



TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

To Pilot Digitalization Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) – for “Community Empowerment Support to Women and Girls (Component 1)” of the South Sudan Women’s Social and Economic Empowerment Project (SSWSEEP)

1. About CARE

CARE International (CI) is among the world’s largest international non-governmental humanitarian relief and development confederations. Drawing on over 75 years of experience, CARE’s work reaches more than 100 countries to save lives, defeat poverty and achieve social justice. CARE puts gender equality, diversity, and inclusion at the center of all we do because sustainable change requires equal rights and opportunities for all people.

2. Introduction / Background

CARE International is implementing activities under Component 1 - Community Empowerment Support to Women and Girls, which forms part of the South Sudan Women’s Social and Economic Empowerment Project (SSWSEEP) in partnership with UNWomen, providing oversight and technical guidance. The SSWSEEP is a government-led initiative implemented by the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare (MGCSW) with funding from the World Bank, with Component 1 focusing on **strengthening the economic and social empowerment of women and adolescent girls** using Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) plus approach, targeting 30,000 individuals: 17,600 women, 4,400 adolescent girls, 6,400 men and 1,600 adolescent boys. CARE is therefore seeking the services of a qualified consultancy firm/ consultant to pilot the digitalization of selected Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs).

3. Purpose of the Assignment

To contract a qualified consulting firm to support CARE in planning, rolling out, and providing quality assurance for a VSLA digitalization pilot across targeted locations for 50 VSLA groups.

4. Objectives

The overarching objective of the VSLA digitization pilot is to introduce a simple, low-cost, and sustainable digital recording of VSLA groups’ information.

This is expected to act as a community-based monitoring system that improves accuracy, transparency, reduces paper dependency, and ensures continuity of VSLA data beyond the pilot phase. The system is not intended to replace VSLA methodology⁶. Specific Tasks



5. Scope of Work

The assignment will cover, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Technical set-up and configuration of the digitalization workspace (program structures, dashboards, identify open-source channel, roles/permissions)
- Device readiness and connectivity planning (handsets/tablets, data bundles, power/charging, offline workflows)
- Capacity building (Training of Trainers, hands-on coaching, refresher sessions) for CARE staff, Community-Based Trainers (CBTs), women-led organizations and government officials
- Field onboarding support for 50 VSLAs, including troubleshooting for device setup, synchronization with identified open-source and SARVIX (<https://mis.thesavix.org/dashboard/admin>) channels, and user management
- Development of the information and digital literacy training manual, including roll-out training for ToTs and CBTs to deliver community-based training.
- Helpdesk and incident management with agreed service levels during the pilot window, which is from 1st June to 31st July 2026.
- Monitoring, reporting and data quality assurance (usage analytics, integrity checks, issues log) during the pilot window.
- Safeguarding, data protection, and responsible data management, aligned to CARE, government of South Sudan ICT protocols and donor policies.
- Documentation of lessons learned and a scalable implementation roadmap.

A. Technical Environment Setup

- Configure workspace structures, roles and access; support groups to use enabled key features and dashboards on identified open-source channels
- Define data model, naming conventions and user provisioning workflows
- Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for administration, and access open-source channels.

B. Capacity Building & Training

- Design and deliver ToT for CARE technical and field teams; produce user guides and quick-reference materials for low-literacy contexts
- Conduct refresher training aligned with VSLA cycles and staff rotations
- Development of the information and digital literacy training manual, including roll-out training for ToTs and CBTs to deliver community-based training.



C. Field Rollout Support

- Onboard 50 VSLA groups; support device setup, synchronization and account management coaching.
- Run a helpdesk function with response and resolution and maintain an issues and decisions log during the pilot window.

D. Monitoring, Reporting & Quality Assurance

- Produce monthly usage and performance reports (group onboarding, meetings, savings/loans, activity trends) and data integrity checks
- Facilitate quarterly review meetings; implement corrective actions

E. Product Support & Maintenance

- Ensure stable application deployments; advise on updates and features relevant to the pilot while using the identified open-source channel.

7. Methodology

The consultant will propose a pragmatic, phased approach: inception and readiness assessment; configuration; training; pilot onboarding; monitoring & adaptation; documentation. Methods should include hands-on coaching, shadowing during group meetings, rapid feedback loops, and analytics-driven decision-making.

8. Geographic Focus

The 25 VSLA groups are in Western Bahr el Ghazal (Wau and Jur River) and 25 in Eastern Equatoria (Torit and Magwi), while the main dashboard will be set up at CARE SSD Country office for administrative management, and overall maintenance.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

CARE International South Sudan (CARE SSD) in collaboration with UNWOMEN

- Select 50 VSLA groups and locations, coordinate field logistics and stakeholder engagement
- Provide resources for purchase of devices (or confirm availability), transport and access facilitation
- Ensure safeguarding oversight and alignment to CARE policies

Consultant/Firm during the pilot window

- Delivery of tasks outlined in this ToR, including configuration, training, field support, and reporting



- Procurement and fully set-up of the required and appropriate devices for the digitalization project
- Maintain helpdesk and incident management; ensure data quality practices
- Coordinate with CARE SSD and vendor on escalations and product matters
- Provide safe and appropriate platform-level support, stability and security; respond to escalated issues

