector development.
- The project has managed to bring the changes in the legal framework – the Law on cooperatives, in a participatory manner. It should be more marketed and promoted, to become more visible in the field and to come up with evidence of good practice examples to
be used for a scale up. The financial support for the umbrella organisation is very useful and needed.

- What has been successfully introduced as an innovation: Definitely, the establishment and provision of support to the Umbrella organisation which should be sustained?
- What makes this project different from/better than the others the stakeholders are familiar with: The methodology and approach applied has been assessed as being highly professional throughout as well as the standards used in the implementation. The financial support for all cooperatives (new and ‘old’ ones) has been crucial for increasing the entrepreneurship quality level in the country i.e. the project is establishing new standards (increment of 30% of the turnover). Further, opening the regional office of the Umbrella organisation and the calls for support (2 for technical and 1 for financial support); the changes in the legal framework recommended based on a thorough and well done analysis including key experts from the relevant fields. In addition, it happens rarely close to never, that such initiative coming from farmers/CSOs are taken into serious consideration when drafting/developing laws.
  - Many claim that caravan info sessions were the best thing that has happened and was implemented on the ground, throughout villages, which resulted in a database of 800+ participants out of which 600 are farmers.
  - The interest from farmers’ initiatives was bigger than initially anticipated (31 applications for farmers’ initiatives willing to establish cooperatives). Also due to the fact that the application process consisted of different phases, some level of commitment and focus has been demonstrated by the applicants already leading the project team to believe that the people who have passed the final phase are thinking from a business point of view and not only seeing this opportunity as pure chance for getting subsidies.

When probed for any unintended changes or project’s added value that have taken place, the assessment participants came up with the following insights:

- The relationships built among cooperatives and consultants has a high probability to continue; it is expected that they would stay connected beyond the project due to the mutually beneficial collaboration;
- Flexibility: all the involved adapted to the way of a tailor-made, needs based approach to best meet the demands.
- The unexpected level of impact the video and the whole campaign had. More people have been reached than initially anticipated.
- While having the agricultural cooperatives in focus, the positive impact is also seen as using the opportunity to work on the Law on cooperatives, on all types of cooperatives, not only on agricultural ones and contributed thereby to a wider debate on priority needs.
- To even have more positive unintended changes, the donor has to be open and flexible enough to allow for such changes to happen.

3.5 PROJECT MANAGEMENT, APPROACHES APPLIED & MODE OF DELIVERY: To what extent has the overall project management been successful? How effective have the approached applied been, in particular the partnership approach as well as the level of contribution to the women’s empowerment?
Finding 8: The overall management has been assessed as good or excellent by over 87% of the anonymously surveyed stakeholders. The partnership approach and the contribution to the women’s empowerment have been rated as partially accomplished.

A total of 41 on-line survey respondents expressed their satisfaction with the overall project management in the following way: only five rated it as poor, 14 as good and 22 as excellent. The key reasons for the poor rating revolve around not being awarded a grant. The ‘good’ grade was mainly justified with a long preparation phase, need for improvement in the communication between the project partners and as an overall positive experience. Most praised the project management for being transparent (all information displayed on the project’s webpage), very present in the ‘field’ across the project sites, approachable and responsive team members, doing a great job at promoting the project and external consultants’ selection (business & legal consultants).

The fact that the project was accompanied with a campaign on TV and social media, was rated also by the focus group members as contributing to the high level of transparency. In their opinion, it showed that the project was unbiased in its approach and has demonstrated sincere intentions to disseminate the information about the calls for support and to explain the possibilities agricultural cooperatives offer to bigger audiences.

It has not been implemented in the ‘business as usual’ manner, but most of the key actors continuously demonstrate high level of commitment and interest in the positive longer term potential. The cooperatives’ members emphasized how positive it was that the project allowed for the agricultural cooperatives to choose an expert for their business plan development (via the pool of experts).

The project has been recognized by almost all the participants for its partnership approach & relationship building focus, clear division or roles and responsibilities. However, it might be good to revise and, if needed, clarify roles and responsibilities among the partners and key stakeholders to ensure improved and transparent communication, regular information exchange, learning and coordination leading to an increased effectiveness and efficiency in the implementation. Several workshop participants pointed out that the project would have benefitted more from having some institutional representatives, like Members of the Parliament, Ministry of Finance etc. more profoundly engaged in the project in order to lobby and push harder for the legislation related changes.

Most also agreed that the partners meet often enough to reflect on the progress, even too often, however, a bigger focus should be put on making those meeting more effective. There is a general feeling of mutual respect, but it should be demonstrated also by respecting the agreed deadlines since the delays negatively affect the entire implementation plan/timelines set. In addition, it has been noted that the project delivery would only benefit from some stakeholders being more interested in the constructive and to the point discussions. All participants agreed that there is a pool of different skills, knowledge and experiences that could be utilized even better as well as exchanged on a more regular basis. The team realized how they tend to take care of the output area or activity they directly manage, rather than paying attention to the project ‘ownership’ aspect. This has led to the conclusion that the improvement of the internal communication and coordination would necessarily result in better messaging and external relationship management, be it with the donor, target audience or the general public.

A Cooperative Manager

The project team and the consultants were very flexible and patient with us, because we often cannot work during the day due to the activities happening in the fields.’
The assessment of contributions to women’s empowerment: Although this aspect of the project has been clearly communicated in a timely manner, MAAC is aware that it will have to invest additional efforts to include more women in the governing structures but also to include them in to different activities. CARE and MEDF need to make additional efforts to keep MAAC on track in order to deliver the expected results since there is an apparent lack of interest for the project from the females (currently, there have been no applications received from women to be a member of MAAC’s assembly). From the agricultural cooperatives perspective, one of the earlier established ones has three women in their Executive Board; one of the newly established cooperatives has two female members in their cooperative and another one, four of them. On the one hand, the lack of a bigger interest and engagement of women as members has been perceived as due to their other obligations and home related responsibilities and on the other, the main obstacle is that they are not registered for having an agricultural holding in the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Water Economy. All agreed that when engaged, women tend to be very proactive and supportive.

3.6. SUSTAINABILITY: To what extent are the benefits of the project likely to continue after the project ends/how has the growth potential been assessed?

Finding 9: Due to the nature of the project and the results accomplished so far it is fair to claim that there is a set of results that are likely to have longer term implications. However, the impact would have been ensured with the continuation of this or a similar initiative over an extended period of time.

