

**TERMS OF REFERENCE  
FOR CONDUCTING A FINAL EVALUATION  
ON BEHALF OF SOS CHILDREN’S VILLAGE NORTH MACEDONIA  
FOR THE PROJECT “Youth Empowerment Enabling Prospects (YEPP II)”**

*June 2026*

## Introduction

These Terms of Reference (ToR) outline the purpose, scope, methodology and requirements for conducting the Final External Evaluation of the regional project **Youth Empowerment Enabling Prospects (YEPP II)**, funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by SOS Children’s Villages associations in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia, with the support of SOS Children’s Villages Worldwide (CVW) and SOS Children’s Villages International (CVI).

The ToR serve as an official invitation for qualified external evaluators—individual experts, consulting teams or evaluation companies—to submit proposals to carry out the evaluation. The evaluation should be independent, impartial, methodologically sound and participatory, ensuring meaningful engagement of young people, civil society partners, state actors, employers and project teams in all five project countries.

The evaluation should assess the project’s performance against its objectives, impact matrix and BMZ requirements, focusing on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, gender sensitivity and cross-cutting issues. The findings will be used for organizational learning, accountability to BMZ and CVW, and strategic planning for future youth empowerment programming.

*The evaluation should be conducted in the period from September to December 2026 (16 weeks total), including the inception phase, field missions, data analysis and submission of the draft final report. The final approved evaluation report is expected by 31 December 2026.*

## About SOS Children’s Villages

SOS Children’s Villages is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit international organization working to ensure that every child grows up with the care, protection and support they need to thrive. Established in 1949 in Austria, the organization now operates in more than 130 countries and territories.

SOS Children’s Villages focuses on strengthening families, providing alternative care for children without parental care, supporting young people on their path to independence, and working with

communities and partners to create safe and nurturing environments for children and youth. The organization is guided by the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, placing child well-being, safeguarding, participation and non-discrimination at the center of its work.

SOS Children's Villages works across five main programmatic areas:

- Family Strengthening: preventing family separation and supporting vulnerable families.
- Alternative Care: providing quality care for children who cannot live with their families.
- Education and Vocational Training: promoting access to learning and skills development.
- Youth Empowerment: supporting young people toward independence, employability and well-being.
- Emergency Response: protecting children and families affected by crises.

### About the commissioning organizations

SOS Children's Villages International (CVI) provides global strategic direction, programme quality standards, safeguarding policies and support to national associations, including coordination of donor-funded initiatives such as YEEP II.

SOS Children's Villages Worldwide (CVW) is the private German sponsor that supports SOS Children's Villages through fundraising, public relations and donor cooperation, including the management and coordination of BMZ-funded projects.

## 1. Background and rationale

SOS Children's Villages Worldwide (CVW) and SOS Children's Villages International (CVI), together with the national associations of SOS Children's Villages in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia have been implementing the regional project "Youth Empowerment Enabling Prospects (YEEP II) since July 2023. The three-and-a-half-year project, funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), focuses on **the sustainable improvement of the living conditions of 2,770 vulnerable young people** (aged 16-35, at least 50% female) from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia.

The Balkan countries participating in the programme are characterised by high unemployment rates and a low level of economic development. In particular, the high youth unemployment rates are a major challenge for the sustainable development of the region. The situation is particularly serious for vulnerable young people from alternative care and young people with complex socio-economic problems. They often have no access to the labour market due to a lack of qualifications and employability and are trapped in long-term unemployment and excluded from society by aggravating factors such as stigmatisation, low self-esteem, lack of social competence, lack of social network, etc. At the same time, local state actors and civil society organisations lack sufficient skills and efficient methods to successfully support these young people in their labour market integration. Political decision-makers also lack awareness and knowledge to effectively address the socio-economic exclusion of vulnerable young people.

The project responds to the multifaceted challenges faced by young people growing up in alternative care or disadvantaged family environments. A transnational feasibility study conducted prior to project start confirmed the need for a holistic, multi-level approach combining life skills, employability skills, coaching, vocational training, practical work experience, entrepreneurship and institutional capacity building. Moreover, the specific challenges of young people from disadvantaged social contexts are included in general youth employment and social inclusion strategies in a generic way. No specific measures have been identified that comprehensively address the specific needs of this group.

