

# Terms of Reference

## Real-Time Review

South Sudan Joint Response 2025

DUTCH RELIEF ALLIANCE



Project details	
Joint Response (JR) name	South Sudan Protracted Crisis Joint Response
Country and locations	South Sudan (Abyei, Akobo, Malakal, Mayendit, Melut, Pibor, Rubkona and Tonj North)
Lead organisation	Help a Child
JR partners	ACROSS, Africa Development Aid (ADA), Aid Link Organization, CARE, Charity Empowerment Foundation (CEF), Coalition for Humanity, Zoa-Dorcas, Red een Kind (Help a Child), Plan International, Smile Again Africa Development Organization (SAADO), Save the Children, Tearfund, UNIDOR, War Child Holland (WCH), Women Development Group (WDG), and Widows and Orphans Charitable Organization (WOCO)
JR timeframe	01 January 2024 – 31 December 2026

## I. Background

### Background of the Dutch Relief Alliance

The Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA) is a coalition of 14 Dutch aid organisations in partnership with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA). The structure of the DRA enables participating NGOs to respond to major international crises in a timely and effective manner. There are two types of Joint Responses (JRs), acute and protracted.

In South Sudan, the Protracted Crisis Mechanism allows us to invest in more sustainable longer-term responses through predictable multi-year funding. With joint responses for protracted crises, local partners can become increasingly engaged in all programme phases.

### Background of the South Sudan Joint Response

The goal of the South Sudan Joint Response (SSJR) is to provide emergency humanitarian assistance for at-risk populations and building resilience of communities to face acute shocks and recover from crisis. Seven member organizations of the Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA), together with nine national partners, provide emergency humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people affected by the crisis in different parts of South Sudan. The response also aims to enhance the transition from humanitarian assistance to resilience by addressing the root causes of





vulnerability and enabling communities at risk to build resilience to acute shocks and chronic stresses and recover from the crisis.

A new phase of the South Sudan Joint Response (2024-2026) started on 01 January 2024. In this Joint Response, the partners work together in eight locations where humanitarian needs and gaps are high. They respond to the needs identified by the communities by providing multi-sectoral assistance in the areas. All partners are committed to incorporating innovations into the project's implementation to address the ever-evolving context and challenges in the project locations.

The SSJR partners are working in Abyei Administrative Area, Akobo County, Malakal County, Mayendit County, Melut County, Pibor Administrative Area, Rubkona County, and Tonj North County. They join forces to provide people in need with Food Security and Livelihoods, WASH, Education, Nutrition, Protection and Multi-Purpose Cash support. Education is a new sector that was added in 2024.

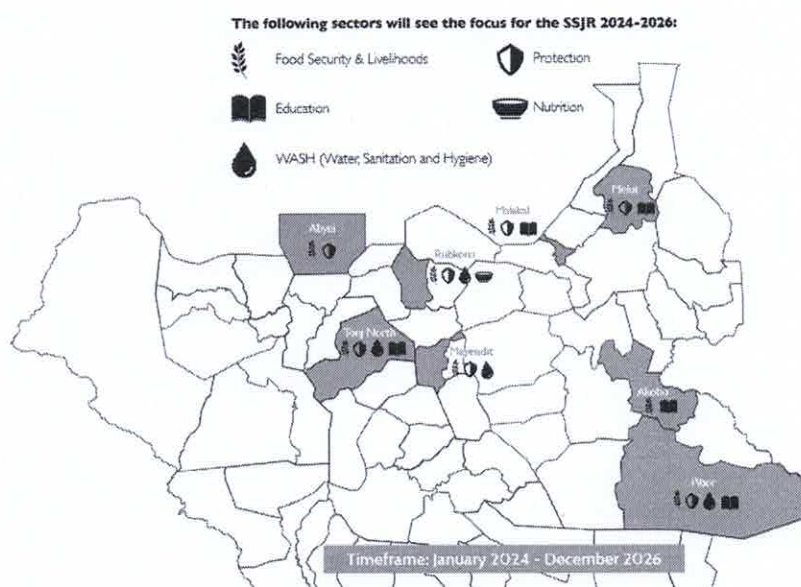


Figure 1: SSJR supported locations and sectors

## Purpose of the RTR

A Real-Time Review (RTR) is defined by the DRA as: 'A rapid and interactive review carried out during the implementation of a Joint Response, comprising interactive learning sessions with teams involved in the response, based on information collected from key stakeholders, including affected people, local authorities and implementing organisations.'



