

FINAL EVALUATION



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PROJECT
AH HAR YA
(NOURISH)
NORTHERN SHAN STATE

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August 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, the consultants would like to thank CARE International in Myanmar for entrusting us with the assignment.

Special thanks to Daw Shwe Nilar who coordinated the assignment and introduced us to the work done by CARE in Myanmar, as well as to Dr. Zin Bo Bo Htet who introduced us to the project and CARE operational team in Lashio providing us with important insights on the project's implementation.

We would like to express our appreciation for the close cooperation and excellent logistic support provided by CARE Lashio team, that accompanied us on the field and help us to better understand the context.

Our appreciation goes also to all community members and their representatives who were pro-active and motivated to share their experiences and showcase their achievements.

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ACRONYMS

FIGs - Farmers Interest Groups

WMCs - Water Management Committees

VDOs - Village Development Organisations

GDP - Gross Domestic Product

NSS - Northern Shan State

LDSC - Latter-day Saints Charities

HHs - Households

FGDs - Focus Group Discussions

KIIs - Key Informant Interviews

DOA - Department of Agriculture

TORs - Terms of Reference

OECD/DAC - Economic Co-operation and Development /
Development Assistance Committee

SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals

WASH - Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

1. Executive summary

This report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Final Evaluation of the project: “Ah Har Ya (Nourish)”. Implemented by CARE International in Myanmar, launched on April 2017, on its first phase for one year, later extended for a further year ending on 30th of June 2019.

The project, implemented in 12 villages of Lashio Township (Northern Shan State) with a target population of 528 Households (HHs), is funded by Latter-day Saints Charities (LDSC). It aims to contribute to food and nutrition security through sustainable agricultural production, access to water for human consumption and farming, women participation in decision makings and improvement on hygiene and nutrition behaviour.

The project is designed to accomplish with the overall objective *“To improve the food and nutrition security of underserved communities in Lashio township, Northern Shan state”* by achieving four interlinked outcomes:

- *Increased production of nutritional food crops;*
- *Increased access to water for home consumption and agriculture;*
- *Increased involvement of women in the management of household and community resource;*
- *Improved hygiene and nutrition behaviours.*

The main purpose of the final evaluation was a) Assessing the project’s achievements and performance against the below criteria for standard evaluations and b) Identifying lessons learned and recommendations to improve future programming in terms of sustainability. To this end, the evaluation team adopted a methodology based on a 'participatory' approach involving main stakeholders throughout the process. It included focus group discussions, key informant interviews and direct observation. The consultants visited 6 out of the 12 villages intervened by the project.

The intervention is relevant to the population in the targeted area, as it addresses identified priorities hampering their livelihood. Furthermore, it aims at introducing good agricultural practices and envisages promoting cooperation through the establishment and capacitation of Farmers Interest Groups (FIGs), Water Management Committees (WMCs) and Village Development Organisations (VDOs) with the objective to create the conditions for sustainable socio-economic local development. It also promotes a change of behaviour in nutrition, hygiene while raising awareness on gender inequalities.

The project has been well managed by the Lashio Office Coordinator and counted with an adequate number of young, motivated and proactive staff that showed positive working dynamics and has established strong links with the community. Nevertheless, its efficiency has been affected by its holistic design and the introduction of new techniques and concepts

(either for the targeted population and the project staff) without enough time to consolidate new knowledge.

The consultants believe that the results have been partially achieved. Activities have been successfully implemented, counted with a good level of participation and have been positively valued by the targeted population. Nevertheless the lay out of the project was very ambitious given its time frame and the challenging environment where it is being implemented, especially in what concerns behavioural changes.

For this type of interventions impact is usually measurable only in the long term. The project has begun to show the value of working in groups (being associated with others), mainly through a learning process laying down the foundation for the potential scale-up of the groups. It has also promoted changes in hygiene and nutrition and helped to introduce new gender equality concepts. Further actions and consolidation of new learnt concepts is needed to ensure real change at the community level.

Sustainability of the actions needs to be ensured by an appropriate follow up of the newly established mechanisms and it can only be granted if they are given further responsibilities beyond the implementation of the project actions. To this end, groups need to be further supported and strengthened in their role as agents of change.

In what concerns gender equality, even if targets have been set too high given the context and timeframe of the project, the fact that women have been placed at the center of community decision making groups and that new gender concepts have been introduced through men's involvement activities represents a positive step in the right direction. On the other hand, it was noted that only a small part of CARE team has been trained on gender and this could lead to contradictory messages in the implementation of actions.

2. Background and context

Myanmar, the second largest country in Southeast Asia in terms of land area, is categorised as a least developed country. Although richly endowed with natural resources (arable land, forestry, minerals and freshwater and marine resources) a large proportion of the country's population is extremely poor and faces severe difficulties meeting the basic households' (HHs) survival needs.

Traditionally an agricultural country, farming activities have declined from almost 50% to 36% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) today, employing about 49% of the country's labour force, according to the data from Myanmar Living Condition Survey 2017, World Bank and FAO . Around 70% of the population lives in rural areas and cultivates small farm tracts.

Rural households in Northern Shan State (NSS) covered by the project are mainly dependent on small-scale agriculture for subsistence and cash crops. Their main cultivation is paddy either in lowland and upland according to their geographical location. Notwithstanding, productivity of the land is low due to poor farming techniques and practices, such as slash and burn, that lead to environmental degradation, which is reflected in the low soil fertility and compensated by the overuse of chemical fertilisers and pesticides.

The aspects mentioned above are compounded by others, such as weak technical knowledge, high cost and bad quality of seeds (and inputs, high levels of indebtedness and a general limited or non-existent access to domestic or international markets.

These factors are leading to the cultivation of illegal crops such as poppies (that with less effort give higher returns), and to a great migration wave (mainly to China) draining workforce in the villages generally dedicated to the cultivation not replaced with machinery due to its high cost.

The villages where the project is implemented are in ethnic areas with on-going conflict between ethnic armed groups and the Myanmar Army. They have limited access to services such as education and health. The consultants have observed that only a very limited number of individuals could understand Myanmar and most of the population is illiterate. On the other hand, basic knowledge of hygiene is limited and there is a major concern regarding the abuse of drugs and alcohol by the men in the communities.

2.1 Project Overview

The project, implemented in 12 villages of Lashio Township (Northern Shan State), is funded by Latter-day Saints Charities (LDSC). It aims to contribute to food and nutrition security through sustainable agricultural production, access to water for human consumption and farming, women participation in decision making and improvement on hygiene and nutrition behaviour.

The overall objective is:

To improve the food and nutrition security of underserved communities in Lashio Township, Northern Shan State.

It is planned to be achieved through the following outcomes:

- *Increased production of nutritional food crops;*
- *Increased access to water for home consumption and agriculture;*
- *Increased involvement of women in the management of household and community resource;*
- *Improved hygiene and nutrition behaviours.*

The target population is 529 HHs from 12 villages (two villages were added in January 2018 - second year of implementation of the project).

The main activities of the project include, among others: provision of technical assistance in agricultural production; extension services and provision of inputs; supporting the development and capacity of FIGs, VDOs and WMCs; construction/rehabilitation of water supply systems; promotion of good hygiene and nutrition practices; facilitation of mini-grants and machinery; life/skills training and better awareness on women roles and value.

2.2 Purpose and scope of the evaluation

As the two phases for a total of 24 months have ended, CARE has decided to conduct a final external evaluation of the project with the objective of:

1. Assessing the project's achievements and performance against the below criteria for standard evaluations:
 - **Relevance:** The extent to which the project suited the priorities of the target groups.
 - **Effectiveness:** The extent to which the project achieved its objectives.
 - **Efficiency:** The extent to which the project was managed to get value for money from inputs of funds, staff and other resources.
 - **Impact:** The extent to what lasting and significant changes have occurred and what the particular project's contribution to these changes is.
 - Higher level changes (Impact): The positive and negative changes produced by the project, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended, for women and men and for the most vulnerable.
 - **Sustainability:** To assess whether the benefits of the project are likely to continue after the project ends.
 - **Monitoring and learning:** The effectiveness of project monitoring and learning processes.
2. Identifying lessons learned and recommendations to improve future programming in terms of sustainability.

The outputs of the evaluation are: Evaluation Plan, Debriefing Presentations (Lashio and Yangon Offices) and Evaluation Report.

2.3 Approach and methodology

The evaluation was conducted by a team of three external evaluators:

1. Maurizio Raineri as Lead Evaluator – Responsible for the evaluation design, debriefing workshop and reporting. He was leading focus group discussions and interviews in 3 villages.
2. Raquel Fernandez Costa as co-evaluator and gender expert – Participated in the evaluation design, conducted interviews and focus group discussions in 2 villages, and contributed to the final report, especially in the gender analysis of the intervention.
3. Min Min Han - Responsible for the facilitation of all field work, she assisted international consultants in 3 villages and conducted alone the field work in other 3 where foreign presence was not authorised. She has reported on the main findings of the interviews and focus group discussions and identified successful stories.

