

Approved
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Call for Consultancy Service

Title of Assignment	Baseline Consultancy Service for the project "Building peaceful, inclusive and resilient communities in Upper Nile and Northern Bar El-Ghazal"	
Location	Renk County, Upper Nile State	
Duration	15 Days of engagement	
Assignment Start	20 th July 2026	Assignment End Date: 7 th August 2026
Application opens	29 th June 2026	Application End Date: 10 th July 2026

1. Introduction and Context

1.1 Contracting Organization Overview

Founded in 2008, the Humanitarian and Development Consortium (HDC) is a national non-governmental organization dedicated to delivering effective programs for communities in South Sudan impacted by conflict and natural disasters. Drawing on practical experience and technical knowledge, HDC consistently implements high-impact humanitarian and development initiatives. The organization's work centers on four key areas: enhancing food security and sustainable livelihoods to strengthen community resilience; advancing peacebuilding, community protection, and civic education; expanding equitable access to education and learning opportunities; and improving public health through community-based health education. As a rapidly growing organization, HDC aims not only to expand its delivery of high-quality, long-term social protection services to vulnerable populations but also to strengthen its advocacy efforts, ensuring that marginalized and at-risk individuals across South Sudan can actively participate in decisions affecting their daily lives.

1.2 Project Context and Overview

South Sudan continues to face a complex, protracted humanitarian crisis driven by localized conflicts, severe climate shocks, economic instability, and regional population inflows. Renk County, situated in the northernmost part of Upper Nile State, serves as a primary border entry point for individuals fleeing ongoing instability in neighbouring Sudan. This massive, continuous influx of displaced populations has severely overstretched existing community infrastructure, depleted basic service capacities, exacerbated local resource competition, and heightened protection risks for vulnerable host and displaced communities alike. Against this context, HDC, in partnership with ACROSS and Christian Blind Mission (the prime recipient), with funding from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) under the Transitional Development Assistance (TDA), is implementing a four-year project, *"Building peaceful, inclusive and resilient communities in Upper Nile and Northern Bar El-Ghazal,"* designed to address these compounding crises. The intervention delivers parallel support across four core pillars: Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL), WASH, Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR), and Protection.

HDC is the primary implementing partner for this integrated initiative in Renk County, working in close coordination with local authorities, community networks, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), and humanitarian agencies. The project combines interventions across several sectors to deliver urgent assistance while also strengthening long-term resilience within the target communities. It focuses on refugees, returnees, and marginalized host populations in Geger, Chemmedi, and Jalhak payams in Renk County. To create a solid benchmark for tracking progress, ensuring accountability, and guiding data-informed decision-making, HDC needs a thorough baseline survey before launching full project operations.



2. Project Description and Objectives

The project, titled "Building peaceful, inclusive and resilient communities in Upper Nile and Northern Bar El-Ghazal," is a multi-sectoral initiative designed to transition communities from emergency reliance to self-sufficiency. Implemented over four years period (2026-2029), the overall goal of the project is to improve the well-being and resilience of vulnerable communities, particularly women, girls, youth and persons with disabilities among the refugees, returnees, internally displaced and host-communities through revamped food security and livelihood, water, hygiene and sanitation and protection interventions in Renk (Up-per Nile State) and Aweil East (Northern Bahr el Gazal State), Republic of South Sudan. The intervention integrates four critical sectors:

Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL): Priority actions involve revitalizing agricultural output, supplying climate-resilient farming inputs, and delivering income-generating activity (IGA) training targeted at women and young people. The intended result is enhanced household food production, broader dietary diversity, and expanded sustainable livelihood options within the community.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH): Priority actions involve restoring key water sources, setting up locally managed water committees, building separate sanitation facilities for different genders, and supporting community-led total sanitation (CLTS) initiatives, along with hygiene education. The intended outcome of this component is that community members have improved hygiene due to access (disability inclusive and gender-sensitive) to clean Water, hygiene, and sanitation (WASH) facilities"

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR): Key focus areas include strengthening community-level preparedness through the formation of Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Management Committees (DRMCs), mapping local hazards, and strengthening disability inclusive early warning systems (EWS). The expected outcome is that community members have improved inclusive disaster resilience and their local preparedness capacities.

Protection: This focuses on mainstreaming protection across all sectors, establishing community-based protection networks (CBPNs), providing psychosocial support (PSS), preventing gender-based violence (GBV), and setting up robust accountability to affected populations (AAP) mechanisms. The expected outcome is that the protection of community members, especially women, children, and persons with disabilities, has been improved, and peaceful coexistence and social cohesion is strengthened.