10. Deliverables

- Inception report with detailed workplan, risk register, and training plan
- Configured open-source workspace and admin Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Training package (ToT agenda, slide deck, handouts, quick guides)
- Monthly usage & performance reports plus data quality checks
- Quarterly review notes and issue-resolution log
- Final pilot report with learning and scalable roadmap

11. Implementation Monitoring & Data Requirements

- Analytics on group onboarding, attendance, savings/loans, arrears, device usage
- Data governance procedures (consent, access control, anonymization for reporting)
- Templates for monthly dashboards and data quality checks

12. Ethical Considerations & Safeguarding

The consultant must comply with CARE's global and South Sudan safeguarding policies, including informed consent, secure data storage, and anonymization of all personally identifiable data. Special care is required for engagement with at-risk populations in line with survivor-centered and do-no-harm principles. Compliance with donor (World Bank) data privacy requirements and Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) is mandatory.



13. Timeline

Indicative workplan schedule (subject to agreement at contract signature).

Phase / Deliverable	Duration (weeks)	Week Range	Start Date	End Date
Inception & readiness assessment; detailed workplan	2	Week 1–2	2026-06-01	2026-06-14
Configuration & admin SOPs; training package design	3	Week 3–5	2026-06-15	2026-07-05
ToT delivery & refresher planning	2	Week 6–7	2026-07-06	2026-07-19
Pilot onboarding of 50 VSLAs; helpdesk live	4	Week 8–11	2026-07-20	2026-08-16
Ongoing monitoring, Q&A support and review	6	Week 8–13 (concurrent)	2026-07-20	2026-08-31
Documentation & final report	2	Week 12–13	2026-08-17	2026-08-31

14. Administrative Arrangements & Budget Responsibilities

The proposal must present a detailed line-item budget in USD. The following cost-sharing is anticipated (to be finalized at contract signature):

Description	Responsibility / Notes
Consultant fees (Must be inclusive of 20% Government Withholding Tax)	Consultant – payable upon deliverables approval
Per diem & accommodation	Consultant – follow CARE standard per diem rates for Wau & Torit
International travel by flight to Juba (This provision applies exclusively to potential consultants registered, based and submitting applications from outside South Sudan)	Consultant – follow CARE standard
National travel by flight to Wau and Torit	Consultant – follow CARE standard



Local transport & field logistics (Travels from Wau and/Torit to locations for the assignment)	Consultant (CARE will reimburse the actual cost incurred upon submission of original receipts/invoices)
Training venue & refreshments (ToT)	CARE caters for training venue and refreshments (ToT)
Devices, SIMs & data bundles (Each item and its quantity must be clearly specified and its respective cost included)	Consultant (CARE will reimburse the actual cost incurred upon submission of original receipts/invoices)
Internet at CARE offices (Wau/Torit)	CARE (as available)
Printing & stationery	Consultant (CARE will reimburse the actual cost incurred upon submission of original receipts/invoices)
Helpdesk operations	Consultant

15. Consultant Qualifications

- Proven experience deploying digital solutions for VSLAs or community finance in fragile contexts
- Demonstrated expertise with mobile data collection/management platforms; experience preferred
- Experience and Capacity to design and deliver ToT and low-literacy user training
- Strong understanding of South Sudan operating context; local language capacity is an advantage
- Robust project management, Question and Answer, and safeguarding credentials

16. Proposal Submission Requirements

- Cover letter and understanding of the ToR
- Technical proposal: methodology, workplan (Gantt), risk & mitigation, team composition, roles & CVs
- Past performance: 2–3 references and up to 2 sample reports (digital deployments preferred)
- Financial proposal: detailed line-item budget (USD), inclusive of taxes
- Legal documents: registration, tax compliance/TIN (for firms/individuals)



17. Evaluation Criteria

Technical Criteria	Description	Marks
General understanding of ToR	Clarity of approach & interpretation of objectives	10
Methodology & Workplan	Appropriateness, practicality, risk management, Gantt	20
Team composition & qualifications	Relevant skills incl. VSLA digitalization, training, safeguarding	20
Relevant experience	Digital finance/community systems in fragile settings; South Sudan exp.	15
Quality of previous work	Sample reports and references	5
Localization & language capacity	Use of local experts/enumerators; language skills	5
Safeguarding & data protection	Strength of protocols and alignment to CARE/Donor	5

Technical proposals will be scored out of 80. Only proposals scoring 50/80 and above proceed to financial evaluation (20 marks).

18. Terms & Conditions

- Proposals **MUST** be submitted as two separate documents: 1) Technical; 2) Financial
- Payment: one-off payment upon successful completion and approval of all deliverables (or as agreed)
- All invoices must reference the contract number and deliverables accepted by CARE

19. Submission Details

Email subject line: "Application – VSLA Digitalization Pilot – SSWSEEP Component 1"

Send to: SSD.Procurement@care.org

Deadline: May 29th, 2026 – 4:00 PM, Central Africa Time. Late submissions will not be accepted. *Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.*



Annexes (to be provided/attached)

- Annex A: Device specifications & minimum OS requirements
- Annex B: Training plan & participant profiles (ToT, CBTs, Women-led organization and government officials)
- Annex C: Reporting templates (monthly dashboards)
- Annex D: Implementation roadmap & risk register template