The evaluation approach is results oriented and aims to provide evidence of quantitative and qualitative achievements. Part of the information is derived from the analysis of the available documentation, while discussions with CARE country office, CARE Lashio project's team and villages participants provided the most important insights into the projects activities and its effectiveness.

The exercise was based on a participatory approach that involved Community Based Organisations and targeted population throughout the process. Participatory methodologies used included the following:

- **Focus Group Discussions** (FGDs), using semi-structured questionnaires for qualitative information.
- **Key Informant Interviews** (KIIs), using semi-structured questionnaires for qualitative information from stakeholders
- **Individual Interviews and small group discussions** with men and women separately using semi-structured questionnaires to obtain qualitative information to analyse the different involvement and impact of the action in men and women.
- **Direct Observation and informal interviews** with villagers.

The exercise was based on the following key principles:

- **Participative** – seeking and basing the evaluation on the views of key stakeholders at all levels.
- **Sensitive to gender** - ensuring inclusion of informants and analysing how the program supported and impacted on women and men.
- **Constructive** – emphasis on lessons learnt and recommendations, highlighting strengths and opportunities.
- **Culturally and conflict sensitive** – cultural aspects play an important role, including the understanding of the complexity of cultural identities and the dynamics of power.
- **Qualitative** – for the present exercise a qualitative approach has been selected, supported by a few quantitative data if needed.

The team applied an Internal Quality Control aimed at ensuring that technical specifications of the assignment were respected, in particular: Compliance with the Economic Co-operation and Development / Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) evaluation standards and the terms of reference (TORs).

The evaluators emphasised lessons learned, in the context of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, expecting that CARE will make use of them to reinforce future strategies.

The outlined methodology has allowed the consultants to capture the information needed to present an informed and independent judgment on the project.

The evaluation is supported by a gender analysis that covers: on the one hand, the analysis of the project design with a focus on how gender has been included in the intervention (logic framework, human and economic resources allocated); and on the other hand, the contribution of the project to gender equality and the different impact of the project actions on men and women. Specific gender questions were included in the evaluation matrix.

2.4 Selection of Informants and fieldwork

Simple random sampling was the sampling method used by the evaluators to select 6 villages out of the 12 intervened by the project (see table below). The consultants discussed the selection with CARE Yangon and Lashio, in order to validate its feasibility considering mainly logistical aspects related to the accessibility. International consultants were granted access to 3 villages while national consultant could visit the 6 selected villages.

Given the limitations in accessibility, in the 3 villages visited by the International Consultants, FGDs were conducted with the 3 community groups created by the project. For coherence purposes and given the availability of the villagers, the National Consultant has also interviewed the 3 community groups in the villages that she visited on her own.

		FGDs				Individual Interview
		Ethnicity	VDOs	FIGs	WMCs/ WUGs	Men/Women
Day 1	Long Waun	Shan	x	x	x	x
Day 2	San Yan Ra	Palaung /Kachin	x	x	x	x
Day 3	Mang Kawng	Palaung	x	x	x	x
Day 4	Par Paw	Shan	x	x	x	x
Day 5	Kawng Lay	Shan	x	x	x	x
Day 6	Mang Haung	Palaung	x	x	x	x

A KII interview was done with the Director of the Department of Agriculture (DOA) in Lashio. Group exchanges have been conducted with the staff involved in the project in Yangon and Lashio and interviews were conducted with Lashio staff: Senior Officers and Project Offices as well as the Head of Office.

2.5 Evaluation tools

The consultants consider participative evaluation as “a process in which people join together and develop critical thinking oriented to action and change.”

An evaluation matrix was designed to identify where and how the required information should be collected (means of verification).

Guidelines questions for the FGDs and interviews were developed based on the evaluation matrix and tailored to the respondent groups. The interview guidelines were intended to

be used in semi-structured interviews, taking the form of checklists of themes to be covered rather than actual questionnaires. Semi-structured interviews were held flexible to provide informants more space to voice their ideas, while also leaving room for the evaluators to dig into specific issues raised during the exercise in order to collect more elements to reinforce the lessons learned.

2.6 Limitations to the Evaluation

Some limitations of the evaluation are summarised below:

- Given the security context a travel authorisation had to be requested and International Consultants could only visit 3 of the villages.
- Language constraints have made discussions with respondents challenging; in most of the cases the translation was done from Shan or Palaung to Burmese and from Burmese to English.
- With regards to the gender analysis the consultants cannot isolate the impact of the activities of this project from that of other ongoing actions from other CARE projects implemented in the same area.

3. Evaluation findings

This section is organised in accordance with the five evaluation criteria defined by the OECD/DAC.

3.1 Relevance

The extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor.

The project is highly relevant to the geographical area of intervention as it takes into consideration the socio-economic context in Northern Shan State. It targets key aspects that are undermining the livelihoods of HHs, putting their food security at risk, and hampering improvements in their quality of life; while adopting a long-term perspective.

The project is in line with the priorities of CARE International and its policies, in particular to the Myanmar Rural Long Term Programme 2013-2028 . Moreover, it builds upon previous and actual CARE work and experiences in the area. In its design, it introduces important perspectives such as an initial approach to agroecological farming, as well as, community and women empowerment.

As drafted, the project contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), more concretely to poverty reduction (SDG 1) and ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture (SDG2). Both are directly addressed in the activities as they work towards sustainable livelihood for better access to food and income.

Regarding gender equality (SDG 5), the project directly supports agency of women in productive activities and decision making at community level. This is clearly stated not only in the Project Outcome 3: *Increased involvement of women in the management of household and community resources* but also by the presence of women in the implementation of all the project activities.

The initiative is in line with the Government of Myanmar development policies and plans, for the intervened geographical area and intervention sectors. It should be mentioned that it was not until 2018 that policy plans were approved and endorsed framing Myanmar's development priorities. Although *Ah Har Ya (Nourish)* project was drafted before their adoption, it could be argued that it is in line with them.

In summary, the project contributes to:

- Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (2018-2030) Strategy 4.4 addressing secure access to food, and Strategy 5.5 on climate resilience
- The Agricultural Development Strategy (2018/19 - 2022/23) specifically to: a) Outcome 1.8 on food and nutrition security by implementing designed interventions aiming at increasing nutrition security. b) the Productivity Outcome 2.8 on Good Agricultural, Veterinary and Husbandry Practices by introducing them at the smallest scale.

The project is also in line with the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (2013-2022). It contributes to the thematic areas of livelihoods, education and training, violence against women, economy and decision-making.

The intervention is relevant to the farmers in the geographical target area, as it introduces some innovation on their livelihood related to the adoption of good agricultural practices. It also envisages to promote cooperation through the establishment and capacitation of FIGs, VDOs and WMCs with the aim to create the conditions for sustainable socio-economic local development.

Moreover, the action proposes and firmly addresses the issue of gender equality in a very challenging environment. Gender has been integrated in the project logframe and in the implementation of the actions.

CARE conducted a gender power analysis in the area of intervention in 2013 and the project formulation took into account the findings of the report to identify the focus areas of intervention. Complementary to this, a needs assessment was conducted by CARE to identify key needs of the population and select the villages where the project was to be implemented.

When it comes to evaluate the participation of men and women in the design of the project, it should be said that their involvement was limited. This can be justified by the fact that the level of exposure of the targeted population to development projects has been minimal - for most of the villages this is the first project being implemented in their community - and given the level of illiteracy and awareness this would have been a complex exercise with uncertain results.

Women and men in the villages have evaluated positively the activities of the project, and when asked about their priorities they have identified areas that have been tackled by the project. Both men and women have pinpointed as key priority areas for the community: learning good agricultural techniques, food security and nutrition awareness, water and hygiene. Mainly men have mentioned need for improved accessibility (transport and road upgrade) but both men and women have stated their knowledge gaps and trainings were identified as the number one priority.

The evaluators consider that the context analysis is an appropriate tool to identify priorities; however, an initial in depth villages assessments would have provided elements leading to a more tailored intervention to the different situations, rather than a systematic implementation. In this regard, the consultants have noticed important differences in the degree of development, access to resources and women's empowerment between Shan and Palaung populations.

Shan villages, are usually closer to Lashio, better communicated and more exposed whereas Palaung villages are in remote areas, have less access to resources (especially land, they mainly do shifting cultivation in upland fields) and have reported a high incidence of alcohol and drug abuse among male population that is probably associated with a higher incidence of gender based violence (GBV). Further analysis is needed, but the consultants have also noticed that Palaung women were less proactive in community decision-making.

