

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Feasibility Study

“Beyond Aid: Building Resilient Livelihoods (BRL)”

Advancing Sustainable Agriculture and Environmental Stewardship in Magwi and Yambio through Strengthened Producer Groups, Private Sector Partnerships, and Scaled Past Investments, with a Focus on Women and Youth

Commissioning Agency	Gesundes Afrika e.V. (German applicant / lead), in partnership with Cordaid and Action for Community Health (ACH)
Donor / Programme	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), administered via Engagement Global (bengo) – PT / PT-LDC funding line
Project Country / Locations	South Sudan – Yambio County (Western Equatoria State) and Magwi County (Eastern Equatoria State)
Planned Project Duration	42 months
Indicative Total Project Budget	EUR 1,611,111 (BMZ contribution 90% = EUR 1,450,000 / Cordaid & Gesundes Afrika own contribution 10% = EUR 161,111, incl. own contributions, project visits and admin costs in Germany)
Target Population	10,400 individuals in total, including 400 direct-beneficiary households (≈2,400 people: 70% women, 15% youth, 15% persons with disabilities) and 8,000 additional individuals reached through nutrition and women’s socio-economic empowerment campaigns
Assignment Type	Independent feasibility study commissioned prior to full proposal submission, in line with bengo/BMZ requirements for PT / PT-LDC funding
Report Length	Maximum 30 pages (excluding annexes)

1. Background and Rationale

Gesundes Afrika e.V., together with its implementing partners Cordaid and Action for Community Health (ACH), has developed a Concept Note for the project “Beyond Aid: Building Resilient Livelihoods (BRL)”, targeting Yambio County (Western Equatoria State) and Magwi County (Eastern Equatoria State) in South Sudan. The Concept Note has been positively appraised, and the partnership is now proceeding to full proposal development for submission to Engagement Global (bengo) under the BMZ-funded PT / PT-LDC programme.

South Sudan continues to face a protracted food security and livelihoods crisis. Over 60% of the population experience acute food insecurity, and although more than 80% of households depend on agriculture, production remains largely subsistence-based, with low commercialization, weak market linkages, limited access to finance, high post-harvest losses and increasing climate variability. Previous interventions in Magwi -- notably BMZ project 7388, "Integration, stabilization, and capacity building of internally displaced persons, returnees and host communities in South Sudan to improve living conditions and peaceful coexistence" (September 2023 -- April 2026), implemented by Cordaid South Sudan and ACH -- supported the formation of producer groups and Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), but these structures remain weakly institutionalized. The BRL project proposes an integrated model combining legumes, coffee and teak production, strengthened producer groups and cooperatives, and a structured private-sector partnership with the Equatoria Teak Company (ETC), to build diversified, resilient livelihoods for women, youth and persons with disabilities.

These Terms of Reference (TOR) define the purpose, scope, methodology and deliverables of that study.

2. Purpose and Objectives of the Feasibility Study

The overall purpose of the feasibility study is to provide Gesundes Afrika e.V. and its partners with a solid, evidence-based foundation for finalizing the BRL project concept ahead of full proposal submission – by independently verifying assumptions, clarifying requirements, opportunities and risks, and offering concrete guidance on optimizing the design, results framework and implementation arrangements.

Specific objectives

1. Assess the extent to which the proposed BRL approach can plausibly achieve its intended objective and goal under the prevailing conditions in Yambio and Magwi Counties.
2. Verify and deepen the context, problem and stakeholder analysis presented in the Concept Note at micro, meso and macro levels.
3. Critically examine the project design against the OECD DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.
4. Assess the capacities, comparative advantages and ownership of the local project partner(s) – Cordaid and ACH – and the strength of the proposed private-sector partnership with ETC.
5. Validate the beneficiary selection criteria, targeting approach and inclusion mechanisms for women, youth and persons with disabilities.
6. Formulate concrete, actionable recommendations for adjusting the project concept, impact/results matrix, and monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) approach, for direct incorporation into the full proposal.
7. Identify risks – contextual, institutional, financial and personal/security – and propose feasible mitigation measures.

