

Annex 11:

A process review of the Mid-Term Review of the Katine Community Partnerships Project

Rick Davies, External Evaluator, Wednesday, 12 August 2009

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1. Why have a process review?

1. In my experience at least, most Mid-Term Reviews (MTR) are contracted by the donor organisation funding the project under review. In this respect the 2009 MTR of the Katine Community Partnerships Project (KCPP) is unusual. The KCPP MTR was contracted by the project manager i.e. AMREF. Although unusual, this step was consistent with a process proposed to the Guardian in 2008, that the role of the Guardian contracted external evaluator should be progressively reduced over time. Behind this proposal were two assumptions: (a) that the M&E capacities of the KCPP project staff would be improving as the project developed, through the efforts of the M&E Officer in Katine, supported by an M&E officer at the AMREF headquarters in Nairobi, (b) that the Guardian would gain confidence over time in AMREF’s ability to objectively monitor and evaluate its own work in Katine
 - In practice the amount of M&E support provided by the Nairobi HQ seems to have been limited¹. Nor has dedicated M&E support been available from the Uganda country office². However, the London office has had a very significant role, both in refining the draft six monthly narrative reports and in drafting the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the MTR.
 - AMREF Uganda has experience with the management of MTRs. There have been a least four other MTRs of AMREF projects in Uganda over the past few years. In each case it has been AMREF who has contracted the MTR consultant, not the donor.
2. The MTR can be considered as an evaluation, given that DFID (amongst others) have defined an evaluation as “*The systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation, and results in relation to specified evaluation criteria*”³. Within the lifespan of the KCPP it is probably the most important evaluation event, more so than an “end-of-project”

¹ It was reported that they did not make a significant contribution to the design of the MTR Terms of Reference

² There is no M&E officer position at the Uganda country office

³ *The UK’s policy on independent evaluation for international development*, DFID, March 2009, page 6

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evaluation that might expect to be scheduled around the end of 2010. This is because the MTR results have the potential to not only affect the course of the project in the period remaining until the end of 2010, but also the decisions about what, if anything, should happen beyond that date. An “end-of-project” evaluation in late 2010 will be too late to influence judgments about activities (and funding thereof) in the post-2010 period. Funding decisions will need to be made well before then.

3. With this view in mind it was proposed that while the management of the MTR process should be in AMREF’s hands, it would still be useful for the Guardian to have some form of involvement in the MTR process. My proposal was that the external evaluator should provide an independent review of the MTR process, by being involved in both the planning and implementation stages of the MTR. This kind of “meta-evaluation” function is now being seen as an essential part of the long term process of improving the quality of evaluations⁴. In the last year or so both DFID and AusAID have institutionalised a process of peer review of their contracted evaluations, and both have developed a set of procedures for those processes. For the KCPP MTR I proposed the use of two sets of DFID checklists for reviewing evaluation plans and reports⁵. These would be used in an open and constructive manner with the MTR consultant, to be shared with them as the MTR process and edited in the light of their comments.
4. Both the MTR consultant and AMREF London office were initially uneasy with the external evaluator being in such a “school inspector” type of role. Concerns were also expressed about the ethics of such an approach, for reasons that were less clear. They proposed that the external consultant should be more engaged with the MTR process, by commenting on and proposing methods of inquiry, and by taking part in the MTR interviews and meetings. This was agreed to, so long as the AMREF contracted MTR consultant remained the person responsible for delivering the MTR report. While this decision may have been at the cost of the external evaluator’s independence it was expected that it would add value to the MTR process. Feedback received so far suggests that the external evaluator’s involvement did add value.

