

USAID Resilience through Agriculture in South Sudan Activity (RASS)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Issue Date: January 16, 2025

Deadline: January 29, 2025

Request No: #RFP-RASS-25-001

Procurement of Consultancy Firm to conduct maturity  
assessment for 1,058 various groups.

for DAI/RASS Activity in 13 Counties

**NOTICE:** Prospective Consultancy firms that has received this document from a source other than the RASS Activity should immediately contact [rass\\_procurement@rassactivity.org](mailto:rass_procurement@rassactivity.org) and provide their name and mailing address so that any amendments to this RFQ or other solicitation-related communications can be sent directly to them. Any prospective Consultancy firm that fails to register their interest with DAI/RASS assumes complete responsibility if they do not receive communications before the closing date of this RFQ. Any amendments to this solicitation will be issued via email.

**Issuance of this RFQ in no way obligates DAI to award the Consultancy Firm an Agreement and the Firm will not be reimbursed for any costs associated with the preparation of their application. No discussions or negotiations are permitted with firms under this RFQ. Consultancy firms shall submit their best and final price.**

## Request for Proposals – Consultancy Firm.

**Overview:** DAI Global LLC, a legally registered company in South Sudan and implementer of the USAID-funded Resilience through Agriculture in South Sudan (RASS) Activity, hereby invites eligible Firms to **conduct maturity assessment for 1,058 various groups. in the Thirteen (13) RASS Counties of Akobo, Baliet, Budi, Duk, Jur River, Kapoeta North, Nzara, Panyijar, Pibor, Rumbek Center, Wau, Wulu and Yambio.** The RASS Activity will improve food security and community household recovery and resilience in 13 target counties, reducing long term reliance on humanitarian assistance (HA).

1. RFQ No.	RFP-RASS-25-001
2. Issuance Date	January 16, 2025
3. Title	Consultancy for Maturity assessment for 1,058 various groups.
4. Issuing Office	DAI Global LLC USAID-funded RASS Activity Afex Camp River, Hai Malakal, Along Side Nile River, Juba, South Sudan
5. Email Address for Submission of Quotations	All Proposals/Applications must be submitted by email to <a href="mailto:rass_submissions@rassactivity.org">rass_submissions@rassactivity.org</a> with “ <b>Maturity assessment Consultancy</b> ” in the email subject line. Any other form of submission will not be accepted.
6. Deadline for Receipt of Applications	<b>January 29, 2025 (17:00 CAT)</b> <b>Late submissions will not be accepted.</b>
7. Submission of Questions / Clarification Requests	Consultancy firms may submit <b>questions and requests</b> for clarifications by email no later than <b>22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025, at 17:00 CAT.</b> Please only <b>submit questions</b> to: <a href="mailto:rass_procurement@rassactivity.org">rass_procurement@rassactivity.org</a> . All questions received will be compiled and answered in writing and distributed to all registered Firms.
8. Anticipated Award Type	<b>DAI anticipates awarding a Firm fixed-price Consultancy</b>
9. Basis for Award	Any application that does not meet the technical minimum score of 70 out of 100 points will be rejected. Any application that does not meet the mandatory criteria set out in Attachment B will be rejected. Firms that meets the selection criteria will be invited for an interview.  To be considered for award, the Consultancy Firms must follow the instructions provided in this RFQ, submit a complete application (see section 11), and meet all the requirements identified in Sections 10, 12 and 13 prior to award.
10. Technical Specifications and Requirements	See Attachment A – Terms of references. See Attachment B – Evaluation criteria
11. Complete Applications Response	A complete submission in response to this RFQ includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attachment C – Application submission form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Form 1. CV with relevant attachments</li> <li>Form 2. Financial Proposal</li> <li>Form 3. Past Performance References</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p>12. General Instructions to Consultants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Each eligible and interested consultancy firms</b> is responsible for reading very carefully and understanding fully the terms and conditions of this RFP. Failure to do so will be at the firm's or individual risk.</li> <li>• All communications regarding this solicitation are to be made solely through the Issuing Office and must be submitted via email.</li> <li>• If this RFP solicitation is amended, then all terms and conditions not modified through the amendment shall remain unchanged.</li> <li>• By applying, the interested consultancy firm fully understands that their proposal must be valid for <b>90 days</b>, which shall be indicated in the cover letter submission.</li> <li>• Prior to any award the Offeror must meet all determination of responsibility requirements as listed in Box 13.</li> <li>• Consultancy firms shall submit applications Individual consultants or firms shall complete Attachment B: Price Schedule template in United States Dollars (USD) only</li> </ul>
<p>13. Anti-Corruption and Anti-Bribery Policy and Reporting Responsibilities</p>	<p>DAI conducts business under the strictest ethical standards to assure fairness in competition, reasonable prices and successful performance or delivery of quality goods and equipment. <b>DAI does not tolerate the following acts of corruption:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any requests for a bribe, kickback, facilitation payment or gratuity in the form of payment, gift or special consideration by a DAI employee, Government official, or their representatives, to influence an award or approval decision.</li> <li>• Any offer of a bribe, kickback, facilitation payment or gratuity in the form of payment, gift or special consideration by an offeror or subcontractor to influence an award or approval decision.</li> <li>• Any fraud, such as mis-stating or withholding information to benefit the offeror or subcontractor.</li> <li>• Any collusion or conflicts of interest in which a DAI employee, consultancy firm or individual, or representative has a business or personal relationship with a principal or owner of the offeror or subcontractor that may appear to unfairly favor the offeror or subcontractor. Subcontractors must also avoid collusion or conflicts of interest in their procurements from vendors. Any such relationship must be disclosed immediately to DAI management for review and appropriate action, including possible exclusion from award.</li> </ul> <p>These acts of corruption are not tolerated and may result in serious consequences, including termination of the award and possible suspension and debarment by the U.S. Government, excluding the offeror or subcontractor from participating in future U.S. Government business.</p>