The main purpose of the RTR is to provide real-time feedback to the SSJR partners, lessons learning to improve the relevance and effectiveness of the response.

### Specifics of the 2025 RTR

The South Sudan Joint Response runs from 01/01/2024 until 31/12/2026; the 2025 RTR will take place from June to July 2025. The RTR will be conducted by an external consultant. The SSJR is operating in eight locations however, the RTR will be conducted in four locations that were not part of the 2024 RTR. The locations for the RTR in 2025 are Rubkona, Melut, Mayendit and Abyei.

### Objectives of the RTR

- Review the SSJR against selected commitments from the three chosen Core Humanitarian Standards.
- Provide timely feedback to SSJR partners on what is working, what is not and what needs to change to improve the relevance and effectiveness of the response in 2025 and 2026.
- Follow up on the main recommendations from the 2024 RTR, 2023 external evaluation, capacity strengthening assessment plans & gender assessment.
- Identify adaptations to the SSJR that have already been implemented and recommend needed adaptations moving forward.
- Facilitate opportunity for SSJR partners to identify good practices and share solutions for common challenges experienced during implementation.
- To contribute to learning.
- Draw lessons for other Joint Responses and future DRA joint responses for the next phase.

### Scope

In preparation for the RTR, the SSJR partners reviewed the CHS handbook with the revised 2024 commitments and recommended the RTR to focus on the following three standards (CHS commitments 1, 2 and 3):

**Commitment 1:** People and communities can exercise their rights and participate in actions and decisions that affect them.

**Commitment 2:** People and communities access timely and effective support in accordance with their specific needs and priorities.

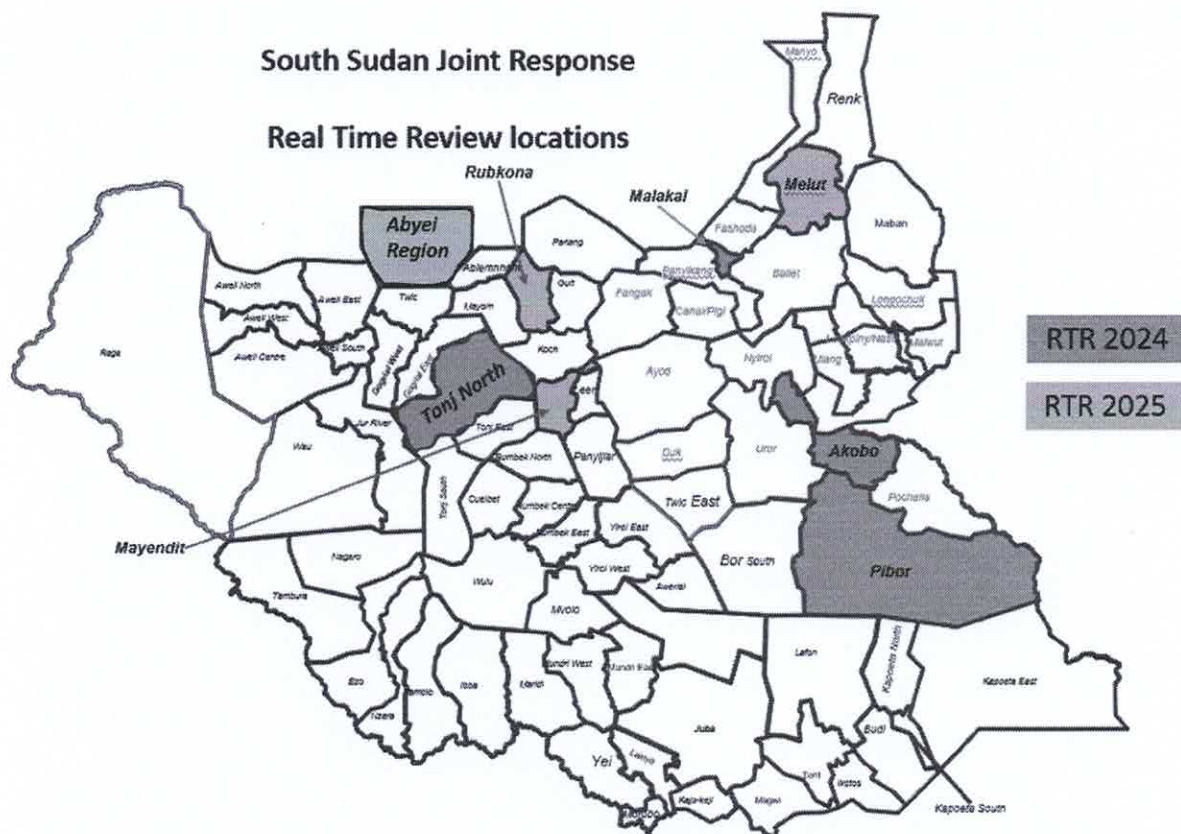
**Commitment 3:** People and communities are better prepared and more resilient to potential crises.