2. The process review – a quick summary

5. The external evaluator was involved in a number of stages during the MTR process, as follows:
 - Commenting on the draft Terms of Reference, by email and face to face meetings in the UK
 - Commenting to Guardian and AMREF on the selection of the MTR consultant
 - Discussion with the MTR consultant re the proposed schedule of activities to make up the MTR process, including data collection activities prior to the MTR, and stakeholder groups that could be engaged.
 - Provision of interim feedback to the MTR consultant on the plan for the MTR, via the use of an adapted DFID checklist, prior to the beginning of the fieldwork in Uganda

⁴ See Michael Scriven’s editorial “*Metaevaluation Revisited*” in the January 2009 edition of the Journal of Multidisciplinary Evaluation

⁵ “Quality Assurance : Template for Entry level” and “Quality Assurance : Template for Exit level”

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- Participation with the MTR consultant in meetings with different stakeholders in Kampala and Soroti⁶
- Commenting on the draft MTR report, by email and meetings with the MTR consultant. (NB: Detailed comments were also provided by AMREF UK, and AMREF Uganda)
- Providing feedback on the completed MTR, via the use of a second DFID checklist (in section 4 of this annex)
- Summarising issues arising from the MTR, via sections 2 and 3 of this annex.

3. Issues arising – about the MTR process

6. A preface: The working relationship between the MTR consultant and external evaluator was positive and constructive throughout the MTR process. While both had different approaches to evaluation these differences were a source of creative thinking, not conflict and confusion.

7. Design of the ToRs:

- *Are the ToRs an agreement about what needs to be done, or a set of guiding suggestions that can be used as needed?* My view erred towards the former, and the MTR consultant erred towards the latter. While I acknowledge that it is frequently the case that not all expectations in a ToRs can be met in practice, there is an obligation to address those that can and explain where and why others cannot be.
- *Do the TORs belong to AMREF and reflect their concerns, or should they also reflect the concerns of other key stakeholders?* While the MTR consultant erred towards the former, my view erred towards the latter. The members of the Steering Committee in Soroti and the Guardian and Barclays in London represented two other stakeholders groups whose interests should ideally be captured in the ToRs for a MTR. This was done to some extent through a meeting between AMREF, Guardian, Barclays, the MTR consultant and myself, organised shortly before the beginning of the MTR. While we did seek the views of the Steering Committee at the beginning of the MTR it would have been preferable to do so before the MTR started.

8. Duration of the MTR

- *When planning an MTR, should the focus be on minimising demands on AMREF staff member's time or ensuring that all relevant stakeholder groups were contacted?* The former was of concern to the MTR consultant, whereas the latter was of greater concern to the external evaluator. In practice the total demand on the time of each component staff member was probably about three days including initial briefing, field work split between two, assigned tasks, and the debriefing. The greatest time demand was on the M&E officer who participated in meetings on most days. The reverse was the case with the Project Manager, who was not as engaged as much as might have been expected, given the importance of the MTR. Overall, most of the stakeholders that were proposed for contact were met. However, with the wisdom of hindsight, it could have been very useful to bring together the stakeholders for each component, to discuss issue that

⁶ This ended unexpectedly on July 9th, because a family crisis that I needed to attend to in Australia

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connected them. With the MTR process that was used there was no opportunity for communications between stakeholder groups. This may or may not be possible during a project planning meeting proposed for September 2009.

9. AMREF staff engagement

- At the beginning of the MTR review process KCPP project staff were openly sceptical about the value of the MTR process as described, questioning its ability to be objective and to be credible in the eyes of others. This was partly due to their frustrations with the lack of information they had been given about the MTR and partly because of concerns that their own views would not be seen as credible by others, including any survey data they might gather from households. The latter concern seems to have been influenced by the degree of public scrutiny that the staff feel the project is under, via the Guardian website. While the MTR team did manage to allay staff concerns and obtain their cooperation, they have also implicitly taken on a responsibility to produce a report that will withstand critical public scrutiny.

10. Participants' views

- *What is more important, how stakeholders see their role in the KCPP or how they see the relevance and value of the assistance provided by AMREF?* The draft MTR report gives a detailed account of the views of the many different stakeholder groups of the value of the assistance provided by AMREF. It gives less attention to analyses of the function of these different groups and how they relate to each other (ideally and in practice)⁷. Yet the project is called the Katine Community Partnership Project, and it is these groups who are not only the key recipients of AMREF assistance but also the vehicles through which social change is expected to happen. Expectations about their relationships fall into the category of project design issues, which were raised being of concern in the London consultation on the ToRs.