3. Purpose and Objectives of the Baseline Consultancy

3.1 Overall Purpose of the Assignment

The primary purpose of this consultancy is to conduct a comprehensive, rigorous baseline survey in Renk County before the full execution of project activities. The baseline survey will establish a reliable reference point for all project indicators detailed in the logical framework. It will provide the HDC project team, donors, and partners with the necessary benchmark data to measure progress, evaluate impact, and make informed adjustments to project design.

3.2 Specific Objectives

- **Quantify Indicators:** Establish baseline quantitative values for all log frame indicators across the FSL, WASH, DRR, and Protection sectors.



- **Analyze Context:** Assess the current socio-economic and security dynamics influencing targeted communities, including conflict drivers related to resource scarcity.
- **Identify Vulnerabilities:** Map out localized hazards, community coping mechanisms, and specific protection risks faced by women, children, and marginalized groups.
- **Assess Existing Capacities:** Evaluate the operational capacity of local institutions, water management committees, CMDRRs, Community-based Protection networks and agricultural groups currently active in Renk County.
- **Refine Targeting:** Provide explicit recommendations to refine household targeting criteria, ensuring the most vulnerable segments receive support.

4. Scope of Work

The selected consultant or consulting firm will be responsible for executing all phases of the baseline assessment in close collaboration with the HDC Programme and Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) team.

Geographic Scope: The assessment will be restricted to Renk County, Upper Nile State, South Sudan. Within the county, the consultant will survey specific payams and bomas targeted by the project. This includes urban and peri-urban settlements in Renk town, as well as remote rural villages and temporary displacement sites hosting returnees.

Target Population: The target population for this baseline survey includes resident host community households, refugees and returnees arriving from Sudan, key informants, including local authorities, traditional chiefs, sector ministry representatives, farmers, women's group leaders, and youth representatives.

Sectoral Scope

Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL): The survey must evaluate the Four Pillars of Food Security (Availability, Access, Utilization, Stability) tailored to Renk's specific agricultural and geopolitical ecosystem. This should specifically focus on establishing basic thresholds using standard metrics like the Food Consumption Score (FCS), Household Hunger Scale (HHS), and reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI), assessing access to smallholder farming land for displaced persons, seed availability (mainly sorghum and sesame), tools, and localized climate-smart agriculture practices, analyze local market functionality, and price volatility for basic foods, and measure household asset ownership, access to informal safety nets, and reliance on Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs).

Water, Hygiene and Sanitation (WASH): The scope must focus on WASH facility coverage, accessibility, vulnerability targeting mechanisms, health and hygiene behaviors, and social cohesion to ensure inclusive, equitable WASH services in a highly constrained environment. Specifically, the consultant should assess the functionality, proximity, and contamination risk of existing water points and coverage gaps. The target baseline is establishing the percentage of households accessing sustained, safe drinking water within a 30-minute round. The survey should also assess access and utilization of sanitation facilities; this includes determining latrine coverage, proximity to households, and the ratio of users to functional latrines, assessing whether latrines are culturally appropriate, gender-segregated, and accessible to vulnerable groups (e.g., elderly, disabled, and children). The survey should also produce an inventory of active Water Management Committees and assess the participation of Persons with Disabilities in WASH management committees, decision-making processes, and community feedback mechanisms. The survey should also



identify potential tensions and competition over scarce WASH resources between displaced populations (refugees/returnees) and host communities.

Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction: The survey should establish a clear benchmark across five critical thematic pillars: DiDRR policy and local governance, individual and community vulnerability, physical accessibility, inclusive early warning systems, and institutional capacity. Specifically, the survey should document barriers faced by persons with disabilities during sudden shocks, particularly regarding safe movement; evaluate the presence and strength of local Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs); assess the inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Renk County boma/payam disaster committees; and assess whether early warnings, evacuation routes, and emergency protocols are communicated in accessible formats, e.g., sign language or simplified audio.

Protection: The survey should evaluate protection risks (such as safety, trauma, and documentation), service access gaps, and social cohesion dynamics among refugees, returnees, and host communities. It should specifically measure inter-community trust, resource-sharing tensions, and community-led dispute resolution mechanisms. Specifically, the survey should evaluate the prevalence of GBV, the safety infrastructure, and community awareness regarding available referral pathways; map the prevalence of trauma, psychological distress, and the accessibility of mental health and psychosocial support services; measure the frequency and quality of interactions (joint economic activities, cultural events, shared resources