In addition, the RTR will include:

- Implementation of recommendations from the capacity strengthening assessment (all locations)
- Assess progress against the 2025 work plan



## Locations of the RTR 2025

The following locations are chosen to conduct RTR 2025

		SAADO	WOCO	AID LINK	UNIDOR	ACROSS	CH	ADA	WDG	CEF	CARE	Zoa Dorcas	Save the Children	War Child	Tearfund	Plan	Help a Child
RTR locations	Abyei									X			X				
	Melut	X	X											X		X	
	Mayendit						X	X							X		
	Rubkona				X		X								X		

## Outline of the RTR Process:

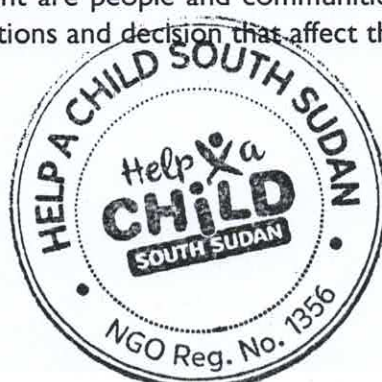
- **Logistic arrangements:**
  - All the logistical arrangements will be done by the Consulting firm. This includes flights to the field locations, travels in the field, accommodation and enumeration fees are all the responsibility of the consulting firm.
- **Duration:**
  - Each field visit will take approximately a week. It is up to the consulting team to propose a feasible schedule for the field visits, depending on the sample sizes, flight availability and human resource capacity to achieve the objectives in the location.
  - Field visits should commence from 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025. Depending on the teams that will be deployed to the field, the data collection should take two weeks in all 4 project locations.

## 2. Research questions

### RtR questions

The RTR of this JR will aim to answer the following research questions, which are related to the three chosen Core humanitarian Standard Commitments 1,2 and 3.

**Commitment 1:** To what extent are people and communities in the JR locations exercising their rights and participating in actions and decision that affect them?





**Commitment 2:** To what extent do people and communities in the JR locations access timely and effective support in accordance with their specific needs and priorities?

**Commitment 3:** To what extent are people and communities in the JR locations better prepared and more resilient to potential crises?

### Questions for Commitment 1

- How do we ensure diversity, equity and inclusion considerations are integrated into the organisation's work with people and communities, with attention to the most marginalised?
- How regularly do we share relevant and timely information with people and communities, including about their rights in relation to the commitments and responsibilities of the organisation, communicated in languages and formats that are easily accessible, understandable, respectful and contextually appropriate for people and communities?
- How are people's participation in decisions and actions meaningful for them and correspond to their preferred ways of engaging?
- To what extent do Communications representing people and communities, including those used for advocacy and fundraising, have their informed consent, are accurate, respectful, ethical and preserve their dignity?