11. Compared to what?⁸

- The MTR report correctly points out “A major constraint in attempting to review and give an achievement rating to the Project is the lack of a succinct LogFrame”. The KCPP Conceptual Framework details the expected Outputs (things to be delivered by AMREF staff) but the expected Outcomes (mainly changes in peoples' lives) are described only by broad inclusive statements e.g. “Increased community awareness of, access to and utilisation of health services in community and health facilities”. The “Specific Objectives” referred to in the ToRs, and narrative progress reports, are less specific e.g. “Improved community health”. The Conceptual Framework does list “example indicators for each of the expect Outcomes. The subsequently produced Monitoring and Evaluation Framework then lists the indicators that the project will monitor, but without any commitment to specific targets that the project (i.e. AMREF and its partners) hopes to achieve. Both lists of indicators are a mix of outputs (what AMREF staff will provide), outcomes

⁷ Included here are the Parent Teachers Associations, the School Management Committees, the School Health Committees, the Village Health Teams, the Water Source Committees, the Farmers Groups, the VSLAs and the government and quasi government bodies they are linked to including the 13 schools, the 2 health centres, the Health Unit Management Committees, the Parish Development Committees, the Sub-County Health Committee (and sub-committees), and others possibly not included here

⁸ The question asked by Groucho Marx, when his friend complained to him that “Life is difficult”

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(changes in the functioning of community structures and services) and impact measures (changes in [people's](#) lives)⁹.

- The MTR report's Annex 10 tabulation of "achievement ratings" has inherited this confusion, mixing up different kinds of changes (in households, community groups and in AMREF staff activities) in one assessment. In Mid-Term Reviews that I am familiar with¹⁰ it is important to assess these types of changes separately, and to try to identify the extent to which changes at one level have contributed to changes in the other¹¹. For example, how have AMREF staff activities (outputs) contributed to changes in the capacities of the School Management Committees and Parent Teachers Associations (outcomes), and then how have changes in those groups' functioning affected children's attendance and performance at school. It is quite possible for project activities to be successfully implemented, but have no significant effects on such community groups, and vice versa, for improvement to take place in the capacities of such groups, despite project activities not being implemented successfully.

12. Multiple sectors, multiple activities

- *How do you make overall judgements about the progress of a multi-sectoral intervention, involving a range of activities in each sector?* Some form of judgement like this is required by the first of the three purposes outlined in the ToRs (*The purpose of the mid-term review is to assess progress against objectives in all 5 components to assess to what extent the project is on track to improve the quality of life for the people of Katine*). One section of the MTR report does examine each component, in terms of staff member's success in implementing activities as per their workplans, during the second year of the project. However, the decision to structure most of the report around different "levels" of organisations (e.g. district, sub-county, parish, households) has meant that in the main text of the report there has been no corresponding analysis of the success of each component at the outcome level (changes in the functioning of different community groups). There are two annexes that disaggregate performance by components (Annex 6: KCPP Achievements since Jan 2008) and Annex 10: Achievement Rating Scale). The first of these lists various "Results" for each component along side the inputs provided (infrastructure and hardware, training). The second goes further and generates an "Achievement rating" for each component. Unfortunately the changes listed as the basis for each component rating conflate changes in outputs (what staff have done), outcomes (changes in the functioning of community groups) and impacts (changes in people's lives)¹². Additional difficulties have been created by the absence of targets, of what was expected to be achieved.
- Ideally an evaluation will make use of multiple information sources, including pre-existing data collected by others. The current MTR report provides information from group and one-to-one interviews, a household survey, a staff self-

⁹ The M&E Officer reported that data is being systematically collated on these indicators. But for reasons not yet identified, this data is not being systematically reported in the six monthly narrative reports to the Guardian and Barclays Bank

¹⁰ Often called "Output to Purpose Reviews"

¹¹ See the DFID Annual Review format, for a detailed example of the kind of analysis expected, at <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/funding/wahrf-annual-review.xls>

¹² The same is the case with Annex 6, which includes as results activities carried out by AMREF e.g. provision of books and desks

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assessment and a database of villages x project activities. However these are reported in separate sections. An analysis of component by component would allow these sources to be integrated into one composite picture. Information was also available from past narrative progress reports and baseline surveys, but this has not been used as much as might be expected.

