

Seed System Security Assessment (SSSA)

Terms of Reference for Consultancy

Proposed Start Date: Sept 18th, 2023

Location: Unity State Region, South Sudan

A. Background

South Sudan Unity state experienced heavy, open conflict between the central government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-North (SPLM/A-N) from 2011 to 2016. The 2011 conflict gave way to a humanitarian crisis with large-scale internal displacement within Unity State, South Sudan. From several needs assessments carried out by Samaritan's Purse since 2012 it has been found that seed quality, seeds access, and seed availability have all been challenges faced by farmers, primarily due to the marginalized state of their areas and the loss of fertile farm lands due to conflict. In spite of this, gains in agricultural production have been traced.

Samaritan's Purse has distributed seeds as an emergency intervention through direct distribution, in-kind modality to conflict affected farmers. Access to markets has been constrained by informal supply chains. In spite of this, improvements have been seen since 2017, allowing the Samaritan's Purse seed distributions to gradually graduate to more market-based modalities (mixed modalities of in-kind, cash, voucher assistance). The seeds promoted/distributed are open pollinated varieties (OPV) of the region's staple crop for both indigenous and improved varieties in South Sudan. The distributed varieties are expected to penetrate the local seed systems and contribute to overall improved food security in the region. Now that seeds have been distributed to the vulnerable communities under emergency interventions for over three years, a Seed System Security Assessment (SSSA) is in order.

B. Evaluation Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the assessment is to better understand the current seeds system security in the area of intervention to guide the path from direct emergency response towards sustainable seed system security interventions that are appropriate, considering the state of ongoing political change in the region. The SSSA will provide a guide for design of feasible relief or development actions to be undertaken by all relevant stakeholders including: farmers, community farm groups, local seed dealers, large-scale vendors, government entities, and non-government organizations (NGOs). Samaritan's Purse will also use the SSSA to fulfill a donor requirement by ensuring that the assessment is based on standard methodology and tools from seedsystem.org and follows humanitarian and evidence-based, sector-specific guidelines (e.g. the SCALE Seeds Assessment in BHA Programs, Guide to Seed System Security by Seed System and the newly launched SEADS Standards, Chapter 5).

Specific Objectives Include:

- To identify the main seed sources and understand how seeds end up being integrated into the system.
- To assess availability, access, quality, varietal suitability, and seed health of the seeds in the local seed system
- To provide an analysis of both the supply and demand side in order to propose market-based solutions for the different actors in the seed system.

C. Evaluation Questions

- What are the primary seed systems used by farmers in the assessment area (formal, informal, and integrated)?
- How well are existing seed channels working in terms of ensuring seed accessibility, availability and quality?
- What constrains (if any) hinder formal and informal suppliers from supplying the quantity/quality/varieties of seed farmers in the region desire?
- What characteristics do farmers prioritize in determining their varietal preferences and how do they evaluate seed quality?
- What factors prevent farmers from adopting (or lead them to choose not to adopt) new seed varieties?
- How widespread is seed insecurity in the region and what are the primary factors that drive it? How do seed needs and seed security differ between different sub-groups (based on gender, displacement status, etc.)?
- What are the most appropriate responses (short and long-term) to help strengthen farmer seed security and seed systems in the region, based on analysis of priority constraints, opportunities, and farmers' needs?

D. Methodology and Work Plan

The consultant should use the tools and methodologies provided through seedsystem.org as the basis of the assessment. The consultant should also ensure adherence to the minimum technical standards for SSSA in Emergencies, available [here](#). The SSSA will gather a combination of qualitative and quantitative data from stakeholders in Unity state where Samaritan's Purse has distributed seeds. The quantitative approaches will generate quantifiable data on priority needs among the target communities. The qualitative information will provide more insight and depth on the local seed system security context, as well as on local markets and livelihood activities. It will also help triangulate quantitative data. The consultant will be requested to conduct interviews with individual farmers, farmer groups and communities, contact seed traders, carry out market inquiries and visits, and consult with formal sector specialists in the region.

Samaritan's Purse will be in position to link the consultant to key stakeholder(s) needed for data collection/interviews for this assessment. Samaritan's Purse shall provide all logistical support required for this consultancy including flight tickets to and from point of origin as well as ground transportation within assessment areas. In addition, Samaritan's Purse shall provide accommodation within its facilities in assessment areas (facilities are very basic). In addition, Samaritan's Purse will assign a staff member to act as a local guide for the consultant within the assessment area and will provide Arabic translation services from English and vice versa, should this be required.

The assessment will take a maximum of two months (60 days) including report submission, but the field work itself should take an estimated three weeks only. As such, prior to commencing, the consultant will be required to submit a detailed scope of work document providing the following information:

- i. Overview
- ii. Expectations of Assessment

- iii. Roles and Responsibilities
- iv. Assessment Methodology
- v. Assessment Framework
- vi. Information Collection and Analysis
- vii. Reporting Methods and Frequency
- viii. Work Scheduling
- ix. Detailed Assessment Budget
- x. Data Collection Tools (to be approved by Samaritan's Purse before commencement)
- xi. Data Analysis Tools/methodologies (to be agreed upon by Samaritan's Purse and consultant)

Ideal start date for data gathering: September 18, 2023

Other helpful resources include SEADS Standards for Supporting Crop-related Livelihoods in Emergencies (<https://www.icvanetwork.org/uploads/2022/11/SEADS-Handbook.pdf>) and the SCALE Seed System Assessment in BHA Programs, Challenges and Opportunities for Enhancing Uptake, (<https://www.fsnnetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/Seeds%20Systems%20Assessments%20in%20BHA%20Programs.pdf>).

E. Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders to be consulted as part of the assessment may include but are not limited to: the Secretary of Agriculture (SoA), the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (SRRA), the business community including both retailers and whole sellers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community based organizations (CBOs), women groups, farmer groups, small holder farmers, research institutes and agro dealers. The consultant shall closely work with all relevant partners throughout the consultancy period including and during assessment planning, design, data collection/interviews, reporting, and result communication. The assessment will be conducted alongside these actors, as well as alongside Samaritan's Purse and project beneficiaries.

F. Expected Deliverables

The SSSA report is the final deliverable, following the outline specified below:

1. Executive Summary
2. Intro
3. The disaster and its consequences for the region's seed systems (description of crop and seed systems during normal times compared to those of the current crisis period).
4. Framework and Methodology
5. Findings and Results
 - a. Analysis of agro-ecological zones (map of seed system actors, the roles they play) and crop patterns¹
 - b. Overview of recent responses to seed security problems and results
 - c. Effects of the disaster on farming systems, seed system, actors, and sub-groups

¹ In order to accomplish this, the consultant will need to identify seed channels and assess the post-crisis functioning of seed channels and their impact on seed security including market functionality, agricultural input, seed and variety availability/demand, prices and price variations.

- i. Availability
 - ii. Access
 - iii. Quality
 - iv. Preferences and Constraints
 - d. Assessing home production and social networks (A, A, Q)
 - e. Identifying and assessing local formal and mostly informal seed markets (A, A, Q)
 - a. Number and capacity of small traders – Quantity, quality
 - b. Preferences and needs of farmers/traders
 - c. Traded volumes, varieties/ species
 - d. Lead time
 - f. Assessing formal sector supply including relief operations and government
- 6. Conclusions and Recommendations
 - A. Short-term needs of the seed system
 - B. Long-term solutions in the seed system – identify opportunities to improve the system
 - C. Response Analysis, determining the most appropriate response based on market actors' constraints and opportunities
 - D. Correlating seed security problems with opportunities and sustainability
 - E. Recommended Seed Security response including modalities

The sub-deliverables to be achieved leading up to the final version of the report and its accompanying annexes will include:

1. Initial Field Results Discussion – Preliminary results to be discussed at the field level with key stakeholders who may have participated in the survey or who will be implementing to interpret the findings into practical/programmatic, field-based recommendations.
2. First Draft Report – The consultant will submit the completed SSSA to Samaritan's Purse, which will be considered a first draft upon initial receipt. The draft will be reviewed within two weeks of receipt and comments provided, unless otherwise specified. The consultant shall satisfactorily address any concerns/comments raised and provide the revised version of project deliverables within one week of having received feedback from Samaritan's Purse. ²
3. Accompanying Annexes – Annexes will include copies of data collection tools used and basic transcripts of all interviews and focus group discussions. Any datasets compiled will be submitted as well. All annexes will be provided in an electronic format.
4. Final Report Submission – Upon addressing all concerns and comments raised on the first draft of the SSSA, the consultant will submit a final draft of the assessment with its accompanying annexes within a maximum period of two weeks.
5. Oral Presentation – Once the SSSA is cleared with no further comments, the consultant will prepare an oral presentation of key finding of the assessment to be presented to the Samaritan's Purse technical advisors and in-country technical officers. The presentation should incorporate comments received on the draft of the report.

G. Evaluation Budget and Proposed Payment Schedule

Applicants will be required to submit a proposal including a detailed budget. The budget will be reviewed as part of the approval process. Upon selection and approval of the consultant, Samaritan's Purse will

² Multiple rounds of feedback may be expected, in some cases. All deliverables will be submitted in electronic form.

cover the cost of international airfare, in-country accommodation and food, and in-country travel for a maximum of 60 working days inclusive of first travel date to South Sudan and final report submission. This is estimated based on deliverables under this TOR and previous experience working with consultants. The number of days, however, may be negotiated based on the number of days consultants will estimate to complete this assignment.

The proposed payment schedule details are as follows:

- 10% upon signature of contract and agreed plan of operations
- 20% upon acceptance of first draft of the report and completion of field-level stake holder discussions
- 30% upon submitting the final draft of the report and completing oral presentation and upon
- 40% on acceptance of the final report

H. Data Ownership and Confidentiality

All intellectual property produced as part of this assessment will be owned by Samaritan's Purse. All datasets and documents passed to the consultants remain the property of Samaritan's Purse and are required to be considered strictly confidential. The datasets and documents will not be shared with a third party without the prior agreement of the Samaritan's Purse. The consultant will not be allowed, without prior authorization in writing, to present any of the results as his or her own work or to make use of the evaluation results for private publication purposes or otherwise.

I. Consultant Profile

- Advanced university degree in Agriculture, Food Security, Agronomy, Seed System Security or other related subject area.
- Prior experience and/or training conducting Seed System Security Assessments strongly preferred.
- Demonstrable experience and technical rigor in producing quality data through use of accepted methodologies and seed system analysis.
- Verbal fluency and written proficiency in English (fluency in Arabic is not a requirement as Samaritan's Purse will facilitate translation services if needed).
- Contextual awareness of the region to guide understanding of the responses given during the assessment (socio-political context, agro-ecological environment, farmer profiles, and crop profiles).