TARGET GROUPS	
Direct target group	<p><b>2.770 vulnerable young people</b> aged 16–35 (at least 50% female)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Unemployed young people and young parents who come from difficult family backgrounds and/or are vulnerable due to poverty, low educational attainment and lack of vocational and/or social skills, disabilities and psychosocial problems.</li> <li>– Young people who are or have been in alternative care and are growing up in a social institution or with foster parents.</li> </ul>
Institutional target group and multipliers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>23 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)</b> from the five Balkan countries, whose capacity to work with young people were built through the project and who took on a co-implementation role in working with young people.</li> <li>- <b>369 professionals</b> trained as trainers in Life skills, Employability, Coaching. <b>20 professionals</b> trained as master trainers in Entrepreneurship.</li> <li>- <b>72 young people</b> trained as trainers in life skills and employability</li> <li>- <b>60 youth leaders</b> trained as trainers in youth work</li> <li>- At least <b>178 enterprises</b> are sensitised on how they can contribute to the inclusion of disadvantaged youth in the labour market</li> </ul>
Indirect target group	At least <b>30,000</b> other disadvantaged young people, community members and other citizens from the 29 project sites <sup>1</sup> will be reached through social networks and actions of the project's strengthened actors (partner CSOs/governmental actors) on youth employability.
Intermediaries and multipliers	<p><b>450</b> public and political actors at local and national level, enterprises and vulnerable youth are sensitised to the situation of youth, especially in relation to their employability, through round tables and workshops on policy recommendations( and commit to take them into account in future local and national policies/strategies/action plans.</p> <p>The actors listed under “Direct institutional target group” also act as facilitators and multipliers by working directly with the target group.</p>

<sup>1</sup> AL - 5 locations (Tirana, Korca, Lezha, Elbasan, Fier)  
 BiH - 6 locations (Sarajevo, Tuzla, Mostar, Zenica, Banja Luka, Brcko district)  
 KOS - 6 locations (Pristina, Gjilan, Prizren, Mitrovica, Peja, Ferizaj)  
 MKD - 6 locations (Skopje, Prilep, Tetovo, Štip, Strumica, Kavadarci)  
 RS - 6 locations (Belgrade, Krusevac, Požega, Sombor, Zaječar, Kragujevac)

The overall intervention logic of the project includes the following:

**Overall objective (Impact):** The socio-economic integration and well-being of vulnerable young people in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia have improved sustainably.

**Specific Objective:** 2,770 vulnerable young people in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia use their newly acquired skills and access to quality support services to better integrate into the labour market.

**Expected Results of the Project:**

- Local actors have strengthened capacities and apply a holistic training curriculum for the socio-economic integration of vulnerable youth.
- Vulnerable young people have improved their life skills, employability skills, vocational competencies and overall socio-economic integration.
- Young people gain initial work experience through internships, or similar practical opportunities that facilitate their entry into the labour market.
- Vulnerable young people motivated to pursue self-employment and the entrepreneurship path are equipped with the skills and financial support needed to register and operate a small business.
- Local and national decision-makers have increased awareness of the needs of the young people at risk and are informed about possible strategies to address the socio-economic exclusion of the target group.

As the implementation of the project is coming to an **end**, an **external independent, participatory evaluation** is planned that will cover the whole project region. The evaluation findings should determine the extent of the implementation outcomes and sustainability of the project, as well as performance of national SOS Children's Villages in all five Western Balkan countries. It will lead to recommendations for improvement of the approach and services for supporting vulnerable youth reaching social and financial sustainability. The evaluation findings will form the basis for future planning, and will provide an opportunity to critically assess strengths and weaknesses of the implementation model, and to identify innovations or improvements for future projects.

Moreover, the evaluation should assess the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the work with vulnerable youth that was carried out on a local level by the 23 local grant-receiving CSOs.

## 2. Purpose, Objectives and Use

The overall objective of the evaluation will be to determine the impact of the project by assessing its **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability**, as well as assess how the project has followed gender sensitive issues. It will generate **lessons learnt and recommendations** for future projects and programmes implemented by the project partners. The evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of project partners and the donor.