8. Identify mechanisms to ensure the safeguard of project stakeholders including project beneficiaries against exploitation in whatever form
9. Determine the community and government interest and support of the proposed project intervention to determine its feasibility, effectiveness and alignment towards the project objective
10. Determine whether private sector actors and markets exist for proposed agricultural interventions beyond the proposed ETC partnership on coffee, legumes and teak.
11. Determine the presence of cooperatives and determine if the current coffee and teak out growers are members
12. Determine the satisfaction levels of the current coffee out growers in relation to coffee payments and other support including extension services received from ETC
13. Evaluate the strategic partnership with ETC as a coexisting, mutually beneficial arrangement -- assessing how strengthening farmers' production and organizational capacity increases the volume and quality of produce supplied to ETC, and how this reciprocity can be clearly articulated to meet BMZ's strict requirements on private-sector engagement under this funding line.
14. For Magwi County, where the project does not include coffee production in partnership with ETC, investigate the specific challenges and approaches needed to strengthen the resilience, health and long-term livelihood capacities of beneficiaries at micro, meso and macro level, building on lessons from earlier Cordaid/ACH/Gesundes Afrika interventions in the county (see Section 1).

3. Scope of the Study

The study shall cover the intervention areas of Yambio County (Western Equatoria State) and Magwi County (Eastern Equatoria State), and shall analyze the proposed project at three interlinked levels:

- Macro level: national food security, agricultural policy, land tenure, climate change and related risks and conflict dynamics in South Sudan, and their bearing on project feasibility.
- Meso level: county-level institutions, government extension services, private-sector actors (including ETC, agro-dealers and financial institutions), producer-group and cooperative structures, and coordination among humanitarian/development actors.
- Micro level: household- and community-level realities, including existing producer groups, VSLAs, gender and protection dynamics, and the specific constraints faced by women, youth, returnees, refugees, IDPs and persons with disabilities.

The study should draw on and avoid duplicating existing evidence, including prior evaluations from earlier Cordaid/Gesundes Afrika/ACH interventions in Magwi, and should clearly indicate where it is generating new primary evidence versus validating existing findings.

4. Key Guiding Questions

The consultant(s) shall use the following areas of inquiry – adapted from Section 4 of the bengo guideline – to structure data collection and analysis, prioritizing those most relevant to closing the evidence gaps in the Concept Note.

4.1 Purpose and use of the study

- How conducive is the context in Yambio and Magwi to achieving the project objective of strengthened, market-oriented and resilient livelihoods for women and youth?
- What additional design or implementation questions, beyond those already answered in the Concept Note, need to be resolved before full proposal submission?

4.2 Methodology of the study itself

- What participatory methods and tools will be used for data collection with producer groups, VSLAs, ETC and government stakeholders?
- Which stakeholders, and how many, will be consulted, and how will their backgrounds and interests be captured?

4.3 Initial situation and problem analysis

- Which of the nine problem areas identified in the Concept Note (food insecurity, climate vulnerability, soil degradation, weak market access, extension gaps, limited finance, weak sustainability of past interventions, land access constraints, limited livelihood diversification) are most pressing, and are there others not yet captured?
- What existing producer groups, VSLAs and community structures in Yambio and Magwi can realistically be built upon, and what specific institutional gaps must be addressed?
- What conflict, displacement and intercommunal dynamics must be factored into implementation planning?
- In Magwi specifically, where coffee production in partnership with ETC is not part of the project, what challenges and approaches should be investigated to strengthen the resilience and health of beneficiaries, and to support their capacities at micro (household), meso (community/institutional) and macro (systemic) level over the long term -- drawing on lessons from BMZ project 7388?