The project segments that have so far proved to having the highest sustainability potential are:

- Sustainable legal framework – law on cooperatives, Law on rural development, Strategy for development of agricultural cooperatives.
- Raising awareness for cooperatives – development of sustainable cooperativeness.
- Presenting examples of successful agricultural cooperatives that will act as motivation to the farmers in general to see first-hand the benefits of joining in an agricultural cooperative.
- Lobbying and advocacy for cooperatives – MAAC should advocate before the relevant institutions.

In terms of what should be maintained as positive lesson learned or warning signals to be considered:

- Working with people requires a high level of flexibility and adaptability;
- Need for paying attention and spotting early warning signs for (un)readiness or inertia to fully engage and commit to the project goal over a longer period of time as true supporters and as agreed;
- Clearly define and communicate widely the management arrangements to have all the key stakeholders on the same page;
- Find best tactics to fight inertia and energy level drops due to the nature of certain activities that take longer time to yield results;
- Always plan thoroughly and consider potential risks and delays in order to have enough to implement the activities.

Key recommendations for the remaining time of the project that came from the participants would include the following:

- To invest in the development of a National Strategy for Agricultural Cooperatives in North Macedonia.
- Produce additional materials for promotion on the needs and possibilities of agricultural cooperatives.
To have the project represent the current and new agricultural cooperatives (in a brochure, monography).

To come up with an award for the successful agricultural cooperatives as a token of recognition and promotion of the project accomplishments.

To develop a group of producers as part of the project (joining 2 or more agricultural cooperatives in 1 entity) and if there is a possibility to financially support it.

4. Conclusions & Recommendations

The following section presents a summary of the lessons learned and conclusions drawn from the entire mid-term evaluation process including collecting the data through the brainstorming face to face and on-line sessions with CARE’s project team, workshop and focus group discussions, individual interviews and an anonymous survey. Based on the information collated and analysed, the following conclusions accompanied with related recommendations are described in a way to match what has been identified as having the highest potential for improvement until the end of the project and beyond:

**Implementation & Sustainability**: The project is highly relevant to the current needs in the agricultural sector in North Macedonia. More precisely, it focuses on the weaknesses of the agricultural cooperatives segment, since it simultaneously yet comprehensively introduces changes to the legal framework, development and operationalization of the monitoring and transparency and accountability mechanisms as well as the awareness and level of capacities of the cooperatives and farmers to be able to organize themselves better, become stronger and more competitive in the country and the region. Three years is not enough to see all of these changes take root and become institutionalized since it requires a transformation in how systems and structures work and communicate with each other as well as a significant change in relations, knowledge level as well as perceptions, attitudes and behaviours required to facilitate the change leading to impact. There is clearly a need for the continuation of this project or for drafting of a new one that builds on this initiative’s accomplishments & potentials identified, grows and expands over time, leading ultimately (ideally) to impact through growth and multiplication.

**Project Management & Partnership & Approaches**: The initiative has been recognized for its uniquely transparent, flexible, participatory and inclusive approach. The project management team has been rated highly for their commitment, genuine interest and engagement when it comes to the sectoral theme as well as way or working and collaborating. There is space for improvement identified in terms of additional focus on trust building and clarifying roles and responsibility.

To continue using the same approach recognized as adequate and successful with an open mind for refinements, when necessary. In order to accomplish that until the project ends, the main project partners should come up with a revised, simple but practical system that would help them communicate and coordinate more effectively, on a regular basis and allow for utilization of compatible skills and capacities of all the members involved. A principle of ‘the whole is greater than the sum of its parts’ should be embraced, meaning that the synergy among partners where each of them feeds off one another will contribute to achieving the project outcome to a greater degree.

**Monitoring & Learning**: The project has a good system in place for collecting, analysing and reporting the quantitative data on a regular basis. Partners collaborate, share and compare the figures in order to avoid double counting and reflect on the adjustment or changes needed based on the evidence at hand.
More attention should be paid to the qualitative data monitoring and reporting. It could be done through collecting stories of change/human interest stories or by applying a so called Most Significant Change Technique (MSC) or method used to monitor and evaluate complex interventions, tested and applied across many CARE projects. The needed tools are available for translation and could be partially or fully utilized in this project (might be tested on a small scale until the end of this project/phase and more comprehensively applied in the next phase or project).

**Methodology:** A very low survey response rate (of less than 14%) suggest that the tool was not an adequate one for collecting the opinion of the wider project related audience and direct beneficiaries. Therefore, it is suggested the project team keeps that fact in mind when planning for the final project evaluation. An external evaluator (team) should be made aware and requested to come up with a solution/method/tool that would work better, like mini workshops across the project sites or focus group discussions targeting farmers.

**Gender integration & Women’s Empowerment:** There is evident lack of women being interested to take part or enabled and empowered to take more active part in the management and work of the agricultural cooperatives.

If the funds allow, it would be good to conduct a thorough nation-wide gender analysis in the sector of agriculture to identify underlying causes and main objective and perceived obstacles and how to address them to influence a longer term change of perceptions when it comes to gender norms, but hopefully also attitudes and behaviours. It might be good to see if the representatives of the relevant Ministries and/or the academia would be interested in conducting such a study, even secure the funds, if not possible to ensure it through the project. The study findings would serve as evidence base for the next project phase/similar new projects. CARE’s Gender Equality Framework of building agency, developing relationships and transforming structures could be a valuable blue print to be used for making sure three key domains necessary for bringing about change in a society are being considered and set to mutually reinforce each other.