### **Specific Objectives of the Evaluation**

- Assess the impact and effectiveness of the activities implemented within the project, including how the holistic YEEP II methodology contributed to changes in the lives of vulnerable young people.
- Evaluate the efficiency of the project in relation to resources used, implementation processes, cost-effectiveness and timeliness.
- Verify the status of indicators as outlined in the project's impact matrix and analyze reasons for under- or over-achievement.
- Provide commentary on the overall project design, the intervention logic and an analysis of the strategy and methodology used
- Assess the sustainability of the project (institutional, social, financial, etc.) at the level of the five implementing SOS CV organizations in the project countries, as well as sustainability of project achievements at the levels of young people, partner CSOs and local actors.
- Examine gender sensitivity and inclusion, considering barriers and outcomes for both young women and young men. Evaluate the implementation of the project in accordance with donor (BMZ) requirements, organizational policies and standards, and the achievement of results as defined in the approved project proposal.
- Identify lessons learned and provide recommendations for improving future youth employability and empowerment programming.
- Provide commentary on the current political, social and cultural factors influencing the implementation of the project.
- To document the communities' attitude towards the project

The evaluation should provide practical, actionable, and context-specific recommendations to support programme development, policy dialogue and future donor-funded initiatives.

### **Key Persons to be Targeted During the Evaluation**

- Young people who participated in project activities (direct beneficiaries).
- Young people who did not participate but may have been indirectly affected.
- Representatives of civil society organizations (CSOs) acting as co-implementing partners.
- Representatives of relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions at local and national levels.
- Employers and private-sector representatives engaged in providing internships, apprenticeships, employment or who participated in other project measures.
- National project teams and programme staff in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia .
- National management: National Directors, Programme Development Departments, Finance Departments.
- Regional project management: Regional Project Manager and Regional Finance Manager.
- Representatives of SOS Children's Villages Worldwide (CVW).

## **Key Users of Evaluation Results in Each Project Country**

- Project level: National project teams and CSO co-implementing partners.
- Management level: National Directors, Programme Development and Finance Departments.
- SOS Children's Villages Worldwide (CVW): for donor reporting and strategic development.
- Regional level (CVI): International Office Region CEE/CIS/ME – for programme quality, learning and strategic planning.
- Global level: SOS Children's Villages International – for organizational learning and donor compliance.
- Donor: BMZ – for accountability, compliance and future cooperation.

### **Intended Use of the Evaluation. The evaluation findings will be used to:**

- Assess the overall performance of the YEPP II project and document achievements.
- Inform strategic planning for future youth employability and empowerment interventions.
- Provide evidence and guidance that will be directly relevant for the planning and implementation of potential future projects
- Strengthen organizational learning across national associations, CVW and CVI.
- Ensure accountability to BMZ and provide evidence for future cooperation.
- Enhance collaboration with governmental and civil society stakeholders working with vulnerable youth.

## **3. Scope of work**

The External evaluator will conduct field evaluation in five project countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia. The time line for the final evaluation will be from September until end of December 2026, including delivery of the final report. The application, reporting, and communication with the SOS CV focal point will be conducted in English, while fieldwork should be performed in the respective local languages.

The evaluation questions should be revolved around the following criteria: Relevance, Effectiveness and Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability, and Project Management and Coordination, as well as gender mainstreaming and inclusion. Based on these criteria, the evaluator should prepare relevant instruments and tools for data collection during the field missions.

## Evaluation Issues and Key Guiding Questions

### Relevance

- To what extent was the project focused on the intended target group?
- Were the selection criteria appropriate and consistently applied?
- To what extent did the project respond to the needs and priorities of the vulnerable youth in each country?
- To what extent have the project adjustments been relevant and justified?
- How well did the project align with national policies, labour market needs and SOS CVI/CVW strategic priorities?

### Effectiveness

- To what extent were the project objectives and planned results achieved?
- How effectively did the training methodology (life skills, employability, coaching, vocational training) contribute to the outcomes for youth?
- Were targeted youth aware of project services and did they access them as planned?
- How satisfied were beneficiaries, CSOs and institutional actors with the interventions?
- Did the project effectively build the capacities of CSOs and key institutions?
- To what extent were the local authorities and companies involved and provided support to the young people and to the project?

