

STREAM Baseline Survey Scope of Work – SDC Funded

Project/Consultancy Title	Baseline Assessment for Strengthening Resilience in Agriculture, Livelihood and Markets (STREAM)
Project Location(s)	Mundri East and Mundri West Counties of Western Equatoria (Legacy Amadi) State and in Koch County of Unity State
Duration	45 working days (9 weeks) - from 15th of March 2021 to 14th of May 2021

Background.

Western Equatoria (WES) and Unity State (US) are among the states in South Sudan mostly affected by recurrent conflicts. These states face a multitude of challenges resulting from the combined effect of prolonged violence and economic shocks which have resulted in displacements, loss of livelihoods, loss of property and assets, destruction of infrastructure and dysfunctioning markets among others. These shocks have also been seen to increase inter-communal tensions as there is increased pressure exerted on available limited resources. In response to some of these shocks, households have been forced to resort to negative coping mechanisms which continue to undermine both their immediate and long term economic opportunities.

1) Program to be Evaluated

Strengthening Resilience in Agriculture, Livelihoods and Markets through Local Institutions in Mundri East & West and Koch (STREAM), SDC Funded is a three phase seven years' program, with the first phase starting as of 1st December 2020 to November 30th 2022 upon completion this phase, phase two will start as of 1st December 2022 to 30th November 2025 and Third phase starting as of 1st December 2025 to November 2027

2) Purpose of the Baseline survey

Mercy Corps is seeking a qualified consultant to conduct a baseline assessment of SDC funded **Strengthening Resilience in Agriculture, Livelihoods and Markets** through Local Institutions in Mundri East & West and Koch (STREAM), SDC Funded, 1st December 2020 to November 30th 2022. **Hence the Terms of Reference has been developed to attract interest from consultants to undertake a baseline. This baseline is being undertaken with funding from SDC and will be conducted to determine pre-project conditions from which a comparison can be made and also for the purpose of informing the Project Implementation Plan, monitoring progress, evaluating performance, contributing to learning and research. It will be essential to gain in-depth understanding of the challenges related to food security, livelihoods and markets.** Below are the purposes for baseline survey using (Market system development (MSD) Lenses:

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The overall objective of this baseline survey is to collect baseline data for a set of indicators outlined in the project monitoring and evaluation plan. The baseline report will be used as a basis for monitoring and measuring progress over the course of project implementation.

- I. To establish the current status of project indicators. This will serve as a basis for setting targets and measuring milestones on outcomes.
- II. To assess and document new knowledge, context analysis and relevant findings that will influence the project's design and thus ability to contribute to its impact in the community.
- III. To identify and document key challenges affecting the communities intended to be served by the program in food security, livelihoods and markets in Mundri East, Mundri West and Koch.
- IV. Collect data on proxy indicators or key areas which contribute to the conceptualization of the each of the indicators being base-lined, based on feedback from the thematic reviews

3) Program Background & Relevant Documents

Mercy Corps aims to make strategic investments in Mundri East and Mundri West Counties of Western Equatoria (Legacy Amadi) State and in Koch County of Unity State. Mercy Corps' goal for the target regions aligns with Mercy Corps' global mission to build secure, productive and just societies. STREAM's Overall Goal is that vulnerable households, youth and women in Mundri East, Mundri West and Koch Counties in South Sudan have improved well-being making use of the skills, knowledge and enabling environment facilitated by the Programme. The Phase 1 of the STREAM Programme will focus on one key objective: *to improve food security of 6,350 households through enhanced gender equitable market access and increased agricultural production and off farm and non-farm livelihood opportunities.*

The Main Objective of the project is "Vulnerable households, youth and Women in Mundri East, Mundri West and Koch Counties in South Sudan have improved their wellbeing by making use of the skills, knowledge and enabling environment facilitated by the programme".

