Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the Mid-Term Review (MTR) Data Analysis and Report Writing of the KfW-funded project “Reconstruction & strengthening of productive infrastructure & value chains across a displacement-affected region in South-Sudan”

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Location: | Remote – no travel required |
| Type of Contract: | Consultancy |
| Duration: | 20 working days |
| Post Level: | International Consultant |
| Languages Required: | English |

**Background**

South Sudan is arguably one of the largest humanitarian crises in the world, a result of a staggering conflict that has left a crippled economy unable to sustain the basic needs of more than half of the country’s population[[1]](#footnote-1). However, despite the undeniable fragility of the South Sudanese context, the crisis hides a complex reality in which humanitarian disasters coexist with pockets of stability characterised by high productive potential and a drive to improve and bridge service delivery gaps.

At the same time, increasing numbers of returns are being recorded since the signing of R- ARCSS[[2]](#footnote-2) (September 2018)[[3]](#footnote-3). Return dynamics vary, however it has mainly been observed that partial households are returning in staggered phases, and urban areas are anticipated to see increased returns due to their higher presence of basic services and access to economic and livelihood opportunities, as well as security, which are the main pre-conditions for permanent returns[[4]](#footnote-4).

The displacement context in South Sudan (and within former Western Equatoria) is complex, with fluid movement trends characterised by transient populations, new displacements and returns, resulting in high levels of IDPs and returnees across the country. In general, there is already a relatively high number of IDPs and returnees reported in the targeted productive areas (Maridi, Ibba and Yambio), and due to their transient nature, some communities are almost entirely made up of IDPs or returnees.

For this reason, several communities in the productive rural peripheries of Maridi, Ibba and Yambio are in fact IDP and returnee communities that practice agriculture as their main livelihood. Therefore, as the Western Equatoria region is already a displacement-affected area and has the potential to be a major area of return, there is an increasing need to get IDPs as well as potential IDP and refugee returnees integrated into productive structures.

**Project Description**

Acted’s intervention is rooted in our global THRIVE flagship approach (Annex R), which Acted is implementing and developing globally to address and contribute towards sustainable production, value chains and peace building in vulnerable environments and contexts. Though THRIVE, Acted has identified, implemented and developed a sustainable approach to supporting and improving local productive value chains, market linkages and social cohesion, which are community based and tailored to each specific context and location. More specifically, THRIVE revolves around main 3 pillars:

* REVIVE is an agro-ecological approach to food security and agricultural livelihoods that works with natural processes for food production to restore soil health, biodiversity, and ecosystem function;
* EMERGE aims to support all post-harvest handling from household level to producer group to co-operative level, and includes market infrastructure ranging from roads to storage facilities; and
* INTEGRATE connects both REVIVE and EMERGE to promote social cohesion, using exchange visits as its vehicle.

Acted is a global leader in the area and has considerable experience and expertise to draw upon for strengthening agricultural value chains. Acted’s THRIVE approach is indeed holistic, addressing needs and gaps in infrastructure and value chains from the grassroots/household level to the cooperative/commercial level.

**Purpose and Objectives**

In April 2023, Acted South Sudan undertook an independent consultant to conduct a Mid Term Review to provide independent assessment and technical advice on project performance and internal processes, as well as to strengthen the monitoring, evaluation and impact measurement approaches, with a focus on generating results, to facilitate decision-making, improve project management and performance, and maximize impact.

Unfortunately, the final analysis and report writing cannot be completed by this consultant. All available data has been collected and will be shared with the new consultant. It is anticipated that triangulation and data analysis, as well as report writing will take 15 working days. Previous Terms of Reference and original scope of work is provided in Annex 1 of this document.

The MTR will have the following specific objectives:

* Assess the performance of the activities implemented in terms of relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficacy (OECD DAC criteria in line with Acted’s standard Technical Guidance Note on conducting Evaluations)
* Assess the internal logic and coherence of the intervention and identify enabling and hindering factors for the achievement of results, and develop recommendations to adjust the programmatic approach to improve the relevance and effectiveness of the activities for the remainder of the project
* Provide recommendations on how Acted can improve current MEAL systems

Scope

The Mid-Term Review will combine the assessment of project performance to consolidate successes and document lessons learned and corrective actions, with an update of existing monitoring and evaluation systems and tools, and the development of a sound impact measurement framework.

The MTR will therefore cover two components:

Component 1. Project performance

Component 2. Monitoring, evaluation and impact measurement systems

In terms of project performance, the MTR will cover all three main results/pillars, as well as the outcomes of the project presented below:

Project Logframe

|  |
| --- |
| Overall Objective: Support urban centres and their rural producing peripheries along the Yambio-Juba axis to meet their productive potential and increase supply for the whole of South Sudan |
| Result 1. Production and local value chains are boosted through investment in large-scale infrastructure and sustainable energy production systems |
| Output 1.1. Construction of infrastructure to support improved productive capacity and production (Maridi, Ibba and Yambio) |
| Result 2. Local value chains and economic development are supported through improved business structures and access to markets, market linkages and trade/ transport networks |
| Output 2.1. Construction of community-based business and social development infrastructure (Maridi) |
| Output 2.2. Construction and reinforcement of business structures (Yambio and Maridi) |
| Output 2.3. Construction of market infrastructure and support to marketing and transportation of  commodities (from Yambio, Maridi and Ibba to Juba) |
| Result 3. Local institutional capacity, local dialogue and natural resource management are enhanced |
| Output 3.1. Local institutions and local governance structures supported (Maridi, Ibba and Yambio) |
| Output 3.2. Food production and ecosystems in vulnerable or volatile areas are resilient to shocks  and stresses (Maridi and Ibba) |
| Output 3.3. Construction of communal infrastructure to meet basic needs and support production (QIP)/ Contingency Fund |

Regarding the monitoring, evaluation and impact measurement systems, the MTR is expected to:

* Suggest adjustments to the existing M&E systems and tools and propose recommendations for improvement
* Review the current Impact Measurement Framework that identifies all expected changes and results across areas of intervention, and advise on methodologies, to monitor and evaluate those changes following a systemic approach.

