



Nazma Akhter (33) conducts a PDMO cost-benefit analysis session for facilitators under the SIMS project in Bangladesh.

ECONOMIC & FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

WHAT IS AN EFA?

Economic and Financial Analysis (EFA) is a strategic tool to assess whether a (development) initiative is worth the investment – and how it can deliver greater impact with the resources available.

It weighs the costs and benefits of a project, considering both financial returns (such as avoided losses or increased incomes) and broader socio-economic value (such as improved livelihoods, resilience, and access to services). EFA supports decision-making throughout the project cycle – from design to evaluation.

Economic & Financial Analysis is not just a technical exercise/tick the box exercise—it's a critical tool to strengthen the effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of project initiatives.

Our EFA work supports decision-makers in making evidence-based, cost-justified investment choices that generate real value for people and communities.



EFA is not just about numbers – it is about clarifying choices, increasing effectiveness, and making the case for impact.

WHY DOES IT MATTER – ESPECIALLY NOW?

In an era marked by shrinking budgets and growing demands for accountability, the ability to demonstrate clear, evidence-based results is no longer optional—it's essential. EFA has become a critical tool for institutions seeking to make the most of every franc, dollar, or euro invested.

EFA allows organizations to justify and prioritize initiatives that generate the highest impact returns—both economically and socially. It strengthens transparency and accountability by providing a clear picture of how resources are used and what they achieve. EFA also enables programmes to adapt based on real-time evidence, ensuring that interventions remain relevant and responsive to changing needs.

At its core, EFA focuses attention on what really matters: achieving the greatest possible impact

with the resources available. It guides organisations toward choices that offer the best value for money and helps ensure that public funds are invested where they can do the most good.

Just as importantly, EFA provides a credible and compelling way to communicate impact to key stakeholders. These include for example development partners—such as the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and other bilateral or multilateral donors. By turning complex outcomes into clear economic evidence, EFA supports stronger dialogue, advocacy, and decision-making at every level.

Photo:
After participating in a fish farming training, Ismaël Kader is now applying his skills to support and expand his family's business in Séréfédougou, Burkina Faso – contributing to increased income, improved food security, and greater economic resilience for his household



The approach supports results-based management, policy dialogue, and learning – whether you are a donor, implementer, policymaker, or investor.

WHAT'S THE ADDED VALUE FOR INSTITUTIONS?

From insight to action: Strategic, applied, and future-facing.

Our Economic & Financial Analysis (EFA) services are more than just technical tools—they are strategically aligned with your mission. Whether you aim to reduce poverty, build resilience, or promote inclusive economic growth, we help you understand trade-offs, demonstrate results, and optimize impact.

Our work has shaped critical decisions across multiple sectors: We are also pushing the boundaries of what EFA can do. Our team is developing hybrid models that integrate monetized and non-monetized outcomes (e.g. gender equity, resilience), adapting tools for fragile and data-scarce contexts.

We lead the development of EFA methodologies for the SDC, including the «How-To Note

on EFA,» Chapter 6 of SDC's PCM Online Platform, and custom tools for sectors including disaster risk reduction, financial inclusion, and governance.

In an era of tightening budgets and growing demands for evidence, EFA can help you defend, improve, and future-proof your interventions. Whether you need a quick assessment, long-term advisory support, or capacity development—we're here.

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EFA helps answer key strategic questions:

- Is this intervention worth it?
- Are we doing things right – and doing the right things?
- How can we do better with fewer resources?

Photo:
A business dialogue and consultation framework among farmers, producers and buyers of moringa powder and local authorities facilitated by the project Ho- Halé



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We bring together a multi-disciplinary team of advisors with expertise ranging from WASH, Governance to education and private sector development.

WHO ARE WE?

Helvetas is a Swiss development organization active in more than 30 countries worldwide. Since 2020, we have supported over 20 + EFAs and contributed to thought leadership in economic analysis for development cooperation.

Photo:
Monthly
reunion of
ACT – Together
For An Active
Civil Society,
coached by
Helvetas Serbia