### Efficiency

- Were project measures implemented in a cost-efficient manner?
- Were project objectives achieved within the planned timeframe?
- Were financial, human and technical resources used efficiently across the five countries?
- How effective were coordination mechanisms between national teams, CSOs, the Regional Project Manager, the Regional Finance Manager and CVW?

### Impact

- What changes occurred in the lives of young people due to their participation in the project?
- What was the impact against the planned results in terms of employability, skills, well-being and social inclusion?
- Did the project generate broader effects at community, CSO or institutional levels?
- Were there any positive or negative outcomes?
- Is the intervention transformative – does it create enduring changes in norms and systems, whether intended or not?
- Is the intervention leading to other changes, including “scalable” or “replicable” results?

- Sustainability**
  - How many beneficiaries left the project since the beginning and became self-reliant? To what extent are the results which they have reached sustainable and are the results effective after the beneficiaries leave the project?
  - To what extent can activities, results and effects be expected to continue after the project financing (BMZ/HGFD) has ended?
  - Will strengthened CSOs and local partners continue applying the methodology and supporting youth?
  - What mechanisms or relationships support sustainability at local or national level?
  - What are the key risks affecting durability of outcomes?
- Project management and coordination**
  - To what extent were project management and coordination structures adequate and effective?
  - How well did national teams, CSOs, the regional project manager, the regional finance manager and CVW coordinate implementation?
  - How were the partner CSOs involved in the process of management and decision-making and how did this affect the quality of implementation?
  - How effective were monitoring, reporting and communication processes?
  - How well were challenges managed and mitigated during project implementation?
- Gender mainstreaming and inclusion**
  - Is the project responsive to gender needs, social and cultural values, conditions and practices?
  - Has gender been considered in the development and implementation of relevant project measures?
  - To what extent did the project ensure inclusion of marginalised and underrepresented youth sub-groups?

#### 4. Methodology and approach

The External Evaluation should be based on a participatory approach involving and engaging a wide and diverse range of stakeholders. Stakeholders' participation is necessary for accountability, promoting ownership and sustainability, facilitating, and further use of the evaluation recommendations. According to this, the participatory approach is very useful in engaging stakeholders and gaining their insights, experiences with the programmes and the benefits accrued to them as a result of the programmes.

In general, the evaluation methodology is concentrated on the objective observation, description and explanation of changes that have happened in beneficiaries lives due to their participation in the project. The evaluation approach should be results-oriented to provide evidence of both quantitative and qualitative achievements as well as the outputs and outcomes obtained by the programmes (or not). Hence, both primary and secondary data should be used in the evaluation and be collected from a wide and diverse range of primary and secondary sources.

Overall, the methodology of the evaluation should include the following:

- **Document review:** Analysis of key project documents, including the approved proposal, impact matrix, progress reports, financial reports, training materials, CSO reports, feasibility study and other relevant sources.
- **Quantitative data collection** (e.g. through surveys)
- **Case studies:** Analysis of a randomly selected sample of beneficiary files (both active and those who exited the project) to understand individual progress, challenges and contribution of project services.
- **Interviews:** Structured or semi-structured interviews (in-person or remote) with key informants, including youth, CSO partners, government representatives, employers, trainers, national project staff, regional management and CVW.
- **Focus groups:** Group discussions with selected youth, CSOs and institutional partners to explore collective perspectives, experiences and lessons learned.
- **Other methods:** Any additional qualitative or quantitative tools deemed relevant for achieving the evaluation objectives.

#### **The data collection process should include:**

- ✓ Reviewing the project documentation and other relevant information at regional and national levels;
- ✓ Identifying the key stakeholders who are associated with the project to be interviewed, such as the direct participants of the project, implementation partners, key local government representatives, and other service providers.
- ✓ Agreeing on the type of information to be collected and the questions to be addressed;
- ✓ Developing methodological tools for data collection and consulting with project teams on national and regional levels.
- ✓ Conducting interviews, focus groups, surveys (if applicable), case file reviews and on-site observations.
- ✓ Analyzing data using triangulation to ensure accuracy, credibility and reliability of findings.

#### **Safeguarding, Ethics and Protection Measures**

- Full compliance with SOS Children's Villages Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct.
- Safe, respectful, and confidential participation of children and youth.
- Protection of personal data in line with GDPR and SOS policies.
- Prevention of harm, discrimination, or undue pressure during interviews and focus groups.
- Culturally appropriate and gender-sensitive methods.
- Voluntary participation and informed consent for all interviewees, especially minors and vulnerable groups.