Overall the reviewers consider the design of the Nourish initiative is well framed in the local context, addresses population's general priorities, and it is supported by a simple Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework. However, the project appears to be too ambitious from an operational point of view, suffering from an imbalance between the number of expected outcomes and the short project life span. This, together with the staff capacity and the remoteness of the villages, has affected the project effectiveness and impact: *a lot to do in too many places in a very limited time.*

3.2 Efficiency

Efficiency measures the outputs (qualitative and quantitative) in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term that signifies that the aid uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results.

During the field visits it was possible to confirm that the project counted with a gender balanced adequate number of young, motivated and proactive staff that showed positive working dynamics and has established strong links with the community.

Overall, the project has been well managed by the Lashio Office Coordinator, who has ensured linkages with other CARE interventions in Northern Shan State that had lead to a wider systematisation process of experience. He has worked towards the consolidation of the team capacity to deliver and provided strategic and methodological guidance while technical staff from Lashio and Yangon Office provided the needed technical assistance.

Some issues related to strategic choices of the project design and operational capacities have impacted the efficiency, affecting by consequence the effectiveness of the intervention.

As mentioned above, the project can be considered of relevance; however its efficiency has been affected by its holistic design and the introduction of new techniques and concepts (either for the targeted population and the project staff) without enough time to consolidate new knowledge. The action would have benefitted from a staff with a more consolidated knowledge, capacity to deliver quality outputs, and ensure effective follow-up of actions, *for instance consolidation of knowledge after the trainings and tailored coaching/mentoring for the FIGs, WMCs, and, VDOs.*

The evaluators identified during the FGDs with the team a need for strengthening the staff capacities especially on development as a concept and as a process, gender and pedagogy (tools to train people with low literacy).

Efficiency in the implementation, especially in what concerns the agricultural interventions, was seriously disturbed by the contractual procedure and the starting date of the project that was overlapping with the annual farming season, hampering the fluent running of the foreseen actions, including: capacity building, quality inputs distributions, technical follow up and yield quantitative and qualitative improvement. Consequently, the project was not able to provide adequate support and sequential follow up of the farmers.

An important delay has been noted regarding the delivery of the machinery. It was distributed in the last quarter of the project due to a series of factors: the Agriculture Senior Project Officer that given her high workload could not identify at an earlier stage of the project the equipment needed for each village, CARE's procurement procedures and the difficulty to find in the local market the equipment.

Another activity that was implemented in the last few months of the project was the delivery of mini-grants; this may have compromised its sustainability, as there has not been enough time to go through the grant return process with the VDOs.

In general, one of the main approaches of the intervention was, at least on paper, the learning process, followed by the technical assistance provided by CARE team. The training

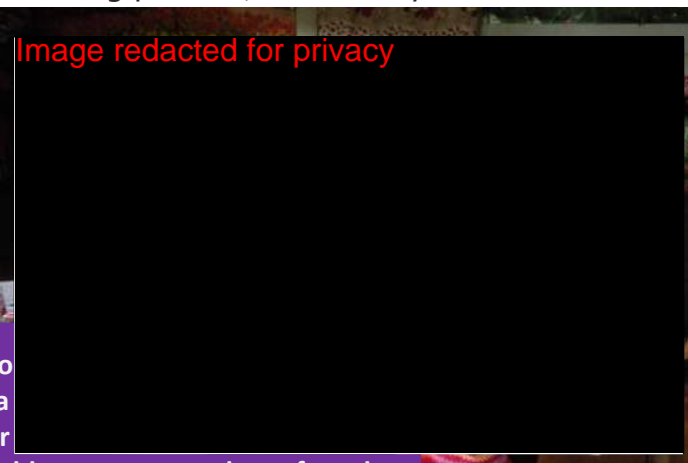


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Woman (Participant) says: "I have many problems to remember after the training, as I cannot take notes"

packages were well thought through, but the villagers have been exposed to many new concepts in a very reduced time, which limited their capacity of absorption and retention.

There has not been time to consolidate new knowledge and ensuring a proper follow up of the actions in a process of learning by doing where the team members are able to provide proper coaching and mentoring. Adding to this, given the context, it is important to

continue developing pedagogical tools specially designed for illiterate people, and improve the existing ones, making

emphasis on visual material facilitating retention of information provided during the training .

Moreover, as it emerged in some communities during the FGDs, the emergency of the implementation responding to the short project calendar and its priorities, do not always respect and match with the participant's availability in terms of time commitment. This latter decreased the efficiency of knowledge sharing due to the turn over of the participants in the training sessions. It should also be said that the degree of participation was diverse between the different villages for two main reasons: the leadership's capacity of mobilisation and the timeframe of the project.

Given the one-year duration of each project phase, there has been a limited margin of manoeuvre to adjust the activities to the harvesting calendar. In addition to this, from June to November accessibility of the villages due to the rains is compromised.

Efficiency in the collaboration mechanisms put in place with the Department of Agriculture has been proven. The DOA in the areas where it has access supported and complemented the theoretical and practical aspects related to the introduction of good agricultural practices e.g. reduction of chemical products and assisting in the procurement of good quality items such as adapted seeds and organic fertilisers. Moreover, the involvement of Lashio's DOA represents an important step in bringing communities closer to state actors reducing reciprocal mistrust.

Concerning gender, it was included in all the outputs of the project mainly by ensuring participation of women in all activities. In fact, women were more pro-active than men in most of the trainings (as shown in the monitoring data of the project) and they were included in all the community groups that have been established by the project. Another important step taken by the project was to involve men in gender awareness training; even if a single training is not enough to provoke a change of behavior it has helped to introduce new concepts and initiate exchanges on the topic of gender amongst community members, sometimes at home and mainly amongst male friends.

On the other hand, it has been noted that most of the staff in the field office have not been trained on gender and those who have received gender training would like to increase their knowledge. Action should be taken in this respect to ensure that all staff is trained so messages passed to the communities are not contradictory.

It is also advisable to provide further training to the people implementing gender actions. For instance, male project officers doing sensitization of men were only provided a training of trainers course of 5 days by the Gender Senior Project Officer of Lashio. Knowledge should be consolidated and pedagogical tools further developed, it is also recommended a follow up and quality check of the trainings delivered in the field.

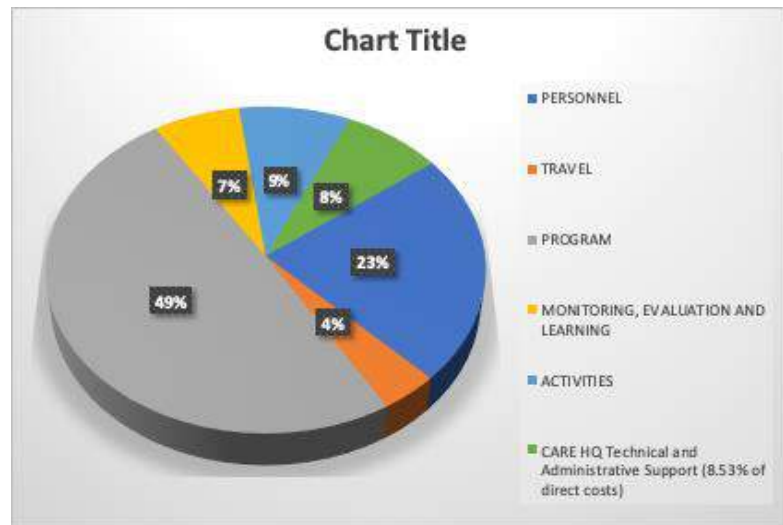
In general, it is the opinion of the evaluators that due to the conditions already mentioned, a less ambitious and focused project in one or maximum two outcomes would have generated higher impact. We would have expected, for example, during the annual review of the project a scaling down of the intervention, when limits in the implementation were already evident. This has probably not happened due to a focus on activities, rather than on outcomes achievements, and as a consequence there has been a decrease in the effectiveness and a limitation on the impact produced by the set of joint actions.

3.2.1 Cost/benefit ratio for the overall project

The Budget is broken down into main headlines as shown below.

The project's cost/benefit is evaluated on the basis of the last approved budget.

Analysing the project costs, considering its specific outcomes and the planned activities within each of the project components; the consultants note that the costs distribution is balanced.



3.3 Effectiveness

Effectiveness of the intervention is defined in terms of achievement or progress towards set targets and goals.

As a first note, the evaluators would like to clarify that the monitoring data for the last trimester was not yet available at the time when the evaluation was conducted, this has somehow limited a more in depth Outcomes' analysis, and probe of the results. Following on this, the evaluation used a qualitative analysis approach.





The project is ambitious but keeps a clear logic that includes a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators with a predominance of the first.

The information collected during the field visit, through the FGDs and KIIs, has been partially triangulated with the information from the periodical reports and some quantitative data. The analysis was completed with information from other documentation to validate, when possible, the results.