4.4 Local project partners

- How well-founded is the selection of Cordaid and ACH as local/implementing partners, and how solid are the existing partnerships (Cordaid–Gesundes Afrika since 2021, Cordaid–ACH since 2024, Cordaid–ETC since 2023)?
- What organizational capacities and gaps exist within Cordaid and ACH for delivering this specific model (legumes–coffee–teak integration, cooperative development, market linkages)?
- What is ETC's current market position? How realistic and sustainable is the envisioned role of ETC company within the project as both a purchaser of agro-goods and provider of trainings? What are its interests and are there any potential conflicts of interest with the ones of beneficiaries and the overall project aims?
-

4.5 Beneficiaries and other stakeholders

- Is the proposed targeting (400 direct-beneficiary households -- 200 smallholder farmer households in Yambio and 20 existing groups of 10 members each in Magwi, together comprising approximately 2,400 people; 70% women, 15% youth, 15% persons with disabilities) realistic, equitable and verifiable?
- How homogeneous or heterogeneous are host communities, returnees, refugees and IDPs in the target areas, and what does this imply for project design?
- Do beneficiaries and stakeholders share a common understanding of the problems and proposed solutions, and what level of ownership/contribution can be expected?

5. Evaluation against OECD DAC Criteria

The study shall provide a critical, evidence-based assessment of the BRL project concept against each of the following six OECD DAC criteria:

- **Relevance** – alignment of the integrated legumes–coffee–teak model and producer-group strengthening with the priority needs of women, youth and persons with disabilities in Yambio and Magwi, including an assessment of potential unintended negative impacts on social cohesion and conflict dynamics, in line with the Do No Harm principle.
- **Coherence** – consistency with human rights and inclusion principles, complementarity with other Cordaid, Gesundes Afrika, ACH and third-party interventions, and avoidance of duplication.
- **Effectiveness** – plausibility of the cause-effect logic linking producer-group strengthening, private-sector partnership (ETC) and diversified production to improved livelihoods, food security and resilience; suitability of proposed indicators.
- **Efficiency** – whether the proposed budget allocation (investment, staff, operating costs, outputs 1–3, MEAL, indirect costs) is proportionate and cost-effective relative to the 42-month timeframe and the 10,400 target beneficiaries.
- **Impact** – contribution of the project objective to broader food-security, environmental-stewardship and women’s/youth economic-empowerment goals in South Sudan; potential for structural or normative change.
- **Sustainability** – credibility of the proposed transition to cost-shared extension services, cooperative development, farmer-owned enterprise pathways, and VSLA-anchored financial sustainability beyond the project lifetime.

6. Methodology

The Consultant(s) shall propose a mixed-methods approach, to be finalized in an inception report, expected to include:

- Desk review of the Concept Note, prior evaluations, national policy and food-security data, and other preparatory documents provided by Cordaid/ACH/GA (see Section 11).
- Key informant interviews with Gesundes Afrika, Cordaid, ACH, ETC, relevant government ministries (agriculture, land, gender/social development), agro-dealers and financial institutions.
- Focus group discussions and/or participatory exercises with existing producer groups, VSLAs and prospective direct beneficiaries in Yambio and Magwi, disaggregated by gender, age, disability status and displacement status.
- Field visits to proposed intervention sites in Yambio County and Magwi County, including verification of land availability and access arrangements in peri-urban areas.
- Market and value-chain assessment for legumes, coffee and teak, including verification of ETC’s off-take, extension and pricing arrangements.

The consultant(s) must demonstrate independence from Gesundes Afrika, Cordaid and partner organizations and disclose any prior engagement with Gesundes Afrika, Cordaid, ACH or ETC, in line with the independence requirement in Section 1 of the bengo guideline.

7. Deliverables and Reporting Requirements

- Inception report (approx. 5–8 pages): confirmed methodology, stakeholder/sampling plan, data collection tools and detailed work plan, submitted within one week of contract signature.
- Draft feasibility study report, for review and comment by Gesundes Afrika, Cordaid and ACH.
- Final feasibility study report of no more than 30 pages (excluding annexes) structured around: context and problem analysis (micro/meso/macro); assessment of local partners; beneficiary and stakeholder analysis; evaluation against the six OECD DAC criteria; and concrete recommendations for the project concept, impact matrix and MEAL indicators.
- **Executive Summary** (in English) in accordance with bengo requirements, summarizing the evaluation methodology, key findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. Translation into German will be arranged by the applicant.
- A single validation workshop with the applicant, Cordaid, ACH and ETC), held shortly after submission of the draft report, at which the consultant(s) present preliminary findings and recommendations for triangulation and debrief prior to finalization of the report.