#### **Inclusive Participation of Vulnerable Youth**

Given the project's strong focus on vulnerable youth, the evaluation must ensure that particularly marginalized sub-groups are systematically and meaningfully included in the data collection. This includes but is not limited to: young people with disabilities, young women, young parents, youth

from minority backgrounds and those living in remote or rural areas and others. The External Evaluator is expected to:

- Define a sampling strategy that intentionally includes these sub-groups and allows for disaggregated analysis (e.g. by gender, age, disability, location, status of care, parental status).
- Use youth-friendly, accessible and context-appropriate tools (e.g. simple language, visual aids, storytelling, participatory ranking, mapping exercises).
- Organize separate or small-group discussions for young women and other groups where mixed settings might inhibit open sharing.
- Adapt the length, pacing and facilitation style to participants' needs, including breaks and sufficient time for reflection.
- Select physically accessible venues for participants with mobility impairments, or provide alternative arrangements (e.g. home visits, online interviews).
- Where relevant and feasible, provide interpretation (including sign language) or support persons, and ensure that written materials are understandable for participants with low literacy.
- Avoid questions or formats that may re-traumatize participants or expose them to stigma or negative consequences.
- Ensure that participation is fully voluntary, that informed consent (and assent/parental consent for minors where applicable) is obtained, and that confidentiality is strictly respected.

*The evaluator should describe in the Inception Report how the participation of vulnerable groups will be operationalized and how their perspectives will be reflected in the analysis and recommendations.*

### Risk Analysis and Mitigation for the Evaluation

RISKS	MITIGATION MEASURES
<p><b>Access to target groups and stakeholders.</b> Limited or delayed access to young people, especially from remote areas, marginalized groups, or those who have exited project activities; competing time demands of youth, employers and institutional partners.</p>	<p>Use of flexible interview and focus group schedules (including evenings/weekends where appropriate); collaboration with CSO partners and national SOS associations for outreach; use of remote/online tools if in-person access is constrained.</p>
<p><b>Political, socio-economic and security context.</b> Changes in the political or regulatory environment, sensitivities around civil society engagement, or local security concerns that may restrict travel or open dialogue.</p>	<p>Close coordination with national SOS associations on context analysis; adapting data collection plans (locations, formats, sequencing) as needed; prioritizing safe and neutral venues; using remote methods where in-person visits are not advisable.</p>
<p><b>Participation of vulnerable groups.</b> Under-representation of particularly vulnerable sub-groups (e.g. youth with disabilities, young</p>	<p>Targeted sampling strategies, proactive outreach via CSO partners and social services, use of accessible and gender-sensitive formats (small</p>

women, minorities, young parents, internally displaced youth) due to accessibility barriers, stigma, safety concerns or lack of information.	groups, single-gender discussions where appropriate), and reasonable accommodations for participants with disabilities.
<b>Data quality and response bias.</b> Social desirability bias, reluctance to share critical feedback, incomplete or inconsistent documentation, and difficulties in tracing former participants.	Triangulation of data sources (documents, quantitative monitoring data, interviews, focus groups, case files); assurance of confidentiality and anonymity; use of neutral, non-leading questions; clearly explaining the independent status of the evaluation.
<b>Time and logistical constraints.</b> Limited time for field missions in five countries, travel delays, overlapping processes (e.g. audits, project closure activities) or unforeseen events (e.g. health-related restrictions).	A realistic and phased work plan; early agreement on country visit schedules; prioritization of key sites and stakeholders; contingency time reserved in the timeline for unexpected delays.

*The evaluator should include a brief risk analysis and mitigation plan in the Inception Report and update it as needed throughout the evaluation process.*

## 5. Timing and deliverables

The evaluation is planned to be conducted starting from **10 September 2026** and the final evaluation report should be presented by **31 December 2026**.

The anticipated work plan and time schedule to be based on the analysis of the issues and presented in the form of the table below:

Activity	Place	Duration	Expert A	Expert B	Dates
Preparatory work •		[..] day(s) [..] day(s)			
Desk review •		[..] day(s) [..] day(s)			
Field visits •		[..] day(s)			
Data analysis and final report •		[..] day(s)			
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>[..] days</b>			

(Exact number of days to be proposed by the evaluator.)