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**Annexes:**

Annex 1: List of Participants  
Annex 2: Survey Response Summary  
Annex 3: Mid-term Evaluation Workplan  
Annex 4: FGD and Interview Question Template  
Annex 5: Mid-term Evaluation ToR

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1. This relatively new method is based on a qualitative, participatory approach, with stakeholders involved in all aspects of the evaluation and is therefore a shift away from conventional quantitative, expert driven evaluation methods toward a qualitative participant driven approach, focusing on the human impact of interventions.
**Project “Support to Development of Agricultural Cooperatives”**
This Project is funded by the European Union.
Grant Contract: IPA/2017/392898

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Surname</th>
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<th>Participation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Zvjezdana Batkovic</td>
<td>Facilitator</td>
<td>CARE</td>
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<td>Strumica – Hotel SIRIUS</td>
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<td>Dragi Peric</td>
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<td>Irina Hadji Mitova</td>
<td>Project Coordinator</td>
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<td>Tetjana Lazarevska</td>
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<td>Lazar Nedanoski</td>
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<td>Dimitar Smiljanovski</td>
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<td>Svetlana Boshkoska</td>
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*Name redacted for privacy*
This project is funded by: [EU Flag]

This Project is funded by the European Union.
Grant Contract: IPA/2017/392898

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Project implemented by: [Care Organization]

Macedonian Enterprise Development Foundation
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<td>Agricultural cooperative development</td>
<td>2023</td>
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<td>Jane</td>
<td>Training in sustainable farming practices</td>
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<td>Market research and value addition</td>
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This project is funded by: [European Union logo]

Project implemented by: [Care logo]
Draft Methodology & Work Plan

Internal Mid Term Review/Evaluation

19-22 November 2019 (Strumica and Skopje)

By: Zvjezdana Batkovic, CARE Balkans Gender Programme Coordinator

November 15, 2019

Introduction:
As defined in the ToR, CARE Balkans Gender Programme Coordinator will conduct this Mid-term review or evaluation for the ‘Support to Development of Agricultural Cooperatives’ project implemented in Macedonia. This draft methodology and work plan has been discussed with and prepared in agreement with the project team. The initial idea of the assessment consisting of a two-three day workshop with the key stakeholders has been changed in agreement with the project team, based on the desk review and a discussion with the Project Manager and Project Coordinator. In this way, the entire process is envisaged to be more participatory and inclusive, diverse in terms of the input level, number and type of actors included as well as the methods used (focus group discussions and individual interviews; in case of need for even greater inclusion, a survey will be developed, and opinions of more actors collected). The aim is to provide more relevant input on how successful the implementation has been so far and what aspects the most, what the key issues need to addressed/improved or changed in the second half of the implementation and what segments or expected outcomes point in this moment to have the highest sustainability potential.

The project team will provide all the logistics related support for the workshop and send out the invitations for the workshop, FGDs and interviews, as well as ensure simultaneous translation English/Macedonian and the recording of discussions during the workshop and the FGDs. CARE Project Coordinator who speaks both languages will listen to the recordings after the event and summarize the discussions and conclusions to serve as key input for the analysis and report.

Work Plan:
Workshop: A total of 15 participants have been invited and should take part in a day and a half workshop (two CARE staff, one EC representative, six MEDF partner – Macedonian Enterprise Development Foundation, Executive Director of MAAC-Macedonian Association of Agricultural Cooperatives, two representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and three Executive Directors of Agricultural Cooperatives). Most of the participants have been familiar or actively engaged in all the four Outputs or Expected Results.

1) After the introduction and CARE team’s update on the level of accomplishments/project outputs achieved so far since the project start, the RELEVANCE aspect will be discussed and voted about on two questions: 1. To what extent has the project responded to the priority needs of the agricultural sector in Macedonia? WHY? HOW? 2. How comprehensive is the intervention logic? Have the activities implemented been relevant for achieving the objectives defined by the project?

The following scale will be used 1- not at all; 2 - slightly 3- good/to some degree 4-excellent

The second part of this session will address the EFFICIENCY & EFFECTIVENESS. It will be discussed in three small groups and the presentation (presentations via flip charts), using the same scale as above. Here are the questions for small group discussions:

Group 1 on Efficiency; Q: Has the relationship between the devoted resources and results been appropriate and justifiable? / The extent to which project was managed to get value for money from inputs of funds, staff and other resources – please explain!
Group 2 & 3 on Effectiveness: Q: Have the objectives defined by the project, proved to be realistic so far? Why/How so?; To what extent have the objectives of the intervention been achieved? How likely is it that the objectives of the intervention will be achieved until the end of the project? Why? Q: What actors/procedures/implementation methods have proved to be crucial for achieving the objectives so far?; What factors are hindering the achievement of the objectives?

2) During this session it will be explored on what is the division of roles and responsibilities, partnership relations as well as monitoring and reporting mechanisms in place; how does it work and what could be done better. This would be shortly presented and then checked through a short quiz (by raising hands for voting on the following statements):

1. We all know WHO is WHO and WHO does WHAT in the project (clear roles & responsibilities).
2. We gladly share tools, practices and experiences with each other on a regular basis.
3. We share information amongst each other to be more effective and efficient in meeting our joint project goal and objectives.
4. We often meet to discuss issues and identify best solutions.
5. We realize that we have a wide variety of different skills & experiences and we make sure to utilize them for the benefit of all the involved.
6. We feel the ownership, we think of it as ‘our own’, therefore we provide support and encourage each other whenever possible.
7. We act as ONE toward the external audience.

3) This session will address the level of GENDER integration in the project by presenting shortly CARE’s Gender Equality Framework (agency, relationship and structure) and facilitating a discussion of why it’s important to have both men and women included and their particular needs assessed and adequately addressed. The underlying causes of gender inequalities would also be talked about as well as to what degree has the project managed so far to respond to the lack of women’s interest in the project. CARE Gender Marker, a simple self-assessment tool for measuring the level of gender integration (from harmful via neutral, responsive to transformative).

4) The monitoring & reporting will be built upon here through exploring the power of story telling for qualitative monitoring & reporting. Why would that be important, how to do it, who for and in what way/form. The discussion is supposed to introduce quantitative reporting. The discussion is supposed to motivate the key stakeholders to introduce quantitative reporting through collecting the evidence of changes project has had leading potentially to impact on people’s lives, organizational development or catching unintended changes that had not been planned at all.

Exercise: Participants will be asked to think about and discuss in pairs what has changed in their personal or professional lives as a result of this project – one or two stories would be told in the big group.

5) The last session will focus on summarizing the key lessons learned, growth potential and recommendations. Participants in mixed groups (representatives of different stakeholders) will have enough time to discuss the task and come up with final conclusions and suggestions for next steps. The groups should present their results and the others will have a chance to add to each group’s flip charts (which would be exhibited on the meeting room walls).