The analysis of the effectiveness takes into account the context in which the project is implemented: remoteness of certain villages, cultural aspects, and the efforts made by the Team to implement the activities of the project meeting the deadlines. As mentioned before, the approach more focused on the activity level was at the expense of a more holistic vision focused on the achievement of the outcomes.

The consultants believe that the objectives have been partially achieved. Activities have been successfully implemented, counted with a good level of participation and have been positively valued by the targeted population, nevertheless as explained before the lay out of the project is very ambitious given its time frame and the challenging environment.

Therefore, the use of the colour orange demonstrates that the project is in good track but further action is needed to consolidate achievements and attain results.

Program Outcomes	Achievement
<u>Project Outcome 1: Increased production of nutritional food crops</u>	 Partially achieved: Given the timeframe of the project (see explanation below) it is still too early to measure.
<u>Project Outcome 2: Increased access to water for home consumption and agriculture</u>	 Achieved: all water systems have been installed and are operative.
<u>Project Outcome 3: Increased involvement of women in the management of household and community resources</u>	 Partially achieved: First steps have been done to achieve the outcome, but behavioural change is a long-term process.
<u>Project Outcome 4: Improved hygiene and nutrition behaviours</u>	 Partially achieved: better hygiene practices have been adopted, nutritional knowledge has increased but access to nutritious food is still a challenge and behavioural change is a long-term process.

The level of participation of the target population can be valued as high, CARE Lashio team has identified the entry points of the community; either traditional village leaders or key resource persons. Additionally, with the implementation of this project and the establishment of community groups, a structure for community work has been created; being this an essential step that will help to sustain and consolidate follow up projects.

A more detailed analysis of the effectiveness through its Outcomes is provided below.

3.3.1 Project Outcome 1: Increased production of nutritional food crops

This outcome has been particularly impacted (as explained before) by the lack of alignment of the project implementation with the cycle of farming. Starting the 1st of July and for one year, the first season was missed as the preparation of land and planting is done in July.

Putting into practice new techniques and the consolidated adoption of good agricultural practices varies from village to village with different degree of progress. According to key informants, at the time of the evaluation, in 6 villages out of the 12 the farmers were starting to introduce in a more systematic way the learnt techniques. It is worth to mention that changes and the consolidated adoption of good agricultural practices are the result of a long term complex process and therefore it is difficult to measure in the time span of this

project. Besides we can report on the efforts done by some of the individuals involved in the FIGs to share their acquired knowledge and disseminate good practices

In some of the villages given their remoteness there is not access to the market and inputs. This, adding to the fact that their population has lower levels of literacy, made the implementation of new techniques a mayor challenge. To overcome these difficulties, the project adopted a different approach by distributing alternative seeds and teaching the farmers how to appropriately use fertilisers.

Image and story redacted for privacy



In spite of the challenges and the difficulty in measuring the results, due to the fact that those, interviewed by the consultants, who are using the new techniques have just planted the seeds and still have to harvest, the participants have positively valued the action and demanded more training and follow up in the new introduced knowledge.

Interviewed farmers also quoted that they have been exposed to many new concepts and they have problems to retain all the information provided. It should be noted that very few of the interviewed are literate, therefore they cannot take notes and materials given were scarce (mainly posters) and not always appropriate to people with low literacy. As a

consequence, given the major challenges in the assimilation of knowledge, it will be also difficult to assess if farmers have properly implemented what they learnt.

The home gardening intervention, mentioned by the participants, in some of the villages resulted as an integrative complement to their traditional practices and helped the HHs generating an extra income through the sale of the surplus. For other villagers was almost a new practice that helped them to improve their diet by the reasonable assumption of vegetable while at the same time represented an economy in the HHs budget.

VDOs and FIGs were established under this outcome. Both of them represent a step forward towards increased community actions. Nevertheless, the main tasks of both groups have been linked to the implementation of the activities of the project. This is especially the case of FIGs, that are composed by the villagers who participated in the trainings on agricultural techniques but have not other collective action.

Under this outcome were also provided mini-grants. This action addresses key deficits of the community to increase agricultural production and access to cash to pay for: agricultural inputs, labour and start new income generation activities.

Effectiveness of the mini-grants cannot be fully measured as the mini grants repayments will be done only in November 2019. Notwithstanding, it is advisable for CARE staff to follow up closely; to ensure sustainability and establish solid linkages with community wellbeing (make sure that everyone, especially those most needed benefit from the action).

For this specific outcome, we can finally argue, that the results obtained up to now show a significant commitment from the communities, indicator this of a potential consolidation and systematic use of the acquired technical knowledge. This condition, strength by means of a strong technical follow up, might lead to a substantial increase of the yield and by consequence of the HHs income.

3.3.2 Project Outcome 2: Increased access to water for home consumption and agriculture

This outcome is 100% achieved. Water systems are in place and functioning for the benefit of 384 HHs in 12 communities, according to the provided data. The evaluators observed the systems and the quality, in all the villages visited during the exercise. They were installed under the supervision of CARE team by specialized workers with the support of community members who were involved in the construction of the system.

According to the discussion with the villagers, all expressed high level of satisfaction with relation to the system and the quality of the distributed water. In fact the systems, in most of the case, dramatically reduced the time and the effort required to fetch water (in some of the case more than one hour), ensuring a better quality by reducing the risk of contamination and as a consequence (as mentioned by the respondents but not supported with data) of the related diseases.

The easy access to water together with the sensitisation campaign in Hygiene, generally stimulated better personal hygiene practises contributing in this way to the Outcome 4 of the project as deepened below.

The effectiveness of the water system could be compromised if its sustainability is not ensured. Right now, the management of the water systems is in the hands of a committee formed by volunteers that are engaged to ensure its maintenance. They followed a half day maintenance training and were provided with a maintenance tool box.

Nevertheless, adequate water management plans have not been established and this could put at risk the effectiveness of the action in the medium term.

Water tank in Long Waun Village (Shan)



Water distribution point in Long Waun Village

Image and story redacted for privacy



3.3.3 Project Outcome 3: Increased involvement of women in the management of household and community resources

The project team asked the villagers to appoint 3 men and 2 women for VDOs, FIGs and WMCs. This represents a big first step to increase participation of women in decision making but it should come together with specific support and training in leadership, management and planning to consolidate the position of women in decision making and increase their participation.

The consultants could also observe different gender dynamics between Palaung and Shan Communities. Being apparently more empowered Shan women, they actively participated in the exchanges whereas Palaung women had more difficulties to speak in public.

Out of the activities proposed under this outcome, the consultants were positively impressed by the “Engaging men” workshops. They were highly valued by the population and even if a one of training does not change behaviour it does bring to the table unspoken new concepts.

On the other hand, regarding life skills training- above all the concept of time and stress management- CARE staff have pointed out that the topic and materials are not relevant to this particular context and they did not feel comfortable with it. This activity is to be reconsidered, or even withdrawn to focus in other areas in order to concentrate efforts to increase impact.

Finally, with regards to the distribution of lighter tools, the consultants have noticed that two different actions were implemented: on one hand light tools were given to the HHs as a donation and sometimes an incentive to participate in trainings; on the other hand, two (in some cases three) big machines were given to each village.

A study on current agricultural practices was conducted and tools/machines that would mainly be used to facilitate women's farm tasks were identified. The selected small tools/machines (mills and thresher) were purchased and distributed.

Small tools were distributed to the individuals and HHs and according to the feedback provided to the consultants they are used by all household members. Regarding the big machines, they have considerably lessened the time and energy spent by women in processing their food, time and energy that they can use now for other activities or even to rest.

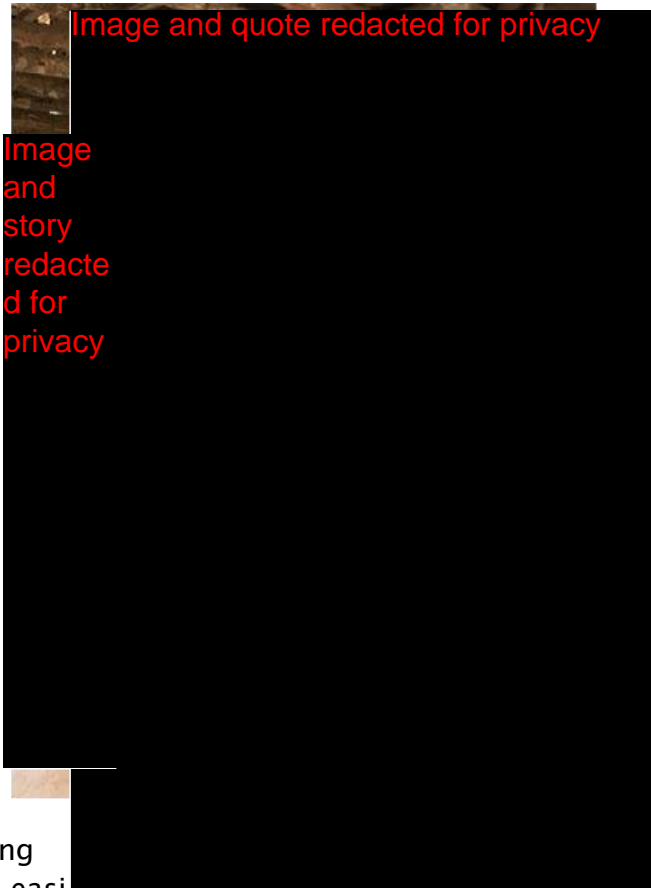
On the other hand, the consultants would like to point out that the machines were provided to the community and only men were involved either in their management or functioning.