The main outcomes of STREAM are:

- **Outcome 1:** Increased food production yields among male and female smallholder farmers in 6,350 targeted farm households
- **Outcome 2:** Increased income for 2,000 male and female youth households engaged in non- farm livelihood opportunities and agro-processing opportunities and off-farm agro-processing opportunities
- **Outcome 3:** Strengthened market systems and local institutions to ensure gender equitable access to financial services, livelihood inputs and extension services for 6,350 households.

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4) Baseline Design

Baseline Methodology

The consultant is expected to propose and design the methodology for conducting the baseline survey using market system development lenses. Both primary and secondary sources not limited. A mix of qualitative and quantitative methods such as surveys, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with key informants, and observation of the system will be used to collect primary data. Surveys and interviews are expected to take place at all program sites (Mundri East and West and Koch).

1. Qualitative methods include;

Cognizant of COVID-19, the consultant is expected to conduct Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key-Informant Interviews (KIIs) while ensuring safety for all participants. Findings from this technique will be used to refine questions raised through the thematic reviews.

2. Quantitative Methods include;

It is important to be able to acquire data that permits the Mercy Corps and its partners to compare changes over time in different locations (such as counties) as per the indicators. Household surveys will be conducted to measure the selected indicators. This data should be collected either through face to face interactions or remote interviews.

However, the consultant is at liberty to come up with its methodology to undertake this study not necessary limited to the above approaches

3. Sampling

The consultant will implement a sampling procedure which is representative of the consortium life of project target population. It is important that the baseline achieves a statistically acceptable sample size for the respective project participant categories.

The consultant will develop, and abide to the approved sampling methodology. Where sampling strategy is changed for whatsoever reason, the consultant is expected to recompute to achieve representative samples with a resubmitted sampling protocol. Therefore, clear and unambiguous proposal on sampling methodology and sample size is expected from the consultant. Sampling method should attain representative and generalizable results for all project participant categories.

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4. Data sourcing

The baseline measurement considers both **primary** and **secondary** data sources.

Primary data sources include, but are not limited to:

- Farmers groups/cooperatives
- Households female and male farmers
- Women's organizations/groups
- female and male youth (18 – 25 years)
- Financial service provider/Micro finance institution
- Honey, Lulu, carpenter, tailors, bakers etc.
- County agricultural department
- Relief and rehabilitation commission official

The secondary data sources include but are not limited to studies from South Sudan's FSL-Cluster, FAO, WFP, SDC, IPC latest findings and other bilateral donors, the consultant is expected to undertake review of existing documents using appropriate document review tools and methods.

5. Data analysis.

The consultant should adopt an iterative data analysis approach. This approach allows for prompt data validation as enumerators collect data. Hence, the consultant will develop a data analysis plan. Analysis should integrate findings from the different sources of data. The consultant should corroborate, and triangulate data from different primary data sources. Depending on access to the country and within the country, the consultant should factor in remote analysis and presentation of findings and sharing of documents in collaborative forums.

6. Data Quality Issues

The designed data collection techniques, Quality of data should not be compromised and maximum care should be taken to avoid or at least minimize errors at all stages of the baseline measurement process. Some techniques such as, but not limited to, the following will be applied:

- Before data collection: Pilot testing the data, collection tool will be required in order to verify the reliability and validity of the tool. This includes for both face to face and remote approaches.
- During field data collection: For household surveys, data entry will be on the spot using an electronic questionnaire. Monitoring enumerators for accuracy in doing the interview and in capturing data will be necessary. Checking through all completed responses (on a daily basis) to ensure any mistakes or inconsistencies are corrected on time will add value to the quality of data.
- Data analysis: Perform iterative data analysis which involves continuously analyzing key variables as part of data quality checks using various methods such as: frequencies or cross-tabulations or any forms of regressions.

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7. Communication of findings/reflections.

Baseline findings will be validated by the relevant community stakeholders and Mercy Corps staff through a validation workshop. Once the validation is completed then the final report will be produced.