Written workshop evaluation will be conducted, with only four key questions: what was most useful and beneficial, what was not important or needed-what was not useful, what’s the biggest take away or benefit of the workshop and any additional comments.
Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): Two FGDs will also be held, one with the ‘old’ and one with the ‘new’ agricultural cooperatives’ representative to address the issues of the grant scheme implementation and the info sessions as well as the provision of capacity building and technical assistance provision. About seven participants each should participate. The following questions and their variations, based on the flow of discussion, are planned to be asked during the facilitation:

1. Please present yourself, your Cooperative and in which capacity/role you are involved in implementing the SDAC project.
2. Have you been involved in the planning and design of the project activities? What was your role/contribution?
3. What has changed in your life/Ag. Coop as a result of your participation in this project?
4. What do you see as the biggest success of your work/cooperation/project so far? What are the concrete results accomplished so far/what has changed? What key factor contributed to that? Please elaborate.
5. What do you see as the biggest challenges so far? What did you do to overcome those? What key factor contributed to that?
6. Who did you need to interact with to implement your project (prompt: CARE, MEDF, MAAC, government officials, other Cooperatives)?
7. The two most important things you personally learnt/benefitted from so far within this project?
8. What needs to be done to ensure that positive changes are lasting? What is the key factor for that to happen?
9. Were there any unexpected changes/results from the project (better communication within the community, jobs, less drop outs, less crime/accidents)?
10. What needs to be done to engage more women? How important is that at all?
11. How would you comment the management of the project, in terms of communication with the CARE team, reporting, readiness and timeliness of assistance, quality of guidance etc.

Individual interviews: A total of four interviews have been planned to talk to high level officials who had mainly been engaged in Output 1 related to the law changes: one with two professors from the University of Skopje School of Agriculture, one with the Head of Legal Department of the Ministry of Economy, one with a Member of the Parliament and one with the Executive Director of the Macedonian National Federation of Farmers. They will be asked questions related to their level and scope of involvement and should look as follows: What part of the project did you take part in? What was your role? How would you assess the overall project management and the level of CARE and MEDF? What worked well, what didn’t and why? What should/could be done better over the next year, why and how to accomplish it? What could/should be continued after the project, why, who would do it?
## Annex 1: Workshop Agenda

### Tuesday, November 19

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday/Tuesday morning</td>
<td>All participants arrive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday morning</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
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<td>10:00 – 11:00</td>
<td>Welcome - CARE Macedonia team welcomes all participants</td>
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<td>Introduction of the participants (facilitator)</td>
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<td>House Rules &amp; Expectations – Why are we here?</td>
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<td>11:00 – 11:30</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 – 13:00</td>
<td>Assessing project's level of RELEVANCE &amp; EFFECTIVENESS &amp; EFFICIENCY</td>
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<td>13:00 – 14:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>14:00 – 15:30</td>
<td>Monitoring, Learning, Accountability and Partnership</td>
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<td>15:30 – 16:00</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:00 – 17:00</td>
<td>Gender Perspective - Contribution to Women’s Empowerment (domains of change)</td>
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### Wednesday, November 19

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<td>11:00 – 11:30</td>
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<td>11:30 – 13:00</td>
<td>Key lessons learned and Recommendations to improve the next phase of project implementation – SUSTAINABILITY</td>
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Support to Development of Agricultural Cooperatives Project

Focus group – ‘new’ & ‘old’ Agricultural Cooperatives
Participants: Table of Records (names, organizations, in which capacity, signature)

Focus group questions:

1. Please present yourself, your Cooperative and in which capacity/role you are involved in implementing the SDAC project.
2. Have you been involved in the planning and design of the project activities? What was your role/contribution?
3. What has changed in your life/Ag. Coop as a result of your participation in this project?
4. What do you see as the biggest success of your work/cooperation/project so far? What are the concrete results accomplished so far/what has changed? What key factor contributed to that? Please elaborate.
5. What do you see as the biggest challenges so far? What did you do to overcome those? What key factor contributed to that?
6. Who did you need to interact with to implement your project (prompt: CARE, MEDF, MAAC, government officials, other Cooperatives)?
7. The two most important things you personally learnt/benefitted from so far within this project?
8. What needs to be done to ensure that positive changes are lasting? What is the key factor for that to happen?
9. Were there any unexpected changes/results from the project(better communication within the community, jobs, less drop outs, less crime/accidents)?
10. What needs to be done to engage more women? How important is that at all?
11. How would you comment the management of the project, in terms of communication with the CARE team, reporting, readiness and timeliness of assistance, quality of guidance etc.
Support to Development of Agricultural Cooperatives Project

INTERVIEW GUIDE for government representatives

Background
1) Please very briefly describe since when and in what capacity/ with what responsibilities you have been involved in the project.

Relevance
2) To what extent is the project still relevant at this point it time/implementation stage to the needs of the agricultural sector development?
3) In your view, how well are CARE and partners addressing those needs?

Effectiveness
4) What positive changes and to what degree has the project contributed to so far?
5) Which segment of this project do you see as mostly beneficial for the government and the agricultural cooperatives? Please explain.
6) On a scale of 1 to 4, from not achieved to partially, almost and fully achieved – how would you rate the success of the project so far? Please explain your rating (e.g., if applicable, describe what else could or should have been achieved better, faster, etc.) What do you think it will look like by the end of the project?
7) Which, if any, contextual influences (e.g. political, economical, social situation) have affected the work of the project as well as your own efforts in this area?
8) To what extent were relevant actors and stakeholders included in the program design and implementation, in which activities and capacities?

Efficiency/Management
9) Which, if any, strengths and weaknesses related to the project management did you notice?

Sustainability
10) Looking ahead, which of the achievements made to date are likely to be sustained or expanded without further external support? Which will require further support and what kind of support?
11) What are key factors likely to support or hinder the sustainability of results? What should be done in the second half of the project to strengthen sustainability?

Other
12) Are there any positive or negative unintended effects of the intervention you can observe? Do you have any other observations or comments that you would like to share with us?
Support to Development of Agricultural Cooperatives in Macedonia

The survey had been sent out in early December to 314 email addresses and due to a low response rate (31 responses), the dead-line was postponed and a reminder sent out to all. However, only 12 more took the survey, which makes it 43 responses in total or 13.7%.