### Questions for Commitment 2

- Use fair, impartial and transparent criteria to define programmes and the people or groups supported by the organisation.
- How regularly do we monitor and adjust programmes to ensure actions are timely, accessible and address the priority needs of people and communities?
- To what extent do we apply relevant technical standards and recognised good practices in the organisation's work with people and communities?
- How do we refer any unmet priority needs to relevant stakeholders with the technical expertise and capacity to address them?
- Do we establish a coherent organisational approach to ensure support is based on an understanding of the context and culture and the diverse capacities, vulnerabilities, needs and risks faced by people and communities, with attention to the most marginalised?

### Questions for Commitment 3

- How do we support formal and informal community leadership and locally led efforts to reinforce the resilience of people and communities?



- To what extent do we support local capacities to anticipate and reduce risks of potential crises or disasters?
- Do we plan and implement programmes that contribute to long-term positive effects on people's lives, livelihoods, the local economy and the environment?
- To what extent do we support local ownership of resources and decision-making from the outset of work with people and communities?
- How do we establish a coherent organisational approach to ensure support reinforces locally led actions and decision-making

### 3. Methodology

- The Real-Time Review (RTR) will employ a light, rapid, and participatory methodology, prioritizing direct engagement with crisis-affected communities and stakeholders across the six sectors of intervention: Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL), Protection, Nutrition, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Education, and Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA). Given the lifesaving nature of the South Sudan Joint Response (SSJR), the methodology will balance speed with rigor, combining qualitative and quantitative data to assess both programmatic effectiveness and community perspectives.

#### 3.1 Data Collection Methods

- **Key Informant Interviews (KII)** will be conducted with key stakeholders to understand sector-specific implementation challenges and successes. Structured and semi-structured interviews will be held with SSJR consortium leads (7 INGOs and 9 NNGOs), including program managers and field coordinators, to assess coordination, resource allocation, and adherence to humanitarian standards. Government representatives, such as RRC officials and local authorities, will be engaged to examine contextual barriers (e.g., access constraints, bureaucratic delays). Additionally, interviews with cluster leads (e.g., WASH Cluster, Protection Cluster) and other humanitarian actors will provide insights into complementarity and gaps in the response.
- **Household Questionnaires** will be administered to beneficiaries across sectors to quantify reach, satisfaction, and unmet needs. In FSL, surveys will measure crop yields or cash utilisation; in Protection, they will capture safety concerns and access to services; in WASH, they will assess water availability and hygiene practices. For MPCA recipients, questions will focus on expenditure patterns and adequacy of cash amounts. The questionnaires will be designed to be short maximum of 30 minutes, and translated into local languages to ensure accessibility.





- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** will be organised separately for women, men, youth, children and marginalised groups (e.g. elderly, disabled) to explore sector-specific impacts. In Nutrition, FGDs with mothers will examine barriers to accessing feeding programs; in Education, discussions with children and teachers will assess school attendance and safety. Protection-focused FGDs will use age- and gender-sensitive approaches to discuss risks like GBV or child separation. For MPCA, groups will debate the effectiveness of cash versus in-kind aid.
- **Direct Observation** will validate reported outcomes through site visits to:
  - ✓ FSL (e.g., Seed distribution points, market systems),
  - ✓ WASH (Water points, latrines),
  - ✓ Nutrition (OTP sites, stabilisation centres),
  - ✓ Education (Schools, temporary learning spaces),
  - ✓ Protection (Safe spaces, case management centres),
  - ✓ MPCA (Local markets).

Observations will document functionality, usage, and compliance with SPHERE standards and SSJR Minimum standards.