13. Future plans

- The draft report listed a set of 13 activities that project staff thought were of the highest priority during the final year of the project. These were identified through a staff workshop facilitated by the MTR consultant, at the end of the MTR process. While seen as a valuable exercise, the list needs to be supplemented with some explanations for the reasons behind these choices, so that the underlying *strategy* is more evident, along with any associated assumptions and risks. That is what AMREF Kampala, the Guardian and Barclays should then be attending to when considering these priorities. This kind of information should also be of interest to other participants in the proposed September workshop.
- Because it was not yet completed the draft report did not make any recommendations about the proposed September workshop, or possible post-2010 activities to be funded by the Guardian and or others (other than that the project should be extended for at least an extra year). I subsequently provided some suggestions on how proposals for the third year, and a one year extension, could be developed via a stakeholder consultation process during the proposed September workshop (and possibly extended thereafter). These are given in para 18 below.

14. Risks and assumptions

- Most evaluations will seek to identify important risks and assumptions being made by the project managers and/or in the project design. Similar expectations were built into the ToRs for this MTR, in the “scope” section. In the draft version of the MTR these issues were not yet addressed. One important area where assumptions could be usefully discussed is that of drug supply. The original needs assessment studies identified problems in this area, but the subsequent project design did not make it clear AMREF’s expectations about how these problems could best be responded to. Other risks seem to be present with the arrangement for money management by the Water Source Committees. Our two visits suggested that neither government nor project staff were fully informed about the financial status of the groups visited. Yet proposals have been made by some to extend the roles of these groups to take on savings and credit services.

4. Issues arising - about the KCPP project

15. A preface: The response of the AMREF UK and Uganda offices to the MTR report has been very positive. The issues raised below are ones that struck the external evaluator as especially important.

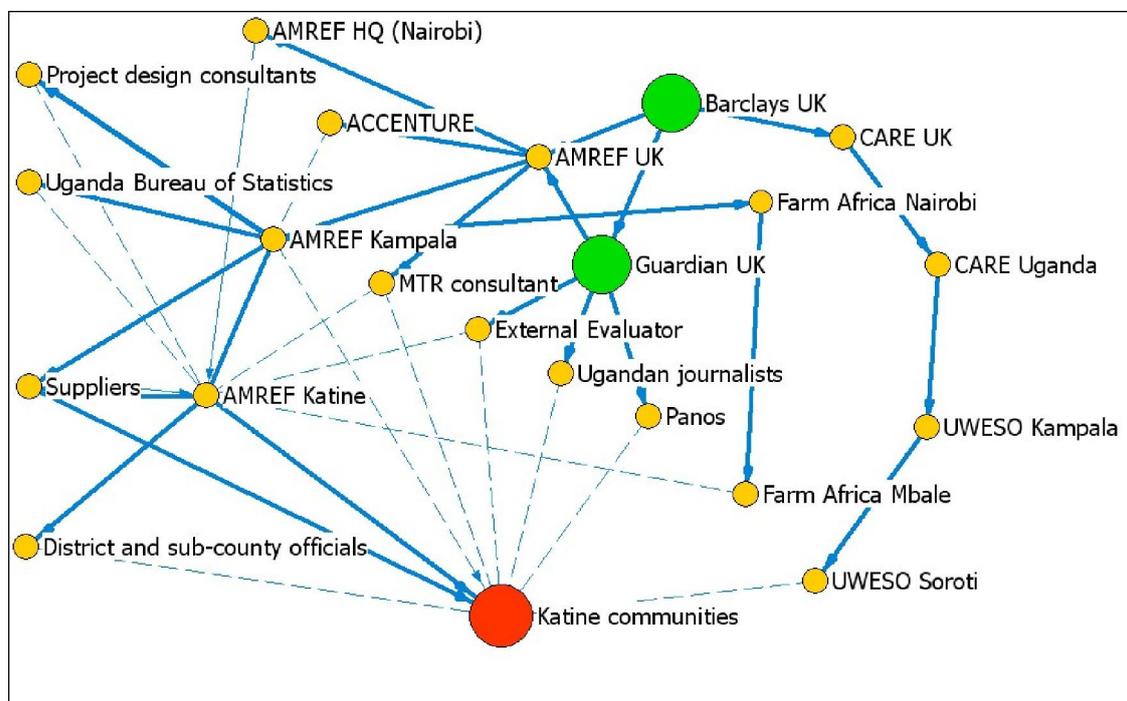
16. Project costs

- In the meeting with the Steering Committee there was an intense discussion of project costs, including questions about the contribution of the AMREF Kampala and other offices. In response, the Project Manager offered to provide more information on how project costs were broken down. The Guardian and Barclays