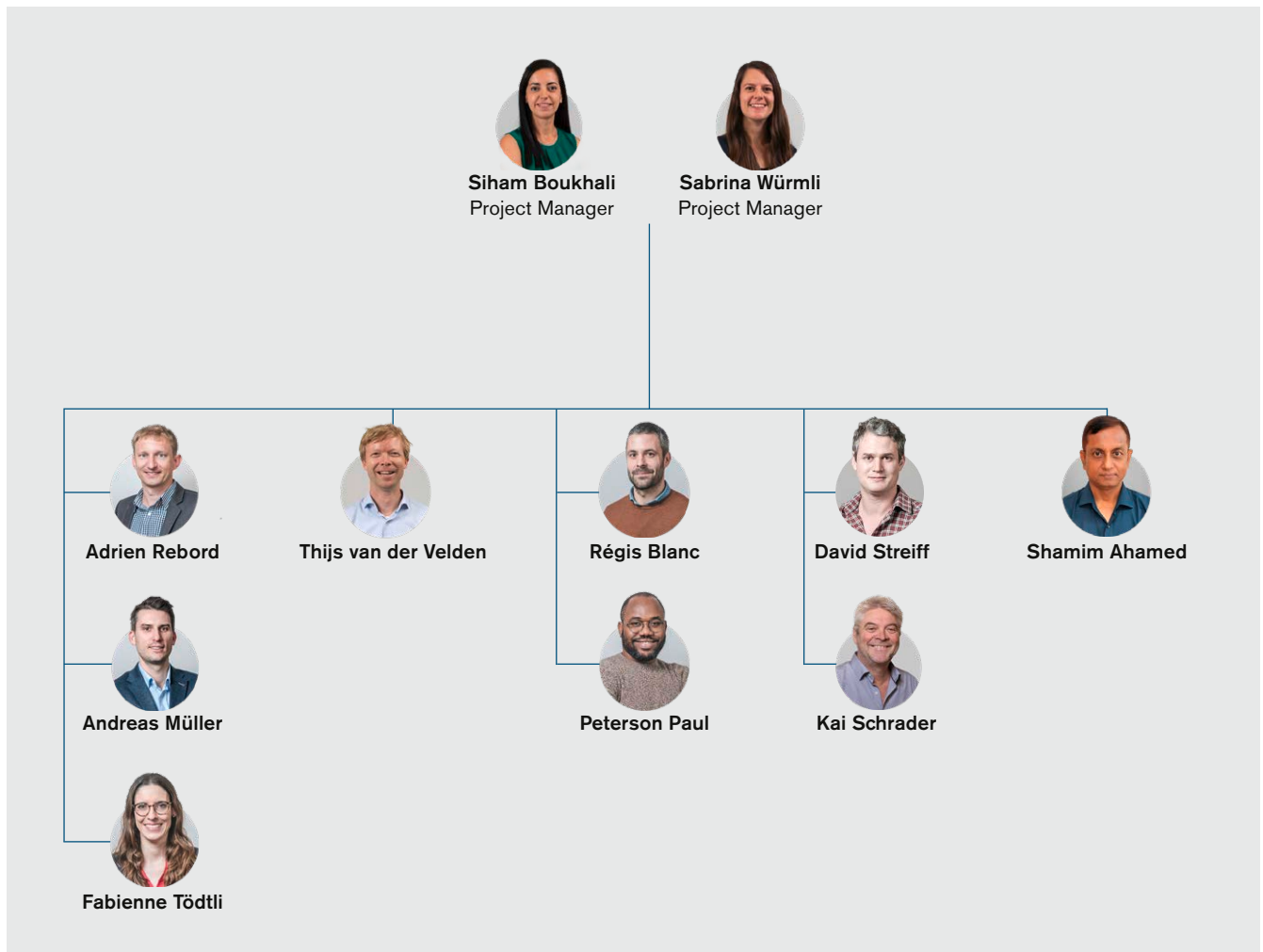
Our services span:

Full EFA Implementation: We conduct fully-fledged EFAs—from simple cost-effectiveness analyses to comprehensive cost-benefit studies—integrated throughout the project cycle, ensuring robust evidence for planning, steering, and evaluation.

Capacity Building & Guidance: We train and coach project teams and donor agencies to understand, apply, and own EFA tools—bridging the gap between technical analysis and practical use.

Methodological Leadership: We co-develop strategic guidance, including official tools for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and design tailored EFA models for diverse contexts.

Advisory Services & Backstopping: We provide on-demand support to development projects across sectors including governance, WASH, VSD, PSD, migration, and disaster risk reduction.



OUR TEAM

From insight to action: Strategic, applied, and future-facing.

We bring together deep technical expertise, participatory methods, and practical tools to help teams/organisations integrate EFA into their strategies and operations. Our EFA team is **multidisciplinary and globally rooted** – combining economists, development practitioners, and sector specialists. We tailor our tools and approaches to the local context, using methods such as:

- Cost-benefit analysis (CBA)
- Cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA)
- Simplified Argumentation of Economic Worthiness
- Scenario and Sensitivity testing

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It has been a pleasure working with Helvetas team on the Economic and Financial Analyses exercise. The expertise, responsiveness, and thorough approach have consistently added value to project further implementation. We especially appreciated the inclusive and consultative way discussions were conducted, ensuring that all relevant stakeholders were meaningfully involved throughout the process. The analysis and the practical relevance of recommendations have greatly supported project and connected initiatives. Notably, this exercise has also contributed to the improvement of internal monitoring tool, particularly in assessing the economic performance of women's entrepreneurship.

Professionalism and collaborative spirit have made joint work both effective and enjoyable. ”

Tatiana Udrea
UN Women

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In the framework of our collaboration with Helvetas, for conducting an Economic and Financial Analysis (EFA), we have been pleased with the rigour and flexibility demonstrated (in the use of various methodologies, as well as in the team's availability) and with the ability to translate the analysis into clear recommendations. The project partners have also shared their satisfaction with having an external analysis conducted that proved to be useful for them to adjust. ”

Simone Di Stefano
SDC Moldova

Interested in learning more?

Positioned as a trusted advisory function within Helvetas, we collaborate closely with donors, project teams, and policy-makers to inform choices that matter – at the right time.

Contacts

For collaborations, capacity building, or direct support:



Siham Boukhali:
siham.boukhali@helvetas.org



Sabrina Würmli
sabrina.wuermli@helvetas.org



HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation

Weinbergstr. 22a, PO Box, CH-8021 Zurich
Maulbeerstr. 10, PO Box, CH-3001 Bern
info@helvetas.org, www.helvetas.org