Online survey questionnaire- coalition partners/network members, sub-grantees, inter-sectoral groups/committees

Q1. Organization/Institution you represent & Your role in the project – select only ONE answer, or if you had several roles in the project, please select the one you had the greater involvement within the project: (please check this and correct or add full names and their exact roles so no one gets offended – it’s important to keep the confidentiality/anonymity on one hand and on the other to collect relevant info that would help us understand where the opinion, tentatively, comes from)

1. Member of an Agricultural Cooperative (18/43 respondents)
2. Individual farmer (3/43 respondents)
3. Project staff (7/43 respondents)
4. Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Water Economy (1/43 respondents)
5. Government institution (7/43 respondents)
6. MAAC – Umbrella organisation (4/43 respondents)
7. International/donor community (0/43)
8. Local CSO (3/43 respondents)
9. Other, please explain: 8 persons identified under the above categories but in a role of a consultant or advisor in the project.
Q2. What part of the Project have you been involved in? (Multiple answers allowed. Please select all of the activities you were involved in)

Output 1: Revision of the Legal framework on Agricultural Cooperatives
   i. In-depth analyses
   ii. Comparative analyses
   iii. Working group discussions (please explain your overall experience with this activity [positive or negative])
   iv. Study visit (please explain your overall experience with this activity [positive or negative])
   v. Public discussions (please explain your overall experience with this activity [positive or negative])

Output 2: Capacity building of the selected Umbrella organisation
   vi. Assessment of the umbrella organisation
   vii. Mentoring of the umbrella organisation (please explain your overall experience with this activity [positive or negative])
   viii. Implementation of the umbrella’s Business plan (please explain your overall experience with this activity so far [positive or negative])

Output 3.1: Increased awareness on benefits of agricultural cooperatives
   ix. Caravan info sessions (please explain your overall experience with this activity [positive or negative])
x. Individual meetings with projects’ representatives (please explain your overall experience with this activity [positive or negative])

Output 3.2: Development of the monitoring software for MAFWE (please explain your overall experience with this activity [positive or negative])

Output 4: Technical and Financial Support to new and old Cooperatives

xi. Trainings for business plan development (please explain your overall experience with this activity [positive or negative])

xii. Providing consultancy on developing business plans for cooperatives (please explain your overall experience with this activity [positive or negative])

xiii. Legal assistance on procedures and requirements for registration of cooperatives (please explain your overall experience with this activity [positive or negative])

xiv. On the spot visits with projects’ representatives (please explain your overall experience with this activity [positive or negative])

Q3. Have you received a grant from the project?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable
Q4. If you have answered yes and no on the previous question, please explain how was your experience with the grant process?

- Positive. Explain
- Negative. Explain
- I don’t know

**Comments:**
- **Positive**, you needed detailed analysis and the plan developed; My opinion is positive because after a long selection process the most interested participants who had the best business ideas remained; These grants will help us achieve positive results.
- **Negative**, no transparency, I am confident it was all staged/fake process; Negative because our business plan for the establishment of the Agro cooperatives was the only business plan for cereals and the only group of farmers where the composition of the farmers was about 80% Albanian and 20% Turkish, and we were rejected.
Q5. What are the main project achievements so far, from your perspective and based on your experience with the project? Why did they happen? Please explain - Replies summarized:

- One of the main achievements of the project from my perspective is Business Plan 2019-2020 of MAAC, as an umbrella organization of agricultural cooperatives representative, that has directly contributed to raising farmers’ awareness of the benefits and opportunities of joining agricultural cooperatives and promoting the associated economic forms of farming and thus contributing jointly to improving the situation in the agricultural sector and work of the Macedonian farmer. MAAC is the only organization that has taken a step forward in promoting co-operatives and is still making efforts to raise the awareness of individual farmers about the benefits of co-operating in the form of a co-operative and as such is recognizable and representative to sector stakeholders.

- There will be no greater achievement, the amount allocated to the applicant is small
- Drafting a new law
- Grants awarded to 17 PA, field training and prepared business plans. And legal support for formation.
- Association of all organic producers in the region. Democratic representation for the ability of the association and the benefits of the association. Benefits from the project. Vision for further work with the association.
- Practical opportunity for financial support for permanent agricultural cooperatives, which will enable them to lock in the level capacities and performances, but also support the initiatives for the formation of new agricultural cooperatives, thus improving the ownership
- Elaboration of a new law on agricultural associations and introduction of mechanisms for monitoring the operation of agricultural associations in the state.
- I am not satisfied.
- Amendments to the legislation, securing cooperatives in a cooperative way, supporting MAAS and the possibility of developing a single structure through different projects that will support agricultural cooperatives, advocate and lobby through the same. Another positive work is the direct co-operation of the project with all other potential candidates and the opportunity to understand the problems faced by the co-operatives. Again, this happens as a result of the project awarded by the European Union.
- The main achievement is raised awareness on the essence of the existence of the cooperatives and the need for small producers to unite for the purpose of economical operation and high yields.
- I think that it is necessary to have frequent awards directly to the agricultural associations as well as to farmers where there is no need to promote and motivate the farmers to associate.
- Over 50 grant applications and over 600 farmers attending the information sessions. The number of applications exceeded that initially planned due to the success of the information sessions organized by the IFRM. The trainings were organized on a business day when the farmers were free and organized in the places offered by the farmers themselves or by the employees of the RDA. Also, the presence of representatives of successful cooperatives was motivated by the farmers’ motivation to form several initiatives for the formation of agricultural cooperatives.
- The major accomplishments of the project are promoting and advancing the farming community and raising the awareness of the population in our country for the East.
- The main accomplishments are that 8 new ventures are formed with the help of a project that will continue to function.
- The main achievements of the project so far are getting acquainted with farmers for association in agricultural associations. The number of agricultural cooperatives is increasing as a result of the case of a Timothy involved in the preparation of a law on agricultural societies.
- I think that with the current promotion of the project, we have been able to raise awareness of the understanding and the benefits of the partnership at a small, high level. Conducting the informative sessions (with over 800 participants) and the presented successful examples from one region encouraged them and motivated the farmers to come together and to start thinking about a joint organization of activities. The large number of agricultural cooperatives, thanks to the project (12 new
agricultural cooperatives for which we hope for the successful implementation of the business plans) is a basis for engaging into agriculture, an example that can be followed by other farmers. The support and training provided to them by the whole process of applying for technical and financial support has led to the refinement of the level-headed business idea in a business plan, with the implementation of which in the next period we hope that positive examples will emerge for its home-grown environment. Choosing an organization’s umbrella, capacity building and support, I think, of course, we have an organization that puts maximum pressure on advancing the vegetable sector and taking the interests of others together. As a project, we have been fully dedicated to successfully promoting our past activities, raising awareness and building the capacity of the entire group.