### Key Deliverables

External evaluator should prepare the following key deliverables:

- Evaluation Design – including the evaluation framework, detailed methodology, sampling strategy, data collection tools, work plan and budget.
- Inception Report – outlining final methodological design, evaluation matrix, stakeholder list, field visit plan, risks and mitigation strategies.
- Developed Evaluation Tools – questionnaires, interview guides, focus group discussion guides, case study templates and consent forms.
- Country Debriefings – short debriefs (oral or written) after each field visit, summarizing preliminary findings and observations.
- Draft Evaluation Report – prepared according to the agreed structure and submitted electronically for feedback from national associations, CVW and CVI.
- Final Evaluation Report – a comprehensive report incorporating feedback from all stakeholders, submitted by 15 October 2026, in English, in electronic format.
- Attachments – including evaluation tools and templates, list of persons interviewed, list of documents reviewed, focus group notes, completed evaluation matrix and any additional materials relevant to the findings.

## 6. Evaluation report structure

The evaluation report should follow the structure bellow. The maximum length of the final report is 30 pages (excluding annexes).

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Table of contents
- Figures and tables
- Acronyms

### SUMMARY

- Background and project context
- Key findings and conclusions
- Recommendations and lessons learned

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Scope of Evaluation – Brief description of the project
- 1.2. Background and Rationale – Purpose and justification of the evaluation; Objectives of the evaluation; Key guiding questions
- 1.3. Evaluation Mission – Duration and process of the evaluation; Team composition and independence (no conflicts of interest); Participation of partners and target groups; External factors influencing the evaluation process

### 2. METHODOLOGY

- 2.1. Evaluation Approach and Methodology – Methodological design and instruments; Measures ensuring protection and safeguarding of participants
- 2.2. Critical Assessment – Suitability, strengths and limitations of the methodological approach

### 3. CONDITIONS FOR EVALUATION

- Local context and problem analysis
- Project's initial potential and changes over time
- Presence and actions of other stakeholders
- Risk factors affecting achievement of project objectives

#### **4. PERFORMANCE OF GERMAN AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS**

- Staff qualification and expertise
- Changes at CVW, CVI and implementing SOS associations
- Internal coordination mechanisms

#### **5. DEVELOPMENTAL EFFECTIVENESS**

- 5.1. Relevance – Alignment of objectives with target group needs and donor priorities; Adequacy of project design and approach
- 5.2. Effectiveness – Quality of planning; Quality of indicators and monitoring system; Quality of implementation; Motivation and ownership of project partners; Quality of project management; Achievement of planned objectives; Other effects at output and outcome level
- 5.3. Efficiency – Cost-effectiveness and optimal use of resources
- 5.4. Impact – Achievement of overall objective; Broader impact, model character and systemic influence; Additional positive or negative effects
- 5.5. Sustainability – Durability of positive effects after project completion; Risks and potential for sustainable impact at organizational and target group levels

#### **6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

- Gender equality
- Human rights
- Inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized youth
- Environmental considerations (if applicable)
- Contribution to organizational goals

#### **7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1. Conclusions
- 7.2. Recommendations
- 7.3. Lessons Learned

#### **ANNEXES**

- Terms of Reference
- Composition and independence of the evaluation team
- Evaluation matrix
- Evaluation plan and time diagram
- List of stakeholders consulted
- Bibliography / References
- Questionnaires and other data collection tools
- Debriefing notes
- System of objectives and indicators
- Any additional annexes as required

### **7. Evaluation team composition and required competencies**

The External Evaluator may be an individual consultant or a team of experts. In the case of a team, roles and responsibilities should be clearly defined, based on the competencies of each member, and aligned with the requirements of this ToR. The evaluation team must act independently and must not have any conflicts of interest with regard to the project, SOS Children's Villages, CSO partners or any other stakeholders involved.

**Method.** The quality and appropriateness of the proposed evaluation methodology, including:

- clarity of the methodological approach;
- alignment with evaluation objectives;
- soundness of data collection tools;
- participatory and ethical considerations;
- safeguarding measures for working with youth.

### **Timetable / Work Plan**

The work plan should be realistic, feasible and aligned with project requirements and the evaluation timeline (10 September – 31 December 2026).