All data, tools and raw findings underpinning the study must be made available to Gesundes Afrika, Cordaid and ACH on request, and, in turn, to bengo/BMZ on request, in line with the accountability requirement in Section 1 of the guideline.

8. Indicative Timeline

Milestone	Responsible	Indicative Timing
Contracting of independent Consultant(s)	Cordaid/Gesundes Afrika e.V.	Week 0
Inception report submitted and approved	Consultant(s) / Cordaid/GA	Week 1
Desk review, KIIs and field data collection (Yambio & Magwi)	Consultant(s)	Week 2–3
Draft report submitted	Consultant(s)	Week 4
Validation workshop with Organizations/partners	Consultant(s) / Cordaid, GA, ACH, ETC	Week 4
Comments consolidated and returned	Cordaid, GA / Partners	Week 5
Final report submitted	Consultant(s)	Week 6

The assignment is expected to be completed within 30–45 days, including fieldwork, analysis, validation, and final reporting once the contract is signed. An indicative schedule (inception, data collection, analysis, validation, finalization) will be agreed with Gesundes Africa, Cordaid and ACH during the inception phase, within the overall 30–45-day timeframe.

9. Requirements for the Independent consultant(s)

The feasibility study shall be conducted by an independent consultant or consultancy firm with demonstrated experience in conducting feasibility assessments, evaluations, baseline studies, or similar assignments for development and humanitarian programmes. Preference will be given to South Sudanese consultants or firms, or to consultants who can demonstrate substantial experience and contextual knowledge of South Sudan, particularly the Equatoria region.

9.1. Academic Qualifications

- A minimum of a **Bachelor's Degree** in Agriculture, Agricultural Economics, Rural Development, Development Studies, Forestry, Natural Resource Management, Economics, Environmental Sciences, Social Sciences, Monitoring and Evaluation, or a related field.
- A **Master's Degree** in a relevant field will be an added advantage.

9.2. Professional Experience

- At least **7 years of relevant professional experience** in conducting feasibility studies, assessments, research, evaluations, or programme design assignments.
- Demonstrated experience in agriculture, food security, livelihoods, resilience, climate change adaptation, agroforestry, or economic empowerment sectors.
- Proven experience working with international NGOs, UN agencies, bilateral donors, government institutions, or donor-funded programmes.
- Experience conducting assignments in South Sudan, particularly in rural and conflict-affected settings.
- Familiarity with BMZ, Engagement Global (bengo), GIZ, USAID, EU, UN, or similar donor requirements will be an added advantage.

9.3. Technical Expertise

The consultant/team should demonstrate expertise in the following areas:

- Sustainable agriculture and climate-resilient farming systems.
- Agricultural value chains and market systems development.
- Producer group, cooperative, and farmer organization strengthening.
- Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and financial inclusion approaches.
- Agroforestry and natural resource management.
- Gender equality, women's economic empowerment, youth engagement, and disability inclusion.
- Conflict-sensitive programming and Do No Harm approaches.
- Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) systems.
- Application of OECD DAC evaluation criteria.

9.4. Team Composition (for Consultancy Firms)

Where a consultancy firm is proposed, the team should preferably include:

- **Team Leader / Lead Consultant** – responsible for overall study design, analysis, and reporting, including the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) expertise required to review and strengthen the project's results framework and MEAL approach (Section 2, objective 6; Section 9.3).
- **Agriculture and Livelihoods Specialist** – responsible for value chain, production, and market systems analysis.
- **Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist** – responsible for assessing gender, youth, disability, and protection considerations.
- **Field Enumerators/Research Assistants** – with knowledge of local languages and communities in the target areas.

9.5. Independence and Ethical Requirements

- The consultant or firm must be independent and have no conflict of interest with Gesundes Afrika e.V., Cordaid, ACH, or Equatoria Teak Company (ETC).
- Any previous professional engagement with these organizations must be disclosed in the proposal.
- The consultant must adhere to professional standards of confidentiality, safeguarding, and ethical research practices.