- Increase the number of applications received on one side of the initiatives as planned, to be included in the project (technical support). Flexibility of the project team in relation to the promotion of the project activities according to the capabilities of the whole group.

Q6. In your opinion what are the main challenges the project has experienced so far? Why did they happen? Please explain:

- The main challenges of the project is the EU financial support for implementation of 17 business plans of agricultural cooperatives that will contribute for increasing the competitiveness of the agricultural sector in Macedonia, emphasizing in particular the use of the principle of profitable association in order to improve the economy of rural areas in R. North Macedonia. This type of project intervention will improve the capacity to lower cost of production, increasing economies of scale and higher quality of products, thus increased negotiating power and stronger market presence on the domestic and foreign markets.

- We did our best to raise awareness of the importance of community to the target group. But it was, and still is, the biggest challenge of the project. The mentality is hard to change and it takes a much longer time than we had. The awareness campaign, I believe, was not delayed and did not coincide with the period when the project was aimed at achieving that change. We hoped for more youth and women to be involved in the cooperatives and initiatives, but the problem remains.

- Move to the planned timeframe for holding the caravan of info sessions due to the ongoing referendum campaign. Moving to the planned timeframe for financial support to adapt to the target group and at the same time as the time required for registration of new cooperatives.

- The main challenges are to increase the number of farmers.

- Lack of transparency without any explanation.

- Qualitatively designed Business (Business) Plans

- The main challenge in the implementation of the project so far has been to succeed in achieving the successful result and high standards, which happened due to big interest attracted by the project, with all other Agricultural Partnerships.

- Challenges are related to the time frame for awarding grants. This is the result of the procedures for evaluating projects sourced from other countries.

- The whole group mentality. Given that the number of young farmers is insignificant, the number of adult farmers who replicate or apply the same model of functioning; much work needs to be done to raise awareness on the benefits of cooperatives.

- The main challenge was to gather as many stakeholders as possible who are actively involved in the realization of the idea of partnership and the pooling of resources and labour in order to achieve the common goals. It is a big problem to explain that the collaboration is not a grounds for introducing any restrict and confiscate the property of the associates and that the invested funds and labour will be shared with the associates but still remain the property of the associates.

- There is no trust between the farmers to collect at least 10 farmers to form together.

- The main challenges will start when the new text of the law is passed.

- A very slow first phase of the project implementation.
Ministry of Agriculture find it difficult to convince those involved in the need for change and reform in this area.

Q7. How would you rate the quality of the overall project management?

Poor (5) – Good (14) – Excellent (22) = 41 responses

Summary of elaborations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor (5)</th>
<th>Poor (5)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is no criterion by which grants are awarded;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We were encouraged to establish a cooperative and then we didn’t get the grant.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of focus, preference should have been given to different groups than the regular majority.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good (14)</th>
<th>Good (14)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparation lasted for too long, less time left for practical activities;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot has been done, but improvement in communication among project partner needed;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive experience of exposure to new donor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum engagement of the project team and institutions responsible for project implementation in order to improve the co-operation in Macedonia.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent (22)</th>
<th>Excellent (22)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent project management, all project phases transparently presented and info displayed on the webpage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visits to different regions/areas to establish what are the needs for training/capacity building to develop a business plan, contributing at the same time to the project promotion;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great! We have been in contact all the time;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The selection of business and legal consultants was excellent;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall project management since the project has contributed to the positive social change in the agricultural sector, to decentralization of joint actions, empowered the agri sector in Macedonia, has brought us close to the EU standards; contributed to establishing constructive partnerships in the design of the agricultural and rural development policies, ensuring advanced transparency, accountability and decision making at all levels; ensured improved representation at the national level and better regulation of the sector.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q8. What are your recommendations to be taken into account until the end of the project in order to improve its implementation? Who should do that? The summary of key responses follows:

- To direct the concept of support policies for farmers to join in their joint market activities, rather than production functions, which are already well developed and closely aligned with similar EU practices in the Law on Agriculture and Rural Development, thereby providing a solid basis for developing a strong co-operatives in the country, as beneficiaries of responsible state policies, creating a rational policy for the development of a cooperative society.
• It should continue at the same pace, but with timely notification of the terms by which procedures should be completed. Monitor donor activities and indicate what training needs to be done by the co-operative and in what order.
• Increased monitoring on how the funds are being spent and assistance with procurement.
• Supporting co-operatives in market segmentation and professional training of managers.
• Project implementers to play a fair game.
• To focus on realization of signed financial support agreements.
• Implementation is excellent, no suggestions.
• The process needs to be speeded up, many slowdowns are demotivating and not functional.
• The project should be completed within one year so that the cooperatives can show positive financial results in the shortest possible time.
• Greater alignment of activities. The recommendation applies to both partners.
• More business plans that have technology transfer investment needs to be promoted to improve technology in the work of co-operative members and in bringing standards for quality assurance and environmental preservation. This should be carried out by the project members who make the evaluation schemes where the most points for evaluating the business plan would be obtained for these parameters.
• Keeping in touch with each other in order to resolve the problem faster and more efficiently.
• We would recommend increased control and oversight of the implementation of individual projects per applicant. And it should be implemented with joint forces for more effective implementation.

Q9. What project aspects have, in your opinion, the biggest sustainable potential (to be continued after the project is over without external assistance/additional funds); Summary:

• All aspects of project show greater inclusion and positive social change in the rural households involved in the agricultural sector in the region. Raising the awareness of farmers on the benefits of functional cooperative and contribution to greater understanding of the priorities identified in the National Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development have had a big effect. Also, the new Law on Agriculture and Rural Development, which places particular emphasis on the development of modern agricultural cooperatives as the only solution to the problems of agriculture. In addition, the process of bringing our agriculture closer to that of the EU Common Agricultural Policy.
• Technical support to grantees and umbrella organization (such as: sharing information on support applications and other programs relevant to them, assisting with documentation preparation, further capacity building, continuing to share information and presentations to raise awareness of the community, etc.).
• Good marketing, packaging and marketing in foreign markets, continuous education and capacity building.
• Fused new co-ops may have sustainable potential because some of them have already changed their awareness of co-ops and are starting to apply a business model to their operation.
• Awareness Campaign on the opportunities offered by the association. And free application advisory help on all support measures for the association.
• The Law of Association very important.
• Support co-operatives in designing products.
• Co-operatives have the greatest sustainable potential because the project has helped them register and will continue to function after the project.
• Strengthening human capacities in agricultural cooperatives.
• Bringing together farmers to take advantage of the financial opportunities offered by EU funds.
I think it’s early to talk about it, but with the implementation of the Business Plan some things will probably come up that need extra help, or tools (such as the purchase of lab equipment).