	<p>Any attempted or actual corruption should be reported immediately by either the offeror, subcontractor or DAI staff to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Toll-free Ethics and Compliance Anonymous Hotline at (U.S.) +1-503-597-4328</li><li>• Hotline website – <a href="http://www.DAI.ethicspoint.com">www.DAI.ethicspoint.com</a>, or</li><li>• Email to <a href="mailto:Ethics@DAI.com">Ethics@DAI.com</a></li><li>• USAID’s Office of the Inspector General Hotline at <a href="mailto:hotline@usaid.gov">hotline@usaid.gov</a></li></ul> <p>By signing this proposal, the offeror confirms adherence to this standard and ensures that no attempts shall be made to influence DAI or Government staff through bribes, gratuities, facilitation payments, kickbacks or fraud. The offeror also acknowledges that violation of this policy may result in termination, repayment of funds disallowed by the corrupt actions and possible suspension and debarment by the U.S. Government.</p>
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## Attachment A

### TERMS OF REFERENCES

#### 1) RASS ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

##### **I.**

The Resilience through Agriculture in South Sudan (RASS) Activity is a four-year USAID-funded project implemented by DAI Global LLC and two sub-contractors: CARE International, International and Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) aimed at improving food security and community household recovery and resilience across 13 counties in Western Bahr el Ghazal, Unity, Upper Nile, Jonglei, Western Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria and Lakes States in-line with USAID strategic framework for South Sudan. To achieve this, RASS employs a resilience pathways approach to improve the effectiveness of local systems and strengthen the capacities of community groups to achieve gender-responsive and diversified market-sensitive agriculture production; facilitate increased production of diverse nutritious foods by strengthening productivity, reducing food loss, and improving nutrition behaviors; strengthen and expand household and community opportunities for sustainable, locally driven livelihoods; and enhanced private sector productivity of honey and shea nuts value chains. Gender Equality, Youth, and Social Inclusion (GEYSI) and Social Behavior Change Communication (SBC) are integral to RASS programming. The work is aimed at transitioning communities from humanitarian assistance to a phase of inclusive development assistance and economic growth.

The RASS Project works closely with other United States Government funded projects as well as collaborate with other United Nations (UN) Agencies and Funds, International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), and National Non-Governmental Organizations (NNGOs) to ensure maximum benefit to the communities and minimal duplication of assistance.

##### **2. Context, Scope, and General Technical Requirements.**

Agriculture in South Sudan is significantly underdeveloped, worsened by years of violence and various natural disasters that have greatly affected multiple sectors, including agriculture, which is the main economic sector and a vital source of livelihood for many South Sudanese individuals. A crucial element of agricultural transformation and growth is the establishment of a robust extension system that can facilitate rural transformation. This is particularly important as most farmers reside in rural areas and face capacity challenges, which are further exacerbated by illiteracy. The reliance on indigenous technical knowledge alone is insufficient for success in modern agricultural production. Strengthening this system would not only improve household food security but also enhance livelihoods by promoting family and group business initiatives, ultimately fostering community resilience in the face of various shocks and stressors.