### **Cost**

The financial proposal must be reasonable and feasible given the scope of work, number of countries involved, methodological requirements, and expected deliverables.

### **Qualifications and Experience**

- Advanced university degree (Master's or higher) in Social Sciences, Public Policy, International Development, Economics/Planning, Public Administration, Education or a related field.
- Proven experience in monitoring and evaluation of international development projects, preferably within the sectors of youth employability, education, vocational training, social inclusion or empowerment.
- Demonstrated ability to apply qualitative and quantitative research methods, participatory approaches and triangulation of data.
- Strong analytical and reporting skills, with experience producing high-quality evaluations for international organizations or donors.
- Very good oral and written communication skills in English.
- Experience with BMZ-funded projects is a strong asset.
- Knowledge and/or experience with SOS Children's Villages programmes is considered an advantage.
- Understanding of the socio-economic context in Western Balkan, including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia, will be an asset.

In the case of a team, roles should be distributed appropriately, such as:

- Team Leader (overall coordination, methodological design, lead author of report)
- Qualitative Research Specialist
- Quantitative/Statistical Analyst
- Local Research Assistants (optional)

### **Responsibilities of the Evaluation Team Leader**

- Overall coordination and quality assurance of the evaluation;
- Delivering the evaluation design and inception report;
- Leading the development of methodological tools;
- Ensuring ethical, safeguarding and data protection standards;

- Coordinating data collection across all countries;
- Leading data analysis and synthesis;
- Drafting and finalizing the evaluation report;
- Ensuring that deliverables meet the required quality standards and deadlines.

### **Independence, Ethics and Confidentiality**

- Be fully independent and impartial;
- Avoid conflicts of interest with SOS Children’s Villages, CVW, CVI or CSO partners;
- Respect local cultures, norms and values;
- Maintain confidentiality of all information obtained during the evaluation;
- Ensure safe, voluntary and informed participation of all stakeholders;
- Comply with SOS Children’s Villages’ Child Safeguarding Policy and data protection standards.

## **8. Management arrangements**

### **1. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

The logistics and coordination of the evaluation will be supported by the national associations of SOS Children’s Villages in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia, and by the Regional Project Management team.

The External Evaluator will be responsible for organizing travel, accommodation and field logistics, in coordination with the respective national offices. Local project teams will provide support in arranging interviews, focus groups, and access to documentation and beneficiary files, as needed. The main point of contact for all technical, coordination and contractual matters related to this evaluation will be:

**Kornelija Cipuseva**

Regional Project Manager, YEPP II project

SOS Children’s Villages International

## **9. Budget and payment**

The financial proposal should include all costs related to the evaluation, including:

- professional fees;
- travel expenses (international and in-country);
- accommodation;
- local transportation;
- translation or interpretation (if required);
- data processing and analysis costs;
- any other operational expenses.

The evaluator should provide a detailed and itemized budget in EUR, distinguishing between:

- daily rates for each expert;
- number of working days;
- travel and field visit costs;
- additional costs.

### Payment Schedule

- Pre-payment: An amount of 30% of the agreed contract value will be paid upon signing the contract and acceptance of the inception report.
- Interim payment: An amount of 30% of the agreed contract value will be paid upon approval of the draft report.
- Final payment: The remaining amount of 40% of the agreed contract value will be paid after the submission and approval of the Final Evaluation Report, incorporating feedback from the national associations, CVW and CVI.

*All payments will be made via bank transfer to the evaluator(s) or the contracted company, according to the terms agreed in the contract.*

## 10. Proposal submission

<b>Deadline for submission</b>	Technical and financial proposals must be submitted by: <b>22 July 2026</b>
<b>Recipient</b>	<a href="mailto:info.na@sos.org.mk">info.na@sos.org.mk</a> <b>Subject:</b> YEOP II – Final External Evaluation – Technical Proposal
<b>Required documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical proposal</li> <li>• Financial proposal</li> <li>• CV(s) of evaluator(s)</li> <li>• At least two examples of previous evaluations</li> </ul>
<b>Selection criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Methodology</li> <li>- Timetable and feasibility</li> <li>- Cost</li> <li>- Qualifications and experience of the evaluator(s)</li> </ul>