



SCOPE OF WORK

Final Evaluation of the Project OPPORTUNITY: Fostering Economic and Social Wellbeing of Ukrainian Refugees in Poland and Germany through Opportunity Self-Employment Social Innovation Model (ESF-SI-2024-UA-01-0071)

1. OVERVIEW

Project OPPORTUNITY is an 18-month project (10 April 2025 – 10 October 2026) funded by the European Social Fund Agency under the ESF+ Social Innovation+ Initiative (call ESF-SI-2024-UA-01: Innovative Approaches to Mitigate the Societal Consequences of Russia's War of Aggression Against Ukraine within EU countries). The project is implemented by Foundation International Rescue Committee Poland (IRC Poland) as Coordinator, in partnership with Foundation Microfinance Centre (MFC), IRC Deutschland gGmbH, Perspektive neuStart e.V. and the European Humanities University (EHU).

The project adapts the Opportunity Self-Employment Social Innovation Model (SIM) to the needs of self-employed Ukrainian refugees in Poland and Germany. It strengthens the support ecosystem by equipping Business Development Service (BDS) providers to deliver bundled, tailored non-financial support (including psycho-social support), directly improving refugees' skills and competences for pursuing self-employment, and increasing awareness of their needs among public authorities and other key stakeholders.

IRC Poland is seeking an external evaluation consultant to conduct the final, independent evaluation of the project and to produce Deliverable D001.005: External Evaluator Report, due in the final month of the project.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this consultancy is to objectively evaluate Project OPPORTUNITY against the standard Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) criteria for programmatic assessment and evaluation – relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact – and against the preset project objectives and indicators. The evaluation will ensure that key lessons learned are appropriately addressed, focusing in particular on feedback from key project stakeholders and beneficiaries, and will provide actionable conclusions and recommendations for future programming. The resulting External Evaluator Report (public dissemination level) will be annexed to the project's final report to the Granting Authority.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

1. Desk review: review key project documentation, including the Grant Agreement and Description of the Project (Annex 1), the M&E Plan (D001.003), the Project Action Plan, periodic and implementation reports, research and training deliverables, and monitoring data against the project indicators (T1–T15).

2. Inception report: develop the evaluation methodology, including an evaluation matrix structured around the OECD criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact), evaluation questions, a gender-sensitive mixed-methods approach, data collection tools, stakeholder mapping and a detailed workplan.
3. Data collection: conduct remote key informant interviews and/or focus group discussions with consortium partners (IRC Poland, MFC, IRC Deutschland, Perspektive neuStart, EHU), Business Development Service providers and Training of Trainers participants, self-employed Ukrainian beneficiaries, Project Advisory Board members and other key stakeholders, complemented by online surveys where appropriate.
4. Analysis and validation: analyse and triangulate qualitative and quantitative data, including project monitoring data, and present preliminary findings to the Project Working Group for validation.
5. Reporting: prepare the draft External Evaluator Report, and finalize it on the basis of consolidated feedback, presenting findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations (Deliverable D001.005).
6. Place of work: the assignment will be performed fully remotely (home-based). Interviews, focus group discussions and validation sessions will be conducted online with stakeholders based in Poland, Germany and Lithuania. The working language of the assignment is English.
7. Timeframe: the assignment will run from July to September 2026, with onboarding in July 2026, evaluation and data collection activities in August 2026, and finalization of the report in September 2026, so that it can be annexed to the project final report ahead of the project end date of 10 October 2026.

4. DELIVERABLES

The consultant is expected to submit the following deliverables:

- Inception report, including the evaluation matrix, methodology, data collection tools and workplan – by 7 August 2026.
- Completed data collection and online presentation of preliminary findings to the Project Working Group – by 4 September 2026.
- Draft External Evaluator Report – by 18 September 2026.
- Final External Evaluator Report (Deliverable D001.005), in English, incorporating consolidated feedback and suitable for public dissemination – by 30 September 2026.

5. KEY REQUIREMENTS

Acceptance of deliverables. All deliverables will be submitted in English, in editable electronic format (Microsoft Word; the final report also in PDF). Deliverables will be reviewed by IRC Poland's Economic Empowerment Manager and Senior MEAL Officer, who are jointly authorized to accept the work on behalf of the project consortium. Consolidated written feedback will be provided within five (5) working days of each submission, and the consultant is expected to address it within five (5) working days. A deliverable is considered accepted upon written (email) confirmation by IRC Poland. The final report will be accepted when it responds to the requirements of Deliverable D001.005 and is suitable for public dissemination and for annexing to the project's final report.

Required qualifications and experience of the candidate:

- Advanced university degree in social sciences, economics, development studies, evaluation or a related field.
- Minimum three (3) years of proven experience in evaluating EU-funded and/or humanitarian and development projects, applying the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria.
- Familiarity with EU funding instruments and reporting requirements; knowledge of ESF+ is an asset.
- Experience with refugee/migration and/or economic recovery programming (self-employment, entrepreneurship, business development services); knowledge of the Polish, German and/or Ukrainian context is a strong asset.
- Demonstrated expertise in gender-sensitive, mixed-methods (qualitative and quantitative) data collection and analysis.
- Fluency in English; working knowledge of Ukrainian, Polish or German is an asset.

Other requirements. The consultant must be independent and have no conflict of interest with the project or the consortium partners. The consultant will adhere to IRC's Code of Conduct and Safeguarding policies, ethical evaluation standards and "do no harm" principles, and will comply with GDPR and IRC data protection requirements in the collection, storage and processing of all data. All data, materials and products of this assignment remain the property of IRC Poland. No security clearance is required, as all work is performed remotely.