Collaborating with producer groups has been acknowledged as a highly effective strategy for addressing the various challenges linked to rural agricultural production, thereby enhancing agricultural extension systems. This method enables a more effective use of resources to tackle current production challenges, instead of concentrating exclusively on individual farmers. This is further reinforced by the fact that collaborating directly with producers' groups provides a more empowering and supportive experience

than relying on extension workers, who offer guidance on various farming challenges. In this scenario, farmers take on a passive role instead of an active one in addressing their challenges. Producer groups are essential community entry points for enhancing productivity in agriculture and improving livelihoods. Nonetheless, it is essential to continually assess their effectiveness. This evaluation might be achieved more effectively through maturity assessment to ascertain their growth trajectory.

A maturity assessment is used to measure the current maturity level of a certain aspect of an organization in a meaningful way, enabling stakeholders to clearly identify strengths and improvement points, and accordingly prioritize what to do to reach higher maturity levels (Proenca 2016). Based on the nature of the project and working groups RASS plans to adopt and borrow key elements of Pete Fowler Construction Services, Inc. organizational performance maturity matrix and audit tool and that will investigate key aspects of group performance namely, production, marketing, governance, and leadership as these forms the critical areas of performance and strengths of groups.

The aim is to pinpoint strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for enhancement, ultimately steering the group's path towards greater effectiveness and efficiency.

## 2.2. Key Performance Areas

The consultancy firm will carry out a comprehensive maturity assessment to evaluate the internal capacity of the producers' groups, identifying their current status, including strengths and areas for improvement, to enhance their effectiveness and sustainability. This process will entail recognizing the existing capacity to assess opportunities and limitations in reaching clearly defined outcomes. The consultancy is expected to create a suitable data collection tool for collecting the necessary information as early on stated.

Conducting a maturity assessment is significant since it will determine the maturity levels of various groups. As explained herein, group maturity is divided into three categories: beginner, intermediate, and mature (Fowler 2019). Understanding this classification with customization of the model by the consultancy firm will enable RASS to successfully adjust and realign its capacity development and associated activities. It will become clear which groups suffer an intermediate lack of planning capacity development, as well as the contrary. There are currently various capacity-building trainings scheduled for all groups, as well as additional areas of assistance. Each training is suited to the group's current degree of development.

## 3. Objectives

The objective of this assignment is to perform a group maturity assessment, an exercise designed to evaluate the performance of various groups in critical areas, including membership/organizational structure, management and organizational systems, financial sustainability, production service, commercialization, and community services. The following are the specific objectives.

- i. Obtain indices of group level of performance through an appropriate diagnostic tool.
- ii. Establish capacity gaps that exist and interventions that could be adopted to close identified gaps amongst groups.
- iii. Generate guidance information for making informed decisions about resource allocation, training needs, and overall improvement strategies.

As a result, RASS will be able to tailor its efforts to the capacity development exercises required to ensure the success of each group, as defined by their maturation indicators and the method in which they will be handled.

#### 4. Geographical Locations

This activity is scheduled to happen in 13 RASS targeted counties in Year IV: Ākobo, Balieta, Budi, Duk, Jur River, Kapoeta North, Nzara, Panyijiar, Pibor, Rumbek Center, Wau, Wulu and Yambio counties.

#### 5. Expected Results and Support

##### 5.1: RASS expectations of the Consultancy Firm

- a) Specifically, the consultancy firm is expected to: Provide its own staff with working laptop with fully functioning Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
- b) The firm will ensure its own staff are connected to the internet when in the field to remain in contact with RASS, using Microsoft Teams or other web-based conference, when available.
- c) The firm will work closely with the RASS operations team to ensure adherence to travel schedules and to troubleshoot any field implementation challenges.
- d) The firm is expected to adhere to all safety guidelines and restrictions and implement solutions that may arise from limitations with in-person meetings.
- e) Given the current restrictions in the country, the consultancy firm staff are expected to communicate any security restrictions that may impede their work.
- f) Exude and apply standard ethical principles and practices for the duration of the assignment. Some of these must deal with the confidentiality of interviewee statements when necessary, refraining from making judgmental remarks about stakeholders.
- g) The firm staff shall not either during the term or after termination of the assignment, disclose any proprietary or confidential information related to the service without prior written consent by the contracting authority. Proprietary interests on all materials and documents prepared by the contract holder under this assignment shall become and remain the property of DAI/RASS

##### 5.2: RASS Support to the Consultant

RASS support will consist of:

- a) Sharing available contacts for county-level work and assisting in the coordination, booking, and payment of approved regional travel arrangements.
- b) Facilitate transportation on ground (field sites).