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Bank could take a further step, and request that each six monthly narrative report on the KCPP includes a section on the activities of the AMEF London and Kampala offices and the costs they have incurred in carrying out these activities. If this step is taken, these narrative reports should then be routinely shared with the Steering Committee and Management Committee, as well as being made publicly available via the Guardian website as at present.

- There is an important larger lesson here. Aid projects like the KCPP involve long and complex supply chains, bringing funds and technical expertise to communities of concern, from distant locations. In the private sector intense effort is invested into making every part of supply chains work as quickly and efficiently as possible. But in the world of development aid often the focus is almost wholly on the final link in the chain, the organisations delivering assistance at the grassroots level. Very little attention is given to the more expensive¹³ parts of the supply chain lined up behind them. Given that the Guardian has reportedly found the costs of delivering aid much more expensive than they expected perhaps they should turn their journalistic attention towards the issue of supply chain costs in international aid delivery.
- See diagram below for a summary view of the supply chain. (There are likely to be some errors in this diagram which will need correction)



Thick blue lines = financial transfers. Broken blue lines = information transfers (not including most of those between yellow nodes (intermediaries between donors and recipients))

17. Government contributions

- In 2009 AMREF switched its approach to the building of school classrooms in Katine, from centrally contracted construction to locally contracted construction, plus some material and labour [check] input from the surrounding communities.

¹³ In terms of the costs of staff time and transport costs involved

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Requiring these types of co-contributions is a commonplace aspect of rural development work. In other parts of the project there are government contributions, most notably in the form of training of community groups by local government staff. But these training inputs are paid for by the project (in the form of meals and travelling allowances and [check]). What appears to be missing is any form of contractual agreement about the nature of government contributions that should match AMREF inputs. For example, in the form of additional staffing to the health centre facilities or to the schools.

- This experience could inform the design of the remaining period of the project to the end of 2010, and any extension of activities thereafter. Agreements about new inputs to be provided by AMREF, especially those most desired by local government (e.g. physical infrastructure), should include details of the contributions that government will also make. In the case of staffing commitments, the beginning of new infrastructure works should be dependent upon fulfilment of staffing commitments to previously completed infrastructure work

18. Provision of training

- More than 50% of all the activities in the three year workplan for the KCPP are training activities. AMREF considers these as an essential part of the project, enabling the many community groups and government services that it is working with to function better than in the past. Without these improvements the benefits obtained from new physical infrastructure will be reduced.
- Many of the training activities involve both AMREF staff and government staff working together. Ideally AMREF staff would be helping build the training capacities of these government staff. However, if AMREF is simply “sub-contracting” government staff to provide training then this relationship is more questionable. In that case it might be argued that the Guardian should simply provide part of its funding direct to local government, and “cut out the middle man” and their associated costs. However, if AMREF is in fact trying to build staff training capacities then we need to see some reporting on this aspect of their work in future narrative progress reports. That is, not just data on who was trained, but who did the training and how their training capacities have been improved.
- In interviews with government official at the district and sub-county levels it was clear that budgets available for training (and supervision) were very limited. This means the prospects for a continuation of training activities on the scale introduced by AMREF are very small. Yet ongoing training will be needed, because of staff turnover in schools and health centres and membership turnover in the community groups. These considerations do not seem to have visibly influenced the design of the KCPP development strategy. There are however two ways in which it could:
 - Cut back on the breadth of training activities under each component, to focus on those with the most potential to be continued by government bodies, after the cessation of AMREF inputs
 - Build in commitments to modest increases in government funded training activities during the lifetime of the project, as part of the agreements proposed above on government co-contributions.

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19. Planning for the future: The following suggestions were made to the MTR consultant regarding the recommendations that had been made (on page 7 of the draft MTR report) for the one-year extension of the project.