Consultant Management

Mercy Corps will support the consultant both physically and remotely throughout the baseline. Whenever the consultant is identified, the consultant will work with the Program and Project Manager, MEL Manager. The team will commence the inception process to:

- Review of baseline protocols, sampling design, data collection and analysis plan, COVID-19 risk reduction plan.
- Finalize tools and approve final plan prior to commencing data collection
- Providing technical support and oversight during data collection process

Data analysis The Consultant on this note is required to provide a data analysis plan and share before undertaking full assessment together with the data collection tools

9. After Action Review

The consultant will provide a reflection on the entire baseline assessment process shall be documented and shared with the Project team and Mercy Corps MEL department so that they may be taken into consideration for future studies. The documentation of these after action review will be vital for reflection, growth and continued improvement.

10. Baseline survey limitation.

The baseline report should also entail the limitations identified during the survey period may include:

11. Gender Analysis .

Besides the baseline assessment, the consultant will also conduct a gender analysis using the Mercy Corps' Gender Analysis Framework as such understanding will provide guiding responses to gender issues that will inform effective program deliver. Given that, in most communities and households; men, women, boys and girls play different roles and responsibilities with unequal power dynamics that influence their ability to make independent or combined decisions in communities or households. This gender analysis will therefore take into consideration the following six analytical domains including:

1. **Roles and Responsibilities:**
2. **Access to resources.**
3. **Decision making and Influence.**
4. **Time (time poverty and work intensity):**
5. **Cultural and legal context.**
6. **Gender Based Violence**

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Indicator to assess during the baseline survey.

Mercy Corps - South Sudan

Strengthening Resilience in Agriculture, Livelihoods and Markets through Local Institutions in Mundri and Koch (**STREAM**) Programme Phase 1

Result Level	Description	Indicators	Baseline Value ??
GOAL for the seven year intervention:	Vulnerable households, youth and women in Mundri East, Mundri West and Koch Counties in South Sudan have improved well-being making use of the skills, knowledge and enabling environment facilitated by the STREAM Programme.		
OBJECTIVE of Phase I (1st Dec 2020 – 30th Nov 2022			
	To improve food security of 6,350 households through enhanced gender equitable market access and increased agricultural production and off farm and non-farm livelihood opportunities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in average household farm crop yield by 30% for target households 2. Average household land area under cultivation increased by 50% for target households 3. Number of farmers reporting an increase in the number of food secure months 4. Average HH Score on the Coping Strategies Index (CSI) for target households 5. Participants report a change in attitude in practice around negative coping mechanisms 	

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		6. 30% of the target households have an alternative off farm/ non-farm means of livelihood support	
OUTCOMES	1. Increased food production yields among male and female smallholder farmers in 6,350 targeted farm households	1.1 % of male and female smallholder farmers that have adopted improved agricultural practices 1.2 % of increase in yield in staples due to adoption of improved agricultural practices 1.3 % of male and female smallholder farmers that have reported reduced post-harvest losses	
	AFS_ARI_1	1.4 Number of smallholders with increased incomes from agricultural production	
	AFS_ARI_2	1.5 Number of smallholders applying more agro ecological farming practices	
	2. Increased income for 2,000 male and female youth households engaged in non-farm livelihood opportunities and agro-processing opportunities and off-farm agro-processing opportunities. ¹	2.1 Number of agro-based initiatives supported and number of women and youth involved/ employed 2.2 Income earned by these agro-based initiatives 2.3 Number of SHGs given Working Capital assistance (grants) 2.4 Number of loans issued by SHGs to members for IGAs 2.5 Households reporting improved quality of life and wellbeing in response to IGA loans and subsequent income generation 2.6 Change in perception and acceptance for women to engage in traditionally male livelihoods.	