While it is a challenge to include women in traditional male dominated activities (using technology) and the community might not easily accept it, development projects represent an opportunity to questioning the current gender dynamics and introduce new practices such as access of women to technology, alternatively if constraints were too strong to have women running the machines, they could have been included in the group as managers.

Given the context it is a positive action for women nevertheless it is more an action that benefits women than a gender action.

Adding to this, despite the effort done to analyse the existing farming systems and practices, seems to the consultants that stronger focus should have been given to increase farms' productivity rather than facilitate post harvesting processing. In fact, there were mainly distributed "rice and oil milling machines", against the 15 previously identified items. The machines are very welcome but limitedly used due to the low farm yield. The consultants consider that it would have been appropriate, as a first step, to prioritise tools to support women's work on the fields focusing in increasing the quantity and quality of their farms' yield.

To finalise, the consultants believe that the fact that women have been placed at community decision making groups is effective and if followed by further leadership skills training will have a greater impact. It is also advisable to continue working with men on one hand and



on the other hand, reach out to key community actors and include them in the gender trainings; for instance, those that are called when there is a case of GBV in the community, teachers, community leaders etc. Notwithstanding, the effectiveness of the actions: life skills training and distribution of tools/machines, under this outcome should be rethought.

3.3.4 Project Outcome 4: Improved hygiene and nutrition behaviours

Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) trainings were highly appreciated, everyone who was asked understood the importance of handwashing and personal hygiene (showering and clothes washing). Once again, there were obvious differences in the standards among the different villages visited. In addition, in the visited villages we could see a waste management system in place, the villages were clean and rubbish bins were seen in the house compounds.

It was also noticed that latrines were installed, with different degrees of success in the villages. In one of the visited villages, latrines were built according to the model in all HHs, however in another village each household had built them differently from one another.

Image and quote redacted for privacy

Latrine at Long Waun (Shan) and Mang Kawng (Palaung)



Regarding nutrition trainings, there has been a change in knowledge and awareness of the importance of changing habits to include more variety on the diet. Nevertheless, when asked about real change in the intake of food, we were told that given the lack of resources and inaccessibility to markets, what they have learnt has been very difficult to implement and seasonal according to the availability of vegetables cultivated in their home gardens.

Behavioural change is a long-term process, for which results are difficult to evaluate in the short term, therefore reinforcement and follow up is needed to ensure real long lasting changes.

To end up this section we would like to include some common notes regarding actions that fall under several outcomes.

Concerning the trainings, they were highly appreciated and much needed. Nevertheless, given the context, the format should be rethought: (1) one time event limits the capacity of absorption, (2) materials given to participants were limited and not always adapted to their needs, especially material tailored to people with low literacy levels would help them to assimilate and remember new concepts, (3) given the time constraints there has been little follow up of the actions; and finally (4) Apart from the farm field schools and the demonstration farm, at the village level for the other main aspects such as nutrition , hygiene, gender, etc. there is no clear mechanism established for knowledge sharing among the villagers

Regarding **Community groups**: VDOs, WMCs and FIGs: (1) they are key for the implementation of the project but their members are confused about their role in the community which raise concerns about sustainability. In particular, for FIGs no common action is foreseen apart from the project activities. WMCs rules are not clear and monetary contribution by villagers very limited to ensure future sustainability. (2) Further support to consolidate them as agents of change is needed. Capacity building in leadership, planning /strategy development and general management skills has not been provided, this is of special importance for VDOs members, especially for women.

On **Women's empowerment**: (1) a good representation of women in decision making mechanisms has been ensured but no specific actions to support them have been implemented. (2) Given the context, men's engagement is a very positive entry point in changing mentality.

3.4 Impact

Impact is defined by the OECD as "The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended".

First it should be noted that for some of the intervened remote communities, the project represented their first experience working with external development agents. For this type

of interventions impact is usually measurable only in the long term; however, we will try to provide some considerations on the likely impact of this action in the given timeframe.

It can be argued that, although still very incipient, the project has begun to achieve some results at impact-level. For instance, the establishment of committees in a more structured and organised way. However, this should be considered as a process that is still ongoing and requires continued support, as well as strategic and methodological adjustments.

Beyond the committees' formation, throughout the two years the project has transferred basic knowledge among the participants in the activities and to some extent to other villagers, enhancing their confidence and abilities to move alone in the future, however this is with unequal results.

The evaluators strongly believe that at this stage, it is key to avoid creating dependency on development aid within the communities, and risking falling into a welfarism approach typical of activity focused interventions. To avoid this, priority should be given to the actions oriented to consolidate local capacities and ownership of decision making processes (outcome oriented).

The project has contributed to an increased awareness in life skills, hygiene and nutrition; generating basic knowledge and some initial changes in behaviour in the intervened communities. Unfortunately, at the time of the evaluation, beside a number of collected success story there was no other qualitative data available. Nevertheless, several respondents mentioned; for example, the introduction of more vegetables in their diet, breastfeeding practices and washing hands and clothes.

A significant number of informants confirmed that they are sharing their experience and knowledge from trainings and practice within group members or among villagers and even with interested people from neighbouring villages, thus increasing the number of (indirect) beneficiaries.

WASH intervention has probably been the most impactful activity from a technical point of view and for its return on the communities in terms of quality of life improvements, as emerged in all the FGDs. Respondents, both from WMCs and users expressed sincere appreciation for the interventions; however, it is still necessary to consolidate the action by supporting the WMCs in defining shared mechanisms to ensure sustainability and enhance the impact.

Nevertheless, despite the inhibitory factors mentioned above in the report, the project has begun to show the value of working in groups (or being associated with others), mainly through a learning process made of knowledge, experience and confidence, laying down the foundation for the potential scale-up of the groups.

A note on the gender impact:

As explained before, the project represents a big first step to introduce gender concepts and women's access to decision making in the concerned villages. Nevertheless, the consultants feel that the gender targets set in the project proposal were too ambitious given

the context and the timeframe. Follow up actions and consolidation of recently established groups is needed in order to have bigger impact. In the previous section examples and recommendations have been given to increase effectiveness and consequently increase the impact.

Men and women have both benefit from the project actions. According to project officers, women have been more actively involved in the activities, above all when they were trainings.

“...At the beginning women were not being involved so we talked to the village leaders and elderly respected persons in the village to explain that women’s presence was required. They passed the message and at the end there were more women than men participating in the activities.... It should be said that sometimes male involvement and participation was a challenge given the big incident of drug use among the targeted population...” (Lashio Office project officer)

Men are still the majority and are more empowered in the community created groups, therefore they continue to have the lead in community decision making. Notwithstanding, a path for women’s inclusion has been created and their presence in the newly created committees has been ensured. If women are supported and the groups’ sustainability is ensured these would represent a substantial change for women. Access to economic and technological resources is still a challenge for women and substantial changes will only come after longer processes and continued work in attitudinal and cultural change. A first step has been taken towards the promotion of gender equality, by questioning the current situation and shining light to the sometimes unfair division of labour.

3.5 Sustainability

Sustainability is defined as the capacity of the target community to maintain the inputs and strategies provided in the framework of the operative action, once the external support of the project has been phased out.

In the context of the evaluated project, the most relevant factor to assess is the process through which sustainability can be achieved in the long term and what initiatives could increase the likelihood that the services will be maintained.

3.5.1 Economic-financial sustainability

One of the positive findings from the evaluation is that farmers, as stated during the interviews, are starting to employ some of the acquired knowledge from trainings in their farms. However, the process is slow, and constraints, mainly related to the short project span and lack of adequate technical support, hampered a smooth implementation and the achievement of concrete results.

From the point of view of communities’ empowerment and capacity building, FIGs and WMCs, benefited from a number of training but lacked time for a proper follow up and coaching. In fact, during the FGDs the evaluators corroborated uneven levels of interest and

empowerment of the groups. It is clear that there is still a need to support the groups in order for them to become agents of change within their communities.