- The September workshop needs to clearly identify what is expected to be achieved by the end of 2011. It is unlikely that any donor would agree to a funding extension without clarity in this area.
- Not in terms of what *inputs* AMREF will deliver, but in terms of expected improvements in the functioning of different groups and services (e.g. VHTs, HCs, SMCs, PRAs, Schools, Health Centres, WSCs, etc). These are *outcomes* that should lead to some longer term *impacts* on people's lives
- Those changes will need to be clearly prioritised, otherwise it will be difficult to make an appropriate allocation of resources (or resources will be allocated according to the priorities of those holding the resources)
- The 2011 targets could be defined in relation to existing national targets or national averages
- Associated with this clarification of expectations, agreements need to be developed that will spell out not only what AMREF will provide, but also what communities will provide, AND what the government will provide. Multiple agreements may be needed, perhaps component by component. One generic agreement will probably not work, because responsibilities will become too generalised and fuzzy.
- The resulting plan should be publicised as a Katine Community Partners plan, not an AMREF plan. One in which both government partners and community groups are committed to and claim as their own.
- The recommendations (page 28) for the third year activities should connect to this longer term plan. Performance during this third year should be sufficient to give a donor confidence that a fourth year of funding will be worthwhile.
- One criteria could be that the September workshop is able to deliver the kind of results outlined above, and
 - That progress in 2010 meets a series of benchmarks identified during the September workshop
- There is a risk that the current donors will not support a fourth year extension, or may change their mind by the end of 2010. With this in mind, the September workshop should be designed such that the partners involved could take all or part of their developed plans to other donors, to seek replacement funding from them (with the interesting challenge – can you be a better donor than G&B?)
- This is an additional reason why the 2011 plan might be made up of multiple parts
- In the argument above my assumption has been that AMREF thinks that a fourth year is necessary, and therefore if G&B will not fund it then funding will need to be sought elsewhere. Any plans to close down AMREF's involvement in project at the end of 2010 would undermine any argument for the need for extended funding from G&B. They could also undermine AMREF's reputation amongst other development agencies

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- The draft report proposes three criteria for selecting activities to be continued, which could be applied in the September workshop: impact, sustainability, and what the community wants. Impact and sustainability criteria will lead in different directions (e.g. material support versus training). The alternative is to focus on those activities that government and communities are *most willing to co-invest in*, along with AMREF resources.

20. Assessing impact on people's lives

- In December 2008 CARE contracted an independent Ugandan consultant to carry out a baseline survey of households' socio-economic status in Katine sub-county *and a control group* in Kamuda sub-county (232 households in all). Because of the simplicity of the method used to collect that data (known as the Basic Necessities Survey) it will be relatively easy and inexpensive for CARE or AMREF to fund a repeat of this survey in late 2010 (or later).
- The data that was collected in late 2008 has not yet been fully analysed. Nor has its potential been realised for publicly communicating how people are living in Katine. For example, using the survey data it is possible to provide a graphic description of (a) what people in Katine thought were the basic necessities that everyone should be able to have and not have to go without, and (b) what in fact the average household in the sampled group actually possessed in December 2008.
- I have offered to complete the analysis, pro bono. I have also encouraged CARE to ensure that multiple copies of the survey data are made (and stored separately) to ensure that the survey results are still available in 2010 and beyond¹⁴.

(Section 5 begins on the next page)

¹⁴ At present the only digital and hard copies of the survey data are being held by the baseline survey consultant.

5. DFID “Quality at Exit” checklist: An assessment of the MTR Report

(and the field work process leading to that report)