##### 5.3: Expected deliverables

The following are expected deliverables:

- a) An inception report including a work plan, detailed methodology, report format, and timeline, to be submitted within 5 days from the commencement of the assignment.
- b) Develop a maturity assessment tool for collecting data that is reliable, proven processes focused on a specific criterion. This must be validated by the RASS technical and MEL teams.



- c) As per the gaps and other challenges identified come out with a list of recommendations especially pertaining to amongst others, adjustment on current training curriculum for building the capacity of the groups. This must be validated accordingly.
- d) A consolidated report which includes findings of the maturity assessment and agreed capacity building plan and to be submitted within 7 days after validation.

## 6. Proposed Timeframe

This assignment should be completed latest by **April 30, 2025**. It is envisaged that the recruitment processes can kick off immediately to ensure the onboarding of the consultancy firm. Given the tight timelines, the approach is to identify competent firm with staff who would be supported by the RASS frontline staff in the collection of the data. It is envisaged that the selected firm would spearhead data collection processes in at least all counties. The timeframe for this consultancy is 80 days, from the time of signing the contract. The firm must commit to finishing the consultancy assignment within the specified timeframe. The proposed timeline is divided as follows: Time frame and estimated working days (LOE)

S/N	Task	Deliverable	# of Days
1	Preparation of schedule for fieldwork, data collection tools	An inception report including a work plan, detailed methodology, report format and timeline.	04
2	Actual Fieldwork (Maturity Assessment)	Actual Maturity Assessment Draft Report	70
3	Preparation of the draft report (process, findings, recommendations, and capacity building plan)	Develop and adjust capacity building plan for building the capacity of the groups. This must be validated accordingly.	03
4	Presentation of findings/validation, feedback, and final reporting	Maturity Assessment Report	01
5	Submission of the final report	A consolidated report which includes findings of the maturity assessment, and agreed capacity building plan, based on existing curriculum to be submitted within 7 days after the validation workshop.	02
<b>Total LOE</b>			<b>80</b>

## 7. Management of the Consultant

Under the overall supervision of the RASS Chief of Party (COP) and or his designate, the firm will be directly under the supervision of the Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP). This is a fixed fee assignment in which the firm shall be responsible for arranging and covering their required expenses such as travel, accommodation, feeding, and any other incidental costs associated with executing this assignment. Payment will be made in two installments as follows: the first installment (30%) upon submission and acceptance of the inception report; and the second and final installment (70%) upon completion of the assessment and submission of the final and approved report.

## 8. Desired Qualifications

### a) Education

- The firm shall present key staff with any one or more of the following education backgrounds; master's degree in business administration/or Business Studies or Commerce, Co-operative Management, Rural Sociology, Entrepreneurship, Agricultural Economics, Development Studies, or any other related field and a minimum of five years of previous work experience.

### b) Demonstrated Professional Knowledge

- The firm's staff should have strong experience in organizational development and institutional strengthening, capacity building, and working with farmer-producer organizations in South Sudan and the wider East African region and beyond. Experienced in conducting similar assessment/assignment in South Sudan, and the region's overall agriculture and livelihood programming context.

### c) Desired Professional Knowledge

- In-depth knowledge and experience in curriculum development are strongly required.
- Demonstrated skills in developing and undertaking field research and business performance/farmer group assessments.
- One to two years of field experience in managing Small and Medium Enterprises.
- Experience in capacity building and knowledge of curricula development and training for Farmers Field Business School (FFBS), Farming as a Family Business (FaaFB), and Farmer Business Organizations (FBOs).
- Ability to work independently and in a team environment to inspire communities to succeed.
- Excellent communicators with English language proficiency skills, both written and spoken

## 9. Submission

To apply, please send your complete and updated Curriculum Vita/Resumes of the proposed experts, technical and financial proposal detailing methodology, work plan, required resources, and budget; and previous reports **as a single email** to: [rass\\_submissions@rassactivity.org](mailto:rass_submissions@rassactivity.org). Your attachment must **not exceed 1 megabyte in size**. Please DO NOT submit any other recruitment documents currently. In the subject line, please include the: **“Consultancy Service for Maturity Assessment for various RASS’ Producers Groups”**. DAI/RASS encourages applicants to submit their applications electronically. Only shortlisted Firms that meet all the minimum qualifications will be contacted. DAI/RASS

will carry out reference checks and document verification for successful Firms. The deadline for submissions is **Wednesday 29th, January 2025, at 05:00 PM (17:00) CAT**. Kindly be reminded that DAI does NOT tolerate canvassing and will not answer questions via phone calls.