- **Staff Reflection Workshops** will convene consortium partners to:
  - ✓ Share challenges (e.g., delays in cash transfers, supply chain bottlenecks),
  - ✓ Identify best practices (e.g., community-led targeting in Protection),
  - ✓ Align corrective actions with CHS Commitments 1–3

## Reporting

The table below shows the outline of the reporting template that will be used for the RTR report

### Contents

1. Introduction
2. Methodology
3. Limitations
4. Context
5. Background of the Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA)
  - Humanitarian Situation Highlights
  - General Humanitarian Response Highlights
  - Joint Response activities and locations
6. Overview, Findings and Recommendations
  - CHS 1.
  - CHS 2.
  - CHS 3.
  - Assessment of the SSJR 2025 Progress
7. Cross-cutting themes



8. Lessons learned and best practices
9. Consolidated action plan

## **ANNEXES**

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

Annex 2: Tools

Annex 3: Workshop Participants & Agenda

Annex 4: Success stories (Minimum of 1 per location per sector)

## **Deliverables**

A list of key deliverables will include, but not limited to the following:

- ✓ New or adapted data collection tools
- ✓ Inception report for the SSJR RTR 2025
- ✓ Draft RTR report (Max of 45 pages)
- ✓ Final presentation/debriefing / Validation workshop report
- ✓ Final RTR report (Max of 45 pages)

## **4. Timeframe**

Below is the tentative timeline for the RTR review

	Item	When	Who is responsible
1.	Confirm with partners the RTR locations and process, and tentative dates	17 <sup>th</sup> April 2025	Lead Team
2.	Develop the RTR ToR for partners' input and approval	25 <sup>th</sup> April 2025	SSJR Partners
3.	Contracting of the RTR Consultant	6 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	Lead Team
4.	Provision of desk review documents and tools	9 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	Lead Team
5.	Submission of Inception report with tools	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	Consultant
6.	Review and finalisation of the Inception report	13 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	Lead Team
7.	Field data collection in the 4 locations	16 <sup>th</sup> June – 7 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	Consultant and Team
8.	Consultant to analyse the data and consolidate a draft report	8 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	Consultant
9.	Circulate the draft RTR report to all partners for feedback	16 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	SSJR Lead Team
10.	Consolidate feedback and send a draft with all input back to the SSJR Lead Team	18 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	Consultant
11.	Conduct a validation workshop for all Partners	24 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	Consultant and Lead Team





12.	Incorporate input and prepare the final report	30 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	Consultant
13.	Final report circulated to all partners	4 <sup>th</sup> August 2025	SSJR Lead Team

## 5. Selection Process

### Application and Selection Process

The DRA is looking for a lead consultant who:

- Has an advanced degree in International Development studies, social science, monitoring and evaluation, demographic studies, and other related disciplines
- Has knowledge about the local context of the JR.
- Preferably, has experience in conducting Rapid Real Time Reviews in the humanitarian field.
- Preferably, has experience with the South Sudan Joint Response.

### Description of the application and selection process

To be considered for this position, applicants should submit an expression of interest to [procurement-hacsouthsudan@hacsouthsudan.org](mailto:procurement-hacsouthsudan@hacsouthsudan.org) by **June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025**, that includes the following:

- Brief CV along with a succinct rationale of how the consultant meets the requirements (max 2 pages).
- Technical proposal, including methodology, evaluation matrix and a proposed schedule (maximum 15 pages, see requirements below).
- Indicative budget including daily rates in USD for the lead consultant and possible other team members.
- Contact details of two referees who can confirm experience with a similar type of work.
- Confirmation of availability to undertake this assignment and to deliver the report on time.

### Technical and Financial Proposals

The Consultant will prepare both technical and financial proposals for the RTR, to be submitted as part of the application.

The technical proposal will describe how the RTR will be carried out, elaborating on the Terms of Reference and will have the following sections:

- Introduction
- Methodology
  - Methodological approach for the evaluation
  - Sampling strategy
  - Data collection methods and instruments
  - Data analysis, interpretation and presentation of results



- Evaluation matrix, summarising the scope of the evaluation by identifying:
  - The key questions suggested in the ToR
  - Indicators
  - Data collection methods
  - Data Source
  - Analysis method
- Plan how observations, conclusions and recommendations will be fed back to:
  - Stakeholders involved in JR (in situ and in the Netherlands)
  - Affected people and their representatives
- Schedule of activities and travel

**Financial Proposal**

- The total amount in USD
- All fees, including withholding tax (20%)
- Detailed costing for staff and research assistants per day
- Detailed costing for other expenses, including flight, travels in the field, accommodation, feeding, etc