¹ We need to establish existence of agro based opportunities

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	IED_TRI_5	2.7 Proportion of women with positive perception on their influence on business and economic related decision making.	
	3. Strengthened market systems and local institutions to ensure gender equitable access to financial services, livelihood inputs and extension services for 6,350 households ²	<p>3.1 Number of cooperatives engaged in seed production and details of seeds produced</p> <p>3.2 Number of private agro and non-agro based service/ input providers and details services offered</p> <p>3.3 % of male and female smallholder farmers benefited from and reporting satisfaction with accessing quality inputs and tillage services</p> <p>3.4 # and types of improved non-farm livelihood support services and opportunities created</p> <p>3.5 # of tailored and inclusive formal and informal financial services available for households engaged in agricultural and off-farm livelihood activities.</p> <p>3.6 % of farmers reporting confidence in the quality of extensions/financial services provided by the local partners,</p> <p>3.7 # of individuals/ households benefited from formal and informal financial services</p> <p>3.8 # of functional markets and market systems</p> <p>3.9 # and type of local institutions (MFI, Cooperatives, Self-Help Groups) functional and providing services to members and clients.</p> <p>3.10 % of households that have diversified their source of income supported by the program.</p>	
	IED_ARI_3	3.11 Number of people having access to and making use of formal financial products and services	
OUTPUTS			

² Consider some Market Systems Resilience type questions/indicators (focusing on both structural and behavioral characteristics)

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	1.1 Adoption of improved agricultural practices among male and female smallholder farmers	1.1.1. # of functional Agricultural Cooperative Societies (both revived and formed) targeting male and female smallholder farmers 1.1.2. # of Country Department of Agriculture extension cadre staff capacity build on climate smart agriculture	
	1.2. Reduced post-harvest losses among male and female smallholder farmers	1.2.1. % of male and female smallholder farmers who report using improved storage and post-harvest handling practices	
	2.1 Expansion of off-farm and agro-processing livelihood opportunities among male and female youth.	2.1.1 # of value addition facilities and enterprises such as honey collection and processing, lulu oil processing and cassava process revived or scaled up	
	3.1 Increased access to quality inputs and tillage for male and female smallholder farmers	3.1.1 Existence of certified quality seed dealers and or producers working closely with farmers' cooperative societies.	
	3.2 Improved off-farm livelihood support services and agro-		

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	processing opportunities		
	3.3 Tailored and inclusive formal and informal financial services available for households engaged in agriculture and non-farm livelihood opportunities	3.3.1 Number of individuals disaggregated by age and gender reporting increased access to financial services	

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5) Team Composition, Roles & Responsibilities

Include for me your team members here and their roles.

S.no.	# of Days	Activity	Responsible Person	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 4	W 5	W 6	W 7	W 8	W 9
1	4	Develop an Inception Report detailing the process and methodologies to be employed to answer the evaluation questions. This should include all evaluation tools, and important time schedules for this exercise, and be presented to Mercy Corps South Sudan for review and further inputs before going to the field.	Consultant									
2	5	Undertake desk review of the relevant program documents that include the Proposals, Implementation Plans, Program Implementation Reports, Mercy Corps strategy documents, Monitoring Survey Reports and any other relevant documents	Consultant									
3	1	Conduct orientation of in-country leadership to discuss expectations and logistics	Consultant & M&E									
4	5	Design, develop, critique (with Mercy Corps South Sudan's STREAM Program and MEL team) and refine data collection tools including translation to Moru/Nuer languages, when needed appropriately.	Consultant									
5	5	Train Enumerators/Surveyors and Pre-test data collection instruments	Lead Consultant and Field Officer									
6	8	Oversee data-collection activities	Enumerators & Field Officer									
7	5	Encode and analysis data	Consultant									
8	5	Prepare draft Baseline report	Consultant									
9	2	Conduct debrief meeting in-country and present draft report (Validation workshop)	Consultant									
10	3	Finalize Report and share with Mercy Corps	Consultant									
11	1	Final approval by Mercy Corps	Director of Programs/CD									
12	1	Report dissemination and follow up	Director of Programs									
	45	Total										

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6) Description of Deliverables

Deliverables:

Successful performance of this assignment will be based on production and timely submission to Mercy Corps of the following deliverables:

- **Inception report** – Both for the Baseline and gender framework analysis; setting out how they will approach the assignment, proposed methodology and timetable/work scheduling and data collection tools, including survey questionnaire include an annex highlighting how COVID-19 safeguards will be achieved. There will also be an oral presentation to Mercy Corps and representatives from partner organizations. The research protocol and survey instruments will need to be approved before going to the fieldwork stage
- Finalize survey tools and inclusive and gender sensitive sampling design and gender framework analysis tools
- Enumerator training, tool pre- testing and data collection for both tools
- **Draft report** - Draft report (in English) will be shared with Mercy Corps within 15 working days of completion of field work, submitted to Mercy Corps for input for both baseline main survey and gender analysis framework
- **Final Report** – for both gender framework analysis and main baseline survey; Five Hard Copies and a soft copy of the report comprising of input from consortium members, completed within 5 days after input is received.

The program baseline survey shall be conducted in maximum 45 days starting from the date of signing the contractual agreement. With first draft submitted at least 30 days after the start of the evaluation with report maximum of 60 pages including annexes and the summary report of 30 pages' maximum.

i. Report Structure & Content

The final report will at the very least contain, but not be restricted to the following.

- Introduction
- Acknowledgements
- Lists of abbreviations
- Executive Summary (including main conclusions and recommendations).
- Background with analysis of the context.
- Methodology
- Limitations
- **Main Findings**
 - Baseline Survey Main findings
 - Gender analysis findings based on the six domains of roles and responsibilities, access resources, decision making & influence, time, cultural and legal context and gender based violence

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- Conclusion and recommendations
- References
- Annexes (a revised log frame, TOR, abbreviations, persons interviewed, references, tables with survey data, questionnaire forms used, summary indicators table with baseline values, data collection tools, consent form, Statistical analyses (codes and formulas used) Raw data (both quantitative and qualitative etc.

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7) Participation & Stakeholder Involvement Plan

Activity	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
Finalizing Terms of Reference	MEL Manager	STREAM Program Manager	Director of Program/MSD Regional advisor	Country Director
Oversee the implementation of the Baseline Survey	MEL Manager	STREAM Program Manager	Director of Program/MSD Regional advisor	Lead Consultant
Submitting Inception Report including review of the relevant program documents and	Lead Consultant	MEL Manager	STREAM Program Manager	Country Director/ Director of Programs
Conduct orientation of in-country leadership	Lead Consultant	MEL Manager	STREAM Program Manager	Country Director/ Director of Programs
Booking of flights, Process authorization & introduction Letters and accommodation	Admin Assistant & Logistic Assistant	National Operations Manager	MEL Manager	Lead Consultant
Develop Data collection tools	Lead Consultant	MEL Manager	STREAM Program Manager	Country Director/ Director of Programs
Recruit Enumerators	Field MEL Team	Lead Consultant	M&E Manager	Head of Office
Train Enumerators	Junior Consultants	Lead Consultant	Field M&E Team	M&E Manager
Field Data collection	Enumerators	Junior Consultants	Lead Consultant	Field M&E Team
Encode and analysis data	Lead Consultant	MEL Manager	STREAM Program Manager	Country Director/ Director of Programs
Prepare draft Baseline report	Lead Consultant	MEL Manager	STREAM Program Manager	Country Director/ Director of Programs
Conduct debrief meeting in-country	Lead Consultant	MEL Manager	STREAM Program Manager	Country Director/ Director of Programs
Finalize Report and share with Mercy Corps	Lead Consultant	MEL Manager	STREAM Program Manager	Country Director/ Director of Programs

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Final approval by Mercy Corps	Director of Program	SDC/Lead Consultant	HQ MEL Team	Lead Consultant
Report dissemination	Director of Program	Country Director	Senior Program Officer HQ	MEL Manager & STREAM Program Manager
Follow Up	MEL Manager	STREAM Program Manager	Director of Programs	Country Director/Donor

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8) Plans for Dissemination, Use & Follow Up.