Evaluation Criteria and Questions

Project performance will be evaluated against the evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency. In total, the evaluation criteria form the basis and guidance for the evaluation suggested questions as presented below.

Relevance

* + To what extent is the intervention relevant to the needs and priorities of the target groups? – PRIORITY
  + To what extent is ACTED successful at leveraging relations with other stakeholders in the area? – PRIORITY
  + To what extent does the intervention align with ACTED’s THRIVE strategy? – PRIORITY
  + How does the intervention complement and build up on other ongoing or past interventions in the area? – OPTIONAL
  + To what extent does the intervention align with BMZ strategy? – OPTIONAL
  + What is ACTED’s comparative advantage in this area of work compared with other

stakeholders? – OPTIONAL

Coherence

* + To what extent is the intervention coherent in terms of activities and expected results? – PRIORITY
  + How does the intervention fit into ACTED South Sudan’s wider strategy? – PRIORITY
  + Is there a shared understanding among ACTED team and other stakeholders in terms of the strategy and expected results of the intervention? – PRIORITY
  + How does the intervention align with South Sudan national policies? – OPTIONAL

Efficiency

* + To what extent does the management structure of the intervention support efficiency for programme implementation? – *PRIORITY*
  + To what extent have resources been used efficiently to maximize results? – *PRIORITY*
  + To what extent were resources available in due time, in appropriate quantity and quality? – *PRIORITY*
  + What technology and systems does the programme use to ensure efficiency? –

*OPTIONAL*

Effectiveness

* + To what extent have the intended outcomes and outputs been achieved and what are the unintended results of the intervention thus far? – *PRIORITY*
  + What facilitating and hindering factors have affected the project’s realization of

intended results thus far? – *PRIORITY*

* + To what extent are ACTED internal processes successful in ensuring a timely and effective implementation and what are the main internal challenges hindering the successful implementation of the intervention? – *OPTIONAL*
  + To what extent are the different ACTED departments working in close coordination to ensure the effectiveness of processes? – *PRIORITY*
  + To what extent is there a shared vision and understanding about the different processes facilitating the implementation of the intervention? – *OPTIONAL*

Evaluation Methodology

The firm/ consultant is ultimately responsible for the development of the overall methodological approach and evaluation. At the same time, it is expected to propose methodologies that the firm/ consultant considers most appropriate to achieve the aims of this evaluation.

The following data sets will be shared with the consultant. Expectations from Acted on deliverables and analyses will depends on the data sets quality shared: ----  
Household survey  
Focus Group Discussions  
Key Informant Interviews  
Other relevant data as available----------------------------------

**Deliverable**

Deliverable 1.2. Final Report (100%) that shall include the following elements:

* + Findings for each proposed criteria
  + Recommendations and suggestions for improvement
  + Guidance on improvements to the current Impact Measurement Framework

**Required Skills and Experience**

The consultant should have the following background:

* + Post- graduate qualifications in development/humanitarian studies or relevant area
  + Experience in project Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), in particular on agriculture and Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL) related projects
  + Strong knowledge and/or demonstrated experience in designing and conducting similar monitoring and evaluation activities in insecure contexts is required
  + Excellent knowledge of the South Sudan / Western Equatoria context, especially in terms of security, and culture is required
  + Strong analytical skills and ability to clearly synthesize and present findings
  + Excellent written and oral English essential

The consultant shall identify a focal point for communication and reporting purposes, with appropriate skills and experience. At the briefing session, the focal point should submit a full contact list of all those involved in the evaluation.

**Application Packet**

Any individual wishing to apply for this opportunity should submit the following no later than 2:00PM CET on January 10, 2024, to EMAIL

1. Cover letter detailing expression of interest.
2. Curriculum vitae including previous experience with MEAL, independent evaluations, and consultancy.
3. Sample of previous work, (15 pages or less).
4. Proposed budget, not to exceed $5,000USD, and small proposal (not to exceed 2 pages) of how the consultant plans to utilize the data, presented above, to analyze data and report the final findings.
5. Original **Offer Form (PRO-06)** dated, filled, signed & stamped by the Bidder *(detailed as per the requested currency)*
6. **Supplier Questionnaire (PRO-06.1)** dated, filled, signed & stamped by the Bidder
7. **ACTED Ethical Declaration (PRO-06.2)** dated, filled, signed & stamped by the Bidder
8. **Bidder’s official registration documents**
9. **Bidder’s legal representative national ID or passport**
10. **ACTED General Conditions of Purchase** signed & stamped by the Bidder

**Proposed Timeline**

It is expected that the chosen consultant is available to start working in mid-January 2024, and complete the assignment by March 1, 2024.

1. South Sudan 2019 HNO [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. IOM DTM Mobility Tracking Round 5 (July 2019) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. 2019 Returnees Scenario Planning Report [↑](#footnote-ref-4)