It is hard to access funding opportunities.

Evaluation and monitoring, legal assistance, lobbying and using social media for promotion.

Macedonian Association of Agricultural Cooperatives.

Government support needed.

The functioning of the co-operatives will be cost-effective and will lead to self-financing and self-financing of the regular ideas and projects. Supplies of reproductive material are at lower prices and sales prices of finished products are higher. It can be used for branding and marketing and promotion.

Involvement of national and local institutions and organizations into collaboration and to assist in marketing and providing subsidies for agricultural production.

Regular funds are allocated and directly fund co-operatives.

Joint production of cooperatives with defined placement and operation of the purchase center.

Q10: What project achievements/aspects of the project would need further support after the project is over to have impact in the long run? Answered: 42 (1 being: no comment) and can be summarized as follows:

1. On the need for continued support to the existing Agriculture Cooperatives and farmers to ensure sustainability and improvement and the potential for expansion and growth:

   - The support and strengthening of the capacities of the cooperatives and umbrella organization must not stop with the completion of the project.
   - The motivation of farmers to cooperate in cooperatives must continue if we are to have sustainable and successful agricultural cooperatives, competitive and export-oriented.
   - Successful umbrella organization; functional legislation; support for the inclusion of more young members in co-operatives as well as women in co-operatives.
   - Continue to support the establishment of agricultural co-operatives in every respect so that as many co-operatives as possible can be established and farmers familiarized with the benefits thereof.
   - The cooperatives are still insufficiently technically equipped and do not have sufficient professional staff to work on developing cooperative development strategies.
   - Continuous support in all segments toward greater independence.
   - Assistance for evaluation and monitoring of co-operatives’ work after receiving the grants.
   - Mentoring and monitoring of financial aid recipients; investing into developing a new monitoring software. Ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of using resources.
   - Be informed and educated on good practices from the region and the EU.
   - Build further on the established collaboration and networking of the current Cooperatives.
   - Further invest in building managerial capacities of the Cooperative managers.
   - Increased control over work of primary and non-primary grants.
   - In our cooperative, besides the existing ones, we have innovative products that we do not have enough experience with, and it would be helpful if we had consultants for these products while adopting their production and sales. It is necessary to monitor and revise the project results every three months in order to avoid any errors in project implementation.
   - To increase the market perspective of the products, including the market analysis, advisory service and managers (of Cooperatives) continued capacity building (training on new skills and knowledge)
   - Consulting services for selling products on the domestic and foreign markets
   - Allocated to grants solely for post-harvest activities
   - Extension the support process for the formation of new (young) co-operatives that will include young and female population in their structure as well as support for the existing ones for strengthening their capacity to identify new markets, better analyze market dynamics, and understand the prerequisites needed to competitively approach targeted export markets.
- Extension the support process for the formation of new (young) co-operatives that will include young and female population in their structure as well as support for the existing ones for strengthening their capacity to identify new markets, better analyze market dynamics, and understand the prerequisites needed to competitively approach targeted export markets.
- Measures provided by the Rural Development Program to support and develop the community
- Arrangements made on continued support of fixed maintenance costs.
- Support for organization management and development, planning and programming, marketing
- To increase the market perspective of the products, including the market analysis, advisory service and managers (of Cooperatives) continued capacity building (training on new skills and knowledge)
- Establish a team of 8-10 advisors to develop
- Invest into research, comparative analysis, new technology application/digitization
Contents

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1. Introduction

The project Support to Development of Agricultural Cooperatives is funded by the European Union and implemented by CARE and MEDF. The project aims at contributing to higher productivity and competitiveness of agriculture sector. To improve the current situation in the segment of agricultural production of individual farmers, the project works on the increase of market competitiveness and cooperation among farmers in the country, through creating favourable conditions for the development of the existing and creation of new agricultural cooperatives.

A Mid-term review (MTR) is required at this time. The results of this MTR will be translated into Macedonian and shared with project participants, the host government, other development partners, donor, CARE Balkan and CARE Germany. The finding will review current progress, highlight impact, and identify and recommend areas for improvement. The findings will also contribute to CARE’s accountability and will be used to improve the quality of future activities, and the design of future projects. Lessons learned and good practice identified will be highlighted, and used for future program design.

2. Background

2.1 CARE International Balkans

The initial reason for CARE to work in the Balkans were the 90s wars—the destruction, traumatisation, displacement and inter-ethnic hatred they caused. In the first years, CARE focused on humanitarian and life-saving work. CARE’s aim in the Balkans today is to ensure social, economic and political rights of vulnerable and marginalized groups are recognized and fulfilled, contributing to sustainable peace in the region. CARE International has developed two programmes strategies that guide our work in the Balkans.

Socio Economic Inclusion Program

CARE promotes social and economic inclusion of vulnerable minorities and other marginalised groups by contributing to stronger capacities and improved opportunities for these groups to enable them to integrate into society and access their rights. CARE also tries to address the structural conditions and barriers that maintain people in a state of vulnerability and poverty.

Impact Goal: Marginalised, socially excluded and poor are integrated into society and are accessing rights.

- Objective 1: Improved social and economic conditions of vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- Objective 2: Improved institutional and policy response, equal access to rights and services.
- Objective 3: Strong civil society organizations representing vulnerable groups (multiplier).
- Objective 4: Stable, peaceful and tolerant relations across ethnic groups.

Gender Equality Program

CARE’s Gender Program seeks to promote the values and practices of gender equality, diversity and non-violence by strengthening the capacities of local, national and regional human rights and social justice actors and by creating opportunities for innovation, participation, learning, cooperation and advocacy. Women and girls vulnerable to violence, discrimination and poverty will be empowered to reach better life opportunities and social justice by CARE’s engagement and contribution to strengthening sustainability of key regional, national and/or local civil society organizations and networks promoting gender equality and diversity, in the context of social inclusion and non-violence.