1	Is there a clear <u>rationale</u> for why the study is being done, why now and who it is for?	Partly so. There could be a more explicit reference back to the three purposes of the MTR, as stated in the 1.2 Purpose of the midterm review section of the Terms of Reference. And to section 3. Expected outputs.
2	Does the report describe the <u>scope</u> and coverage of the evaluation? Is the rationale of the intervention or policy clear?	Partly so. The bullet pointed list in the scope section of the ToRs should be included in the Introduction section of the MTR. However, these are available in the full text of the ToRs in Annex 1. While the activities and objectives of the project are well documented the rationale of the project is not clear. AMREF’s views on working with partners, providing models, undertaking operational research and advocacy all have a place here
3	Is the policy, development and institutional <u>context</u> of the intervention clearly assessed, including political economy, poverty, gender, environment and rights issues?	To some extent. There is a reference to the fit between the project activities and the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) on page 14. Attention has been given to data collected on national targets and averages, relevant to one component (Education), but not others. In 2008 AMREF commented on the External Evaluators’ August Visit report: <i>Analysis of KCPP did not fully take into account the wider development context of Katine, Soroti district and Uganda.</i> However in their comment on the draft MTR they have not highlighted this as an issue.
4	Is the <u>evaluation framework</u> established and was it appropriate, ensuring that diverse views were heard?	An evaluation framework was established and used. The Introduction to the MTR gives a quick overview of the methods used and the evaluation issues attended to. The results of the different methods used are clearly documented in the report. A diversity of views has been documented, Different community groups and government bodies, at district, sub-county, parish and village level were interviewed and reported on.
5	Was the <u>data collected</u> sufficiently disaggregated to enable diverse views to be reflected; was it collected in an appropriate manner and was information sufficiently triangulated?	The report separately documents the view of many different government bodies and community groups. Views were obtained through structured meetings, household surveys and random walks There was no dis-aggregation of the household survey data There was some triangulation of data e.g. by relating household survey responses to staff data on coverage of each village by each project activity. More use might be expected of data available in the

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		narrative reports and baseline surveys
6	Does the report indicate the <u>stakeholders</u> consulted, the criteria for their selection, and the methods and reasons for selection of particular stakeholders?	Annex2 lists all groups that were met. The decision to meet contrasting pairs of community groups has been made clear on page 27, but not the criteria behind the choice of “well” and “less-well” performing groups. These are important because the “success” criteria used may or may not fit well with the official objectives of the project.
7	Have <u>Paris Declaration Principles</u> been addressed in the evaluation?	<i>Alignment</i> with government policy was mentioned via references to the PEAP and government targets for each sector <i>Harmonisation</i> efforts with other NGOs have not been described / analysed. Information was collected and could be used (e.g. on the district level forums for water and education activities)
8	Are some of the DAC evaluation <u>criteria</u> ¹⁵ reflected in an appropriate way?	To some extent. The DAC+ criteria were used to inform the questions asked during interviews, but the findings on each of these criteria are not easily accessible in the report as currently structured. Relevance and effectiveness of AMREF activities, as seen by different stakeholders, have been emphasised the most. Discussion of issues of impact, sustainability and transparency are less evident. Gender and equity issues have been analysed in the final version of the report.
9	Is the <u>analysis</u> sufficiently robust?	All the recommendations are supported by some prior discussion. There is a significant section of the report (pages 20-27) that are descriptive with little analysis of issues arising (and any recommendations that could relate to those issues). There needs to be some form of summarizing or synthesizing here. As noted below, all respondents’ view of project benefits seem to be accepted at face value, and of equal value. In practice some views will be more important than others, both to the individual respondents and given the strategy of the project
10	Are the <u>findings</u> valid, balanced and adequately supported by evidence?	The findings appear balanced, and have been accepted by AMREF, even though some are quite critical of AMREF practices. The achievement ratings in Annex 10 have been made on the basis of a mixed set of data on outputs, outcomes and impact, and in the absence of defined targets or comparators. They must therefore be regarded as impressions. These limitations need to be clearly stated
11	Are the <u>recommendations</u> sufficiently clear,	Yes. But some seem to assume some background knowledge about the issues involved. A non-

¹⁵ Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability plus the additional 3 criteria of coverage, coherence and coordination.