However, foundations have been laid out by the project and a number of lessons have been learnt that will help consolidate the intervention in the following phase by adequately addressing the weaknesses and ensuring greater sustainability.

3.5.2 Socio-cultural sustainability

During the focus group discussions and interviews the consultants observed substantial participation of women. Women also play active roles in some of the groups. This enhances their participation in community decision making and promotes an openness to have their voices heard despite the traditional and conservative environment.

Nevertheless, sustainability of accomplishments regarding gender equality achievements will be compromised if further actions are not taken to consolidate the ongoing efforts. Now that the presence of women in community decision making groups is ensured, further efforts should be made, first to reinforce the structures and make them sustainable and second to capacitate and empower women as agents of change.

The same applies to the gender capacity building actions, given the cultural and social context (areas somehow isolated, affected by on-going conflict and with very traditional patriarchal rules) if further efforts are not taken to continue questioning the gendered norms, behavioural change will not be a reality.

At this point, the project has introduced the concept of gender in the communities and has shown the existing inequalities in the division of labour. Some individuals have gained gender awareness, but it is too early for the intervention to have real impact in behavioural change.

3.5.3 Organisational and institutional/political sustainability.

Local capacity building has been part of the proposed program but somehow was limited on its extent (undoubtedly due to the project time constrain) with relation to the VDOs, which functioning during the project has been more oriented towards mobilising the community to participate in the activities rather than playing an active role as local development promoters. This represents a missed opportunity to set mechanisms in place to strengthen future sustainability

3.5.4 Environmental sustainability

The project provided the communities with important theoretical tools on farming and environmental conservation. Trainings and FIGs experiences enhanced farmer awareness on the risks, for humans and the ecosystem, of the mass utilisation of agrochemical products, and shared knowledge of its proper management. This has resulted in a reduction of their utilisation, that together with the gradual adoption of proper techniques in soil management

will have a positive impact on the environment and on its sustainability, as well as a substantial economic benefit for the producer.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The project represents an intervention of high relevance for the local context providing the communities with knowledge, techniques and inputs to strengthen their livelihoods, generate income, diversify their diet, improve their hygiene and access to water and overall increasing their resilience. It also represents an effort in promoting behavioural change amongst the targeted population on issues related to gender.

During the qualitative exercise the evaluators appreciated several achievements, even if unequal and still incipient, especially related to the different groups and committees formed and capacitated for providing in the future sustainable services to the communities and oriented to be drivers in the socio-economic processes related to the development of their villages.

In general, the project achieved, albeit still incipient, some positive results. However the evaluation shows that the calendar mismatch, the short time available for the implementation of activities and some other constraints that emerged during the project implementation, affected the complete achievement of the planned Outcomes.

The challenges highlighted in this report should become part of the learning process and appropriate strategies should be drawn in the next phase in order to ensure quality and enhance impact and sustainability in the medium and long term.

In conclusion, CARE should CAREfully examine the recommendations put forward below, and make the necessary adjustments.

4.2 Recommendations and way forward

Based on the results of the evaluation and discussions held with CARE, the following set of recommendations is put forward, with the aim to provide elements for a presumed continuation of the project.

For the donor:

- For a project of short span, implemented in problematic areas, it is recommended to discuss and agree with the implementing organisation only reasonable and focused actions that could lead to a concrete impact.
- It is recommended, as much as possible, the alignment of the contractual agreement and starting of the activities according to the context seasonality (farming seasons) in order to ensure a smooth and effective implementation of project activities.

For CARE:

- Design interventions according to the time available in order to favour quality over quantity. It is strongly recommended to focus in one or two outcomes.
- It is recommended to concentrate the action in one or two village tracts in order to enhance and increase the visibility of the project's impact, avoiding dripping interventions and concentrating efforts.
- Staff Capacity building is a continuous process that cannot be limited to a one-time training on topics of a certain level of difficulty. It is important to equip the team with a solid knowledge of the concepts of development, strengthen their analytical skills and provide them with the capacity to have a holistic approach. The latter will help to overcome an activity-focused approach and move towards an outcomes analysis.
- Standard Operation Procedures are extremely important to enhance the accountability of the organisations, however for specific and justified cases derogation of the procedure should be taken into consideration in order to avoid delays affecting the appropriate consolidation of actions.
- In the future, in case there is a follow up of the project, it would benefit from a differentiated, tailor made approach that takes into account that Shan and Palaung villages have different specific needs.
- Capacity building activities will have higher impact if specific pedagogical tools for people with low literacy levels are used. For example, graphic material and hand-outs that will help remember and repeat new concepts. On the other hand, processes should be followed to ensure better understanding and to facilitate behavioural change. It is also recommended to assist the community to establish an internal knowledge transfer system beside the Farmer Field Schools and the demonstration plot.
- Groups (VDOs, FIGs and WMC) should be formed, trained and followed to ensure sustainability beyond the implementation of project activities.
- For key activities: mini-grants and machinery, CARE should assist the community in establishing a fair, sustainable management that benefits the community as a whole.
- Regarding water systems, CARE could support the WMC to ensure that current arrangements guarantee sustainability.

- Gender awareness tools should be better adapted to the local context and limitations. It is important to support women that are members of community groups and use key people of the village as agents of change: leaders, teachers, etc. The work done with men is to be continued as it stimulates debate and questioning

5. Annexes

5.1 Project Gender Mark

The OECD has developed a system to gender mark projects and programmes. The gender equality policy marker is based on a three-point scoring system:

- Principal (marked 2) means that gender equality is the main objective of the project/programme and is fundamental in its design and expected results. The project/programme would not have been undertaken without this objective.
- Significant (marked 1) means that gender equality is an important and deliberate objective, but not the principal reason for undertaking the project/programme.
- Not targeted (marked 0) means that the project/programme has been screened against the gender marker but has not been found to target gender equality.

According to this criteria it could be said that **Ah Har Ya project has a Gender Marker 1: “Significant”**, here below some explanation on the fulfilment of the criteria and comments to improve the project approach to gender.

Criteria		Comments
A gender analysis of the action conducted.	x	In 2013 CARE conducted a gender and power analysis study on the Kachin, Palaung and Shan ethnic groups in Northern Shan state (2013), specific gender analysis of the project villages has not been conducted.
Findings from this gender analysis have informed the design of the action and the intervention adopts a ‘do no harm’ approach.	x	Yes, some of the detected imbalances in access to power have been addressed. Mainly access to community decision making and access to credit, further work in empowerment and capacity building is needed to consolidate achievements.
Data and indicators are disaggregated by sex where applicable.	x	Data collection according to the M&E plan is disaggregated. Nevertheless, there are many indicators that are measured at the household level and it does not help to measure gender impact of actions.

Presence of at least one explicit gender equality objective backed by at least one gender-specific indicator.	x	Outcome 3: Increased involvement of women in the management of household and community resources Indicators: a) No. of women receiving life skills training. b) % of women who (report they) are able to equally participate in household financial decision-making
Commitment to monitor and report on the gender equality results achieved by the project in the evaluation phase.	x	M&E data is disaggregated, nevertheless qualitative data on gender impact is not being gathered. Given the context and time frame measuring behaviour change it is a challenge. Gender has been a central area in this evaluation report.

5.2 Respondent list

			♀	♂
Names redacted for privacy				
Project Team FGDs		CARE Lashio	5	7
Project Team KII	Project Officer	CARE Lashio	1	1
DoA KII	Director	Lashio	1	
Long Waun Shan Village	VDO		2	3
	FIG		2	3
	WMG		2	3
	Men			2
San Ran Yeng Palaung/Kachin Village	VDO		2	3
	WMG		3	2
	Women		3	
	Man			3
Mang Kawng Palaung Village	VDO		2	3
	FIG		3	1
	WMG		2	3
Kwaung Lay Shan Village	VDO		1	4
	FIG		2	2
	Women		5	

	Men			5
	Machine operator			2
Par Paw Shan Village	VDO		3	2
	FIG		2	3
	WMG		1	4
	Women		7	
	Men			4
Mang Haung Palaung Village	VDO		2	3
	WMG		2	3
	FIG		2	2
	Women		4	
	Men			4
Total			67	75

5.3 Guideline questions

Interview Guides (sub-questions derivate from the evaluation matrix)

Village Development Organization

1. When was the group created?
2. How often do you meet?
3. What is your role?
4. How many are you in the VDO? How many women? What is their role? What is the age range?
5. What is the average age of the participants?
6. How does the group work? Structure, tasks and responsibilities? Any written rule?
7. How do you make decisions?
8. What do you know about the project? What will you say is the main objective?
9. Have you been involved in the project design?
10. What is your role in the project?
11. Have you been involved in the project development? If yes, please explain how
12. Which is your relationship with the WMC, FIG?,
13. Do you believe that WMC and FIG are able to support the community? Have they been properly trained? How would you value they work?
14. Do you think this cooperation will go on after the project finishes?
15. Have you been involved in the activities? If yes in which?
16. Do you have regular meeting with the NGO?
17. If yes, please give me example
18. Did you attend any training, workshop etc.. in the framework of this project?
19. What do you like and what you dislike about the collaboration?
20. What has been changed in the community after the implementation of the project?
Do you see the activities as sustainable once the project is finalised?
21. Which would you say are the priorities / needs of the village? To ask men and women and note the differences.
22. How is the project addressing them? Have you seen any impact with regards to income, production and nutrition? Who has most benefited from the actions?
23. What can be improved?
24. Is there any local women association? If yes to ask for an interview with one of the members.