Impact Goal: All women and girls have full life opportunities and social justice.
Objective 1: Improved implementation of existing national legislation related to gender based violence and discrimination of women (policies and institutional support mechanisms).
Objective 2: Changed/improved attitudes and behaviors of relevant communities and government institutions towards gender equality and masculinity (combat all forms of discrimination).
Objective 3: Strengthened sustainability of key regional, national and/or local civil society organizations and networks promoting gender equality and diversity, in the context of social inclusion and non-violence.
Objective 4: Enhanced life opportunities for economically and socially deprived women & girls.

2.2 Support to Development of Agricultural Cooperatives (SDAC)

The project Support to Development of Agricultural Cooperatives is funded by the European Union and implemented by CARE and MEDF. The project started in December 2017 and will run until February 2021.

As overall goal, the proposed Action aims at contributing to higher productivity and competitiveness of agriculture sector, as one of the most important sectors of the Macedonian economy. In order to improve the current situation, predominantly in the segment of agricultural production of individual farmers, the project will utilize recommendations of the latest assessments of the efficiency of domestic agriculture and work on the specific objective: to increase market competitiveness and cooperation among farmers in Macedonia, through creating favorable conditions for the development of the existing and creation of new agricultural cooperatives.

Project outputs – expected results are:

- **Op 1**: Legal framework regulating agricultural cooperatives is revised, through a joint work of the project team and associates, MAFWE and a cooperatives’ umbrella organisation.
- **Op 2**: Capacity of a selected umbrella organisation of agricultural cooperatives strengthened.
- **Op 3.1**: Increased awareness on benefits of cooperatives, among farmers, businesses and general public.
- **Op 3.2**: Data base created with information on existing agricultural cooperatives willing to expand and farmers’ groups willing to establish new cooperatives and receive support for development.
- **Op 4**: Technical and financial support provided for the development of 8 existing and creation of 12 new cooperatives

Logframe attached as annex 1.

3. Objectives and Scope

The overall objectives of the MTR are:

1. To assess the project’s current performance against the below criteria for standard evaluations as relevant (e.g. at MTR stage efficiency and effectiveness will have higher relevance than assessing sustainability).
2. A qualitative review of progress against the project logical framework.
3. To make recommendations to improve current project implementation to achieve objectives and maximise impact
4. To identify lessons learned and recommendations to improve future programming.

The criteria for this MTR are:

1. Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency
Relevance: The extent to which the project suited the priorities and policies of the target group, and donor
Effectiveness: The extent to which the project achieved its objectives
Efficiency: The extent to which project was managed to get value for money from inputs of funds, staff and other resources

2. Sustainability: To assess whether the benefits of the project are likely to continue after the project ends.


4. Assessment of the effectiveness of a specific technical approach or methodology used (where relevant)

5. Assessment of the mode of delivery, such as the partnership approach adopted

6. Assessment of the specific management arrangements, such as staffing structure, quality of partnership relationships, technical assistance provided

7. Assessment of contributions to women’s empowerment, with reference to specific domains of change (agency, relationship, structure) (where relevant)

Note: Through the above process the assessment should enable a review of the project log frame and achievement against indicators. A number of the higher-level objectives and indicators will only be assessed/measured by the MTR and the End of Project Evaluation so it imperative that appropriate information is captured to enable this (full log frame is annexed).

The report will be shared with the donor and key project stakeholders (and translated into Macedonian language) to enable broad shared learning, and the opportunity to develop approaches to development support (and so content should be constructive and appropriate for this audience).

4. Methodology

The review will be performed by CARE Regional Program Advisor who will be required to design the methodology for the MTR in the first phase of the assignment, in consultation with the project staff. A mix of quantitative and qualitative instruments and methods will be used, and a participatory approach should be adopted, capturing the perspectives of key stakeholders. The methodology, tools and scheduling used must be gender and target group sensitive.

The methodology will include a phase of documentation review. Key documents will be provided by the project staff, and include:
- Project documents, including proposal, baseline study, other evaluation studies; annual reports
- Review of log frame (noting that reporting on the achievements against a number of indicators are reliant on this MTR)

The methodology will also include:

1. Desk review: 2 days in the period Nov 5-15 and an online meeting with the project team to assess the relevant stakeholders and approach;
2. Workshop: a day and a half with the key stakeholders that have participated in all the 4 outputs/expected results;
3. **Focus group discussions:** one (not more than 7-8 people) with an ‘old’ cooperatives and one with new agricultural cooperatives

4. **Individual interviews:** several individual, one hour interviews with other important stakeholders, who are familiar with only one specific aspect of the project, for example, or are higher ups that will not attend the workshop or focus group discussions. The point is to collect as many different perspectives as possible to be able to verify the data collected and draw conclusions/recommendations for the way forward.

5. **Roles and responsibilities**

   In consultation with the project staff, the reviewer is responsible for:
   - Designing the MTR methodology
   - Implementing the agreed methodology
   - Analysing data
   - Documenting outcomes of the MTR

   The project staff will ensure effective administrative support for the assessment, and provide inputs into the research process, as determined by the agreed methodology. The project staff will also make available preparatory documentation on the project, as per section 4, above. The project staff will support with identification of ethnic translators as necessary. CARE field translator will be available to support translation as needed.

6. **Deliverables**

   Deliverables of this consultancy comprise:
   1. Draft methodology and work plan.
   2. Day and a half workshop with project stakeholders
   3. Focus group discussions with project beneficiaries.
   4. Individual interviews with key stakeholders.
   5. Final report of the MTR, based on feedback from the initial draft
Проект „Поддршка за развој на земјоделски задруги во Македонија“
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Tem/Sa: Workshop for the Midterm project evaluation

Date and place: November 20th, 2019, Hotel Sirius – Strumica

By signing the attendance list we confirm participation in the meeting. We also consent to the use of personal data for statistical purposes and the publication of photographs in reports.
Процен "Поддршка за развој на земјоделски задруги во Македонија"
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Проектот е финансиран од Европската Унија:

![EU logo]

Проектот е спроведуван од:

![Care logo]

Македонска развојна фондација за претпријатија
Проект „Поддршка за развој на земјоделски задруги во Македонија”
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