10. Budget for the Study

The applicant/consultant shall submit a financial proposal covering all required items necessary to facilitate the feasibility study. All figures should be in United States Dollars (USD). The budget should reflect realistic costing for a 30 - 45-day assignment, noting that Cordaid/GA will not provide volunteer support, community mobilization, or logistical coordination as specified in the TOR. The financial proposal will be subject to Cordaid/ACH financial guidelines and relevant South Sudan tax policies.

10.1. Financial proposal.

Budget Item	Unit	Qty	Rate (USD)	Total (USD)
A. CONSULTANCY FEES				
Subtotal A — Consultancy Fees				
B. FIELD TEAM SUPPORT (Enumerators/Translators)				
Subtotal B — Field Team Support				
C. TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION				
Subtotal C — Travel & Accommodation				
D. DATA COLLECTION MATERIALS AND LOGISTICS				
Subtotal D — Materials & Logistics				
E. REPORT PRODUCTION AND VALIDATION WORKSHOP				

Subtotal E — Report & Workshop				
GRAND TOTAL				

10.2. Payment Schedule.

The payment for the applicant/consultant shall be arranged in the following schedules of payment as per the milestones attained, subject to committee approval and in compliance with South Sudan tax policies. Applicable consultancy fee will be subjected to applicable 20% tax as per the South Sudan taxation policy. Rates quoted by consultants in Section 10.1 shall be gross figures (i.e. inclusive of this 20% withholding tax); Cordaid/ACH will withhold and remit the tax, and payments will be made net of tax accordingly.

Milestone	Percentage	Amount (USD)
Upon approval of Inception Report	30%	
Upon delivery of Draft Report	40%	
Upon acceptance of Final Report	30%	

11. Tendering, Selection and Preparatory Documents

Interested individual consultants/firms shall submit a technical proposal (methodology, team composition and CVs, work plan) and a financial proposal (itemized budget and invoicing schedule) and two reports of previous similar Feasibility study done by the firm/consultant.

Cordaid/ACH/Gesundes Afrika will provide the following preparatory documents to shortlisted firms/individual consultants:

- The approved BRL Concept Note and budget.
- Relevant South Sudan national policy/strategy papers on food security, agriculture and land.
- Reports and lessons learned from earlier Cordaid/ACH interventions in Magwi (producer groups, VSLAs).
- Partnership agreements or terms of reference with Cordaid, ACH and ETC, were available.
- The bengo “Guide to Conducting Feasibility Studies” and relevant BMZ/bengo funding requirements (BNBest-P).

12. Roles and Responsibilities

- Gesundes Afrika e.V. (applicant/commissioning agency): overall contracting, quality assurance, liaison with bengo, and integration of findings into the full proposal.
- Cordaid and ACH (local implementing partners): facilitate field access, stakeholder introductions, and provide local logistical and technical support to the reviewer(s).
- Independent firm(s)/consultants: conduct the study impartially, deliver all outputs specified in Section 7, and respond to applicant/bengo queries on methodology, data and findings as required.

13. Inquiries and submission.

In case of inquiries, contact the email addresses below.

tendercordaidsouthsudan@cordaid.org

The deadline for the submission of both technical and financial proposals is by **Friday 18 September 2026; time 4:00Pm.**

Proposals can be submitted in both hard copy, by dropping them directly to the Cordaid tender box in the address below for receiving proposals for consultancy works and

Afex Riverside Camp, Stadium Road, Off Cemetery Road, Africa 05 house building.

or by email to tendercordaidsouthsudan@cordaid.org.

14. Evaluation and award of consultancy.

Cordaid / Gesundes Afrika/ACH will evaluate the proposals and award the assignment based on technical and financial feasibility. Cordaid / Gesundes Afrika/ACH reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal received without giving reasons and is not bound to accept the lowest or highest bidder. Data collected shall remain the property of Cordaid / Gesundes Afrika/ACH.