Farmer's Interest Group

1. When was the group created?
2. How often do you meet?
3. How many are you in the FIG? 5 How many women? What is their role? What is the age range?
4. What is the average age of the participants?
5. How does the group work? Structure, tasks and responsibilities? Any written rule?
6. How do you make decisions?
7. What is your role in the implementation of the project?
8. Any collective action? Buying inputs, selling production, travelling?
9. Have you received any training? When?
10. What did you learn? Has it been useful to you? Why?

11. Is the training provided in line with what you need?
12. Are you replicating the new techniques in your fields?
13. Have you shared your knowledge with your neighbours/family?
14. How do you like the new system compared to the old one?
15. Have you received any other support from the project? What? Has it been useful? Why?
16. How do you interact with institutions and other groups? Example water management group
17. What are the successes and failures of the activities? Variation on the production and income/foods available all year round
18. What has been done to tackle the difficulties on the implementation?
19. Who most benefit the project activities within the family?
20. Which would you say are the priorities for your village? What can be improved?
21. How could your experiences help other villages?
22. Will you be applying the new techniques in the future even if the project ends ?
23. What would you say has been the main impact of the project?
24. What would you say has been the main shortfall of the project?
25. Are there any other on-going projects?
26. Do you need any support?
27. How would you evaluate the interaction with CARE How often do they come to the village? Is communication easy?

Water Management Committee

1. When was the group created?
2. How often do you meet?
3. How many are you in the committee? How many women? What is their role? What is the age range?
4. What is the average age of the participants?
5. How does the group work? Structure, tasks and responsibilities? Anything written?
6. How do you make decisions?
7. Have you received any training? When? What did you learn? Has it been useful? Who was trained?
8. Have you received any other support from the project?
9. Do you need any support?
10. What is the main water concern in the village? To see if is the same on men and women, ask both.
11. Was there any local initiative for water management before the project?
12. Since the project started have you change anything regarding water management in the village? What? Why?
13. Do you have a water safety plan? If yes, explain to us how does it work.
14. Any payment for water use? What is the plan for infrastructure maintenance?
15. Are you controlling water quality? How?
16. What is the hydric infrastructure that was sponsored by the project? How did you contribute to the construction?
17. How much water more has the new infrastructure facilitated? What do you use it for? Agricultural production? Household consumption?
18. How do you interact with institutions and other groups? Example VDO, FIG? Is there any other ongoing water initiative?
19. Any action training on environmental issues, hygiene? Reforestation, waste management? Could you please explain any changes due to project actions?

20. How do you evaluate the success of the project? Differences in access to safe water before and after.
21. On your view who has benefited more from the actions of the project? Why? How? – to see the different impact on men and women.

To interview men and women who were involved in the different activities of the project:
Farming/water/nutrition/hygiene/women's empowerment/micro-grant

Men participant

1. Age / economic status (landlessness) /household composition (number of men and women in the household).
2. What is your main occupation / Activity? Farming? Trading? Other...
3. Could you describe a normal working day for you? What time do you wake up and after what do you do? We want to find out division of labour between men and women.
4. How do you decide things at home? Do you discuss them with your wife? Give us an example, how do you decide education, health, food expenses?
5. What are your tasks when farming your land? And your wife?
6. Who goes to fetch water at home? How long does it take? And before the project?
7. In what activities of the project have you participated?
8. What did you do?
9. What did you learnt? Have you participated in any of the learning activities? Could you explain what was the activity?
10. Have you change anything on your routines? Use of time
11. Any change in the way you farm?
12. IF YES:
 - a. Are you using any of the techniques and tools provided?
 - b. How much was your production before? Has it increase?
 - c. Do you believe you can and will continue producing once the project is finished?
13. Are you producing new veggies?
14. Has anything change in your diet? And your children diet?
15. Any change in your hygiene?
16. What have you learnt with regards to nutrition and hygiene?
17. Will you keep on doing it next year once the project has finished?
18. What about your wife is she involved in the project? What do you think she learnt?
19. How would you value the support you receive from the project?
20. What is the major contribution of the project on your view?
21. What do you thing that could be improved?
22. What are the main problems of your village?
23. What do you think are the main problems for women?
24. How is this project addressing them?

Women participant

1. Age / economic status (landlessness) /household composition (number of men and women in the household).
2. What is your main occupation / Activity? Farming? Trading? Other...

3. Could you describe a normal working day for you? What time do you wake up and after what do you do? We want to find out division of labour between men and women.
4. How do you decide things at home? Do you discuss them with your husband? Give us an example, how do you decide education, health, food expenses?
5. What are your tasks when farming your land? And your husband?
6. Who goes to fetch water at home? How long does it take? And before the project?
7. In what activities of the project have you participated?
8. What did you do?
9. What did you learnt? Have you participated in any of the learning activities? Could you explain what was the activity?
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14. Has anything change in your diet? And your children diet?
15. Any change in your hygiene?
16. What have you learnt regarding nutrition and hygiene?
17. Will you keep on doing it next year once the project has finished?
18. What about your husband is he involved in the project? What do you think he learnt?
19. How would you value the support you receive from the project?
20. What is the major contribution of the project on your view?
21. What do you thing that could be improved?
22. What are the main problems of your village?
23. What do you think are the main problems for men?
24. How is this project addressing them?

Department of Agriculture – Key informant

1. What do you know about the project?
2. Have you been involved in the project design?
3. Have you been involved in the project development? If yes, please explain how
4. Have you been involved in the activities? If yes in which one?
5. Do you hold regular meetings with the project staff?
6. Did you attend / gave any training, workshop etc in the framework of this project?
7. What is your opinion on the actions of the project?
8. Could you identify the needs in the area? For men and women?
9. Does the project address the identified needs?
10. Are there other similar actions ongoing in the same area?
11. How do you evaluate the synergies?
12. What do you like and what you dislike about the collaboration?
13. What can be improved?

Field Project Staff

1. How many staff in the field? Men, women? Age group?
2. Please explain your role in the project. Please explain if gender is within you job description;

3. What is your experience of the implementation structure, positive and negative aspects?
4. Have the Project and staff been proactive in addressing emerging problems or weaknesses?
5. What have been the key challenges encountered in the implementation by your organization?
6. How have you addressed these challenges within your organization and with your partner?
7. What capacity building and trainings have been provided to the project staff? Usefulness?
8. Do you think there are other needs in terms of capacity building?
9. If a capacity gap remains at what level would you say it is?
10. To what degree do you think you have addressed population needs?
11. Men's needs and women needs?
12. How do you evaluate the sustainability of the actions?
13. What have you done to involve / work with institutions and coordinate with other development partners?
14. Do you think that the dynamics will continue after the project?
15. Do you think that the project has adequately promoted the participation of women and youth?
16. Please evaluate participation of men and women
17. What would you say has been the main impact of the project?
18. What would you say has been the main shortfall of the project?
19. Which are the main factors facilitating and limiting the realization of the objectives? (internal and external)
20. Looking back at the project design, what changes would you have done in retrospect?
21. What would you see as the main priorities if the project was to have a new phase?
22. Do you think that the activities in the project promote long lasting change?
23. Will there be sustainable after the project ends?

Management Team

1. Who was involved in designing the project? To which extent communities, CBOs, Local authorities have been involved in the project cycle? What degree of ownership?
2. How actual target areas were selected? Please describe the identification process of villages and beneficiaries.
3. Which problems have you encountered with the Logframe and what solutions have been applied?
4. What problems have you encountered in implementing the Work Plan, why? How did you address them?
5. Targeting VS achievements: could you explain reasons behind differences.
6. Can you give examples how the project has been flexible in adapting to actual (local) circumstances and constraints?
7. What monitoring system and tools have been used? What field monitoring has been implemented?
8. What problems have you encountered in the budget expenditure (e.g. unspent budget or increase in beneficiaries)? What solutions have been put in place?
9. What procurement procedures have been used? Are they efficient?
10. What practices and innovations have been applied to ensure best cost/quality ration? What synergies have allowed increases in efficiency?