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	targeted and practical?	AMREF audience might need some more context / explanation. Some will need clarification even to the parties referred to, such as those regarding the need for MoUs and Rules of Engagement
12	Are the <u>lessons</u> ¹⁶ clearly presented and applicable for wider use?	Lessons learned have not been explicitly documents as such. In their comments on the draft MTR report AMREF London have since requested “key learning that will impact what we can do differently” To some extent this request is covered by the list of recommendations, but these are not easily read as generalisations that might be relevant to other AMREF project
13	Are the evaluation results sufficiently <u>independent and impartial</u> , (from the evidence available)? ¹⁷	The report appears independent and impartial. However, perhaps some of the data that has been collected needs to be viewed more critically. All respondents’ view of project benefits seem to be accepted at face value. VSLA have been judged as highly successful (according to member views), but some hard data e.g. on membership turnover in groups, would be more persuasive still. Training is reported as appreciated by many, but there is no reference to any technical assessments of training programs that have been provided.
14	Has the evaluation process and report adequately addressed the information needs of the commissioning body and other <u>users</u> ; and does it address the questions in the <u>TOR</u> ?	<p>Feedback on the draft report from AMREF London was positive, with requests for further information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>key learning that will impact what we can do differently</i> - <i>why report sections were organised according to parish and governance level</i> - <i>more pointers on a 4th year and what we need to consider for the project to be sustainable</i> - <i>Performance measurement against each component (using DAC criteria)</i> - <i>Integration of project activities, across components</i> <p>(RD) Looking at the ToRs, there are a number of aspects of the Scope of work not yet addressed (4 of 8). More information could be provided and/or reasons given for not covering these issues (e.g. in the Introduction):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Changes to community and government structures in terms of their capacities and the impact this has on the delivery of the project and people’s lives i.e. are we seeing a more active community or policy change? (considering sustainability and effectiveness) [Not addressed]</i>

¹⁶ Note : Recommendations are actionable proposals and lessons learned are generalisations of conclusions applicable for wider use.

¹⁷ It is recognised that the QA Assessor may not be able to make a valid judgment, because of lack of evidence; in which case, there should be a n/a response.

Annex 11: A review of the Mid-Term Review process

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The contribution of: Partners activities e.g. UWESO, FARM-Africa, CARE (considering relevance, effectiveness and efficiency)</i>³ <i>Role of other NGOs operating in Katine, considering to what extent the partnerships and collaborations have hindered or helped towards achieving the end goal [Partly addressed]</i> • <i>Review and identify sustainability mechanisms, what needs to happen from mid way until the end of the project and after the project lifetime to ensure sustainability i.e. replication of the model/ scale up and an exploration of opportunities to support that. [Not addressed]</i> • <i>Risks and assumptions: consider assumptions in initial design of project, what has been learnt to inform future implementation.[Not addressed]</i>
15	Have stakeholders in countries and other users been sufficiently engaged in the evaluation process ¹⁸ ; and has <u>communication</u> been sufficiently transparent?	<p>Largely so. Consultations on the ToRs took place within AMREF, and with the Guardian, CARE, Farm Africa and Barclays. The Steering Committee did not appear to be involved in the development of the ToRs.</p> <p>AMREF Katine staff participated in all field visits, meetings and interviews. A planning workshop was held with AMREF Katine staff on the final day of the fieldwork</p> <p>A debriefing of the results of the MTR took place in Kampala, and will also take place in London. A stakeholders meeting is scheduled for mid-September, and it is expected the MTR results will be discussed there. The finalised MTR will be available on the Guardian website, and should be provided to the Steering Committee in Soroti.</p>
16	Is the <u>Executive Summary</u> clear, balanced and of appropriate length ¹⁹ ; and does it sufficiently reflect the findings and tone of the main report? Are the appropriate <u>Annexes</u> available and of sufficient quality?	<p>An Executive Summary has been provided, of appropriate length. The sequence of findings could be improved, with method descriptions in one place (e.g. paras 1, 3, 5) and overall assessments in another place (e.g. paras 4, 8). The description of the achievement ratings need to be associated with a caveat, relating to unclear objectives and poor data, documented in the report. Some statements are a bit skeletal, and may leave the reader puzzled e.g. paras 8, 13</p> <p>A list of Recommendations is also provided. These would benefit by references to specific sections of the main text where they are discussed in detail e.g. See page...</p> <p>The Annexes provide substantial supplementary information</p>

¹⁸ The evaluation approach should include learning and participation opportunities (e.g. workshops, learning groups, debriefing, participation in field visits) to ensure key stakeholders are fully integrated into the evaluation learning process.

¹⁹ Up to four pages.