**DAI Organization and Values:** DAI is a global development company with corporate offices in the United States, the United Kingdom, EU, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Palestine and project operations worldwide. We tackle fundamental social and economic development problems caused by inefficient markets, ineffective governance, and instability. DAI works on the frontlines of global development. Transforming ideas into action—action into impact. We are committed to shaping a more livable world.

DAI and its employees are committed to confronting racism and holding ourselves accountable for positive change within the company and in the communities, cultures, and countries in which we live and work. DAI is committed to attracting and retaining the best employees from all races and backgrounds in our continued effort to become a better development partner. DAI upholds the highest ethical standards. We are committed to the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment as well as other ethical breaches. All of our positions are therefore subject to stringent vetting and reference checks.

DAI is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer with a commitment to diversity. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or status as a protected veteran.

## ATTACHMENT B EVALUATION CRITERIA

### Mandatory criteria

The Maturity Assessment Consultancy firm will be eliminated if the application does not demonstrate that it meets the following minimum mandatory criteria:

### Evaluation criteria

#	Evaluation criteria	Maximum Points
1	<b><u>Education and qualifications</u></b>	20
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The firm shall present key staff with any one or more of the following education backgrounds; master's degree in business administration/or Business Studies or Commerce, Co-operative Management, Rural Sociology, Entrepreneurship, Agricultural Economics, Development Studies, or any other related field and a minimum of five years of previous work experience</li> </ul>	20
2	<b><u>Professional experience</u></b>	80
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum of five years of previous work experience.</li> <li>The firm's staff should have strong experience in organizational development and institutional strengthening, capacity building, and working with farmer-producer organizations in South Sudan and the wider East African region and beyond. Experienced in conducting similar assessment/assignment in South Sudan, and the region's overall agriculture and livelihood programming context.</li> </ul>	20
2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-depth knowledge and experience in curriculum development are strongly required.</li> </ul>	20
2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrated skills in developing and undertaking field research and business performance/farmer group assessments.</li> </ul>	10
2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One to two years of field experience in managing Small and Medium Enterprises.</li> </ul>	10

#	Evaluation criteria	Maximum Points
2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience in capacity building and knowledge of curricula development and training for Farmers Field Business School (FFBS), Farming as a Family Business (FaaFB), and Farmer Business Organizations (FBOs).</li> </ul>	10
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to work independently and in a team environment to inspire communities to succeed.</li> </ul>	5
2.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent communicators with English language proficiency skills, both written and spoken</li> </ul>	5
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>		<b>100</b>

To be qualified, the firm must obtain a minimum of 70/100 points.  
Consultancy firms that successfully pass the interview will be recommended for the award upon satisfactory references.

## Attachment C APPLICATION'S SUBMISSION FORM

### 1. Form 1. CV

The "Maturity assessment Consultancy firm" must provide complete and updated CV/Resume of its Staff with a recent work plan or technical Proposal that was originally authored by such staff(s). The CV must specify the staff's Nationality.

1. Form 2. Financial proposal

Procurement of a consultancy firm to conduct Maturity Assessment for the DAI/RASS Activity  
Procurement Ref : RFP-RASS-25-001

**NB: Please use the attached detailed budget template in excel sheet.**



Budget Template -  
FFP.xlsx

We, the undersigned, provide the attached financial proposal by **RFP-RASS-25-001** dated **[Insert full date]**.

I certify a validity period of 90 days for the rates provided in the attached proposal. I have read and understood the instructions provided in the subject RFP, which I intend to fully comply with.

We understand that DAI is not bound to accept any applications it receives, and that DAI will not reimburse any costs associated with the preparation of this application.

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Consultant's signature



## 2. Form 3. Past performance references

The **Maturity Assessment Consultancy Firm** must provide at least 3 past performance reference information. This may include any good performance certificate that may have been received for similar assignment or assessment.

### Reference # 1

Name of Project:	
Location of Project:	
Period of Performance:	
Description of Services Provided:	
Reference Contact Name:	
Reference Contact Number:	

### Reference # 2

Name of Project:	
Location of Project:	
Period of Performance:	
Description of Services Provided:	
Reference Contact Name:	
Reference Contact Number:	

### Reference # 3

Name of Project:	
Location of Project:	
Period of Performance:	
Description of Services Provided:	
Reference Contact Name:	
Reference Contact Number:	