11. What coordination mechanisms (including decision making) have been organized with field staff? how information has been disseminated to/from partners, what benefits and limitation have you encountered?
12. What has been the key challenges encountered in implementation by your organization?
13. How have you addressed these challenges within your organization and with your partner?
14. Looking back at the project design, what changes would you have done in retrospect?
15. What is your experience of the implementation structure, positive and negative aspects?
16. Do you think there have been more difficulties with staff turnover and reassignments than usual, and in that case why?
17. Which are the main factors facilitating and limiting the realisation of the objectives? (internal and external)
18. What would you say has been the main impact of the project for men and women
19. What would you say has been the main shortfall of the project?
20. Which would you say are the priorities for the second half of the implementation?
21. What can be improved?
22. Could you please evaluate the sustainability of the project?

5.4 ToR



Date: 4th April 2019

CARE International in Myanmar

Terms of Reference: End of Project Evaluation Consultant

Project: Ah Har Ya (Nourish) Project

Location of assignment: Yangon and Lashio

Duration of assignment: Estimated 25 working days

Responsible to: Program Director – Vulnerable Rural Women Program

Main counterparts: Program Manager- Vulnerable Rural Women Program

1. CARE International in Myanmar

CARE is an international development and humanitarian aid organisation fighting global poverty, with a special focus on working with women and girls to bring lasting change to their communities. As a non-religious and non-political organisation, CARE works with communities to help overcome poverty by supporting development efforts and providing emergency assistance. We believe supporting women and girls is one of the most effective ways to create sustainable outcomes in poor communities.

CARE International in Myanmar's programs focus on gender-based violence; food and livelihood security; disaster risk reduction; sexual reproductive health rights; peace-building; and policy and law reform in related areas.

2. Background

Since 2003, CARE has worked to have a sustainable impact on the most marginalized and vulnerable communities in Myanmar's northern Shan state, with a focus on women and girls who experience socio-economic injustice in remote, rural and conflict affected areas. Initially CARE provided humanitarian assistance with a progressive transition to development programs. In April 2017, CARE started the *Ah Har Ya* (Nourish) project funded by Latter-day Saints Charities (LDSC), in 12 villages of Lashio Township, Northern Shan state, with the aim to improve the food and nutrition security of underserved communities through production of nutritional food crops, access to water for home consumption and agriculture, involvement of women in the management of household and community resources, and improvement of hygiene and nutrition behaviors. The *Ah Har Ya* project will end on June 30, 2019.

The Objective and Outcomes of the *Ah Har Ya* project are:

Objective: To improve the food and nutrition security of underserved communities in Lashio township, Northern Shan state.

Outcome 1: Increased production of nutritional food crops

Outcome 2: Increased access to water for home consumption and agriculture

Outcome 3: Increased involvement of women in the management of household and community resources

Outcome 4: Improved hygiene and nutrition behaviors

Regarding the *Ah Har Ya* project the situational appraisal of food and nutrition security was conducted in April 2017 to assess a range of contextual driving factors for food and nutrition security situation, nutrition-related behaviours and agricultural practices in the project area. An Annual Review of this project has been conducted in January 2018 in order to assess the project's progress in achieving its objectives and outcomes.

An end of project evaluation is required at this time. The results of this evaluation will be reported to project participants, host government, other development partners, donor, CARE USA and relevant CARE members. The findings contribute to CARE's accountability and will be used to inform project quality improvements and CARE Myanmar's long term program design and quality improvement. In response to the evaluation, CARE International in Myanmar will develop a management response to the recommendations provided. Lessons learned and good practice identified will be highlighted, and used for future program design.

3. Objectives and Scope

The overall objectives of the evaluation are:

1. To assess the project's achievements and performance against the below criteria for standard evaluations.
2. To identify lessons learned and recommendations to improve future programming in terms of sustainability.

The criteria for this evaluation are:

1. Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact
 - Relevance: The extent to which the project suited the priorities of the target groups
 - 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
 - Impact: The extent to what lasting and significant changes have occurred and what the particular project's contribution to these changes
2. Higher level changes (Impact): The positive and negative changes produced by the project, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended, for women and men and for the most vulnerable.
3. Sustainability: To assess whether the benefits of the project are likely to continue after the project ends.
4. Monitoring and learning: The effectiveness of project monitoring and learning processes.

Criteria should be assessed with reference to gendered benefits, and with a view to analyzing lessons learned.

Key areas of investigation are:

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
Goal To improve food and nutrition security of underserved communities in Lashio township, northern Shan State.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of HHs suffering from moderate hunger ▪ % of HHs suffering from severe hunger ▪ % of targeted HHs with improved access to food through improved food production
Outcome 1 Increased production of nutritional food crops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of targeted HHs who adopt/use at least one improved technology/practice ▪ % of members of farmer interest groups increase in agriculture productivity (target crops) ▪ % of target HHs who use economic resources
Outcome 2 Increased access to water for home consumption and agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ # of water system management plans developed and implemented ▪ % of participating households have increased access to safe and reliable water supplies for home consumption ▪ % of HHs with increased access to water for agriculture ▪ Increase in no. acres of agricultural land with access to water

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
Outcome 3 Increased involvement of women in the management of household and community resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No. of women receiving life skills training ▪ % of women who (report they) are able to equally participate in household financial decision-making
Outcome 4 Improved hygiene and nutrition behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of HHs reporting increase in dietary diversity score ▪ Dietary diversity score for infants and young children ▪ % of target households using recommended hygiene and nutrition practices ▪ % of people with understanding of basic nutrition principles ▪ % of HHs with a decrease in diarrhea cases in target communities by the end of the project

4. Methodology

The consultant will be required to design the methodology for the evaluation in the first phase of the consultancy, in consultation with CARE staff. This may include a mix of quantitative and qualitative instruments. It is expected that a participatory approach should be reflected in the evaluation plan, capturing the perspectives of key stakeholders. The methodology, tools and scheduling will be reviewed to ensure they are gender and target group sensitive.

Key documents will be provided by CARE as background information, and can be used as source of information to be reflected in evaluation plan. These include:

- Project documents, including proposal, other studies such as situational appraisal of food and nutrition security; annual reports
- Results of project monitoring, reviews, reflection processes, and annual assessments
- Other relevant CARE tools and policies, for example CARE International Gender Policy
- CARE Myanmar's program strategies, such as Gender Strategy
- CARE Myanmar's long term program strategy summary documents, and framework

5. Roles and responsibilities

In consultation with CARE staff, the consultant is responsible for:

- Developing the key evaluation questions and designing the evaluation methodology
- Implementing the agreed methodology
- Analysing data
- Documenting outcomes of the evaluation

CARE will ensure effective administrative support for the assessment and provide inputs into the evaluation process, as determined by the agreed methodology. CARE will also make available preparatory documentation on the project, as per section 4., above.

6. Deliverables

- Draft methodology and work plan
- Briefing or workshop of key findings with the project staff/senior management
- Draft report on the findings of the evaluation
- Other: specify
- Final report of the evaluation, based on feedback from the initial draft. The report should cover, but is not restricted to:
 - a. Cover sheet
 - b. Table of contents
 - c. List of abbreviations and acronyms
 - d. Executive summary (maximum two pages with recommendations)

- e. Introduction and background
- f. Summary of methodology including limitations
- g. Results, analysis and discussion as per evaluation criteria. This must include a discussion of approaches, as well as analysis of other specified themes.
- h. Analysis of key lessons learned
- i. Conclusion and recommendations
- j. References
- k. Annexes – Including tools used in the evaluation.

7. Timing

It is anticipated that the work is to commence on 2 May, with the final report due on 15 June, and approximately 10 days will be field based.

8. Selection criteria

- Must have sufficient facilitation skills and ability to use participatory tools for evaluation processes
- Minimum ten years of continuous professional experience in the design, monitoring and review of community development projects
- Demonstrated successful experience in learning participatory, capacity assessment, gender evaluation projects
- High level English language skills are required (written and spoken). Myanmar language skills are desirable
- Experience in Myanmar or in the region is preferred.

9. Submission of Proposal

Interested Consulting firms or individuals are expected to submit a detailed expression of interest (technical and financial proposal) with the following components:

- Proposed methodology and work schedule
- Proposed Budget (Including daily consultancy rate, international travel cost (if applicable), domestic transport and accommodation will be covered by CARE International. Perdiem or meal costs will not be provided).
- A profile of the firm including full name(s), physical addresses, telephone numbers or a copy of CVs of the individual consultant who will undertake the evaluation
- An analytical writing sample of max. 5 pages from a previous evaluation report, preferably of strengthening food and nutrition security

CARE is an equal opportunity employer committed to a diverse workforce. Women, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply. CARE is committed to protecting the right of children. CARE reserves the right to conduct screening procedures to ensure a child safe environment. Interested applicants are requested to submit above-mentioned documents to the address below not later than **18th April 2019**.

Redacted for privacy