As laid out in schedule section of this SOW, MEL manager will lead the STREAM Team in developing an action plan based on the findings and recommendations of the Baseline Survey. The MEL manager will be responsible for presenting the key findings and recommendations to the STREAM. Copies of all data collections tools and information gathered during the baseline will be provided for use and dissemination among the Mercy Corps Team and for use and dissemination at headquarters level.

9) Budget/ Consultancy Fee

The total charge to be paid for the consulting assignment will depend on the technical proposal. A technical and financial proposal based on the Terms of Reference outlined above must be provided. Hence most of the payments are entirely responsibility of the Consultancy firm/Consultant and invoice Mercy Corps as per the agreement. However, below will be incurred from Mercy Corps side.

S/no	Activity	Unit	Rate (USD\$)	Total
	Air fare	4	275	1,100USD\$
	Grand Total			1,100USD\$

10) Baseline survey Timing

The baseline survey will be conducted for a duration of **9 weeks (from 15th of March 2021 to 14th of May 2021)**. This will include preparation and delivery of the final report

- Whilst Mercy Corps and the other consortium members will undertake to facilitate travel and organize meetings for the consultant, it is the consultant's ultimate responsibility to follow through and ensure that all relevant respondents are interviewed and relevant project sites visited.
- Mercy Corps will be responsible for consultants' accommodation and travel within the project location while the consultant will be responsible for the requisite visas and travel permits.
- Travel to and within the project locations involves risk (travelling by car and through insecure locations). Other than providing standard security arrangements and information, Mercy Corps will take no responsibility for the safety of the consultant(s) and/or of their respective property during this exercise. Personal insurance will be the responsibility of the consultant(s). This car will entirely be hired by the consultants.

11) Skills and qualification required.

- At least lead consultants with a Master's degree in food security or related area and over 5 years of significant food security-related research/work experience.
- Applied qualitative and quantitative research experience.
- Market system development approach assessment skills is an added advantage.
- Significant experience of undertaking desk reviews, as well as assessments and/or evaluations.
- Experience performing food security programme surveys within South Sudan will be a major advantage.
- Proven publication record related to food security (attach at least one research sample).
- Ability to provide evidence of producing high quality assessment/evaluation reports in English, and working within tight timeframes (understanding of relevant local languages will be an added advantage).

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12) Terms of Payment.

Payment will be effected as follows; First installment (25%) of the total cost on submission and acceptance of inception report, 25% upon submission of first draft report and Final payment (50%) upon completion and approval of the final report. Additional information on payment terms and conditions will be included in the contract.

13) Additional Information.

- Consultants shall abide to WHO and Government of South Sudan COVID-19 SOPs.
- Consultants shall be required to sign and abide to Mercy Corps Safeguarding Policy (which includes prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and behavior protocols)
- Consultants shall abide to EU beneficiary data privacy/management policies

14) Ethical considerations, Confidentiality and Proprietary Interests.

- The Consultancy Firm/Individual consultant holder needs to apply standard ethical principles during the course of the assignment. Some of these must deal with confidentiality of interviewee statements when necessary, refraining from making judgmental remarks about stakeholders.
- The incumbent 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 properties of Mercy Corps

15) Communication.

For queries or need for additional information on the consultancy please contact: lgideon@mercycorps.org.

16) Application Process.

Interested individuals and companies should submit the following application documents:

- Expression of interest outlining how the consultant(s) meets the selection criteria and their understanding of the ToR and methodology
- A proposed activities schedule/work plan with time frame
- Copy of CV of the consultant(s) who will undertake the evaluation
- One recent example of similar evaluation report written by the applicant
- Legal documents for interested consultancy firms
- Financial proposal detailing consultant(s) itemized fees

Please address your applications to **“ss-pr@mercorps.org while copying “lgideon@mercycorps.org “& kaguret@mercycorps.org**

The deadline for submitting applications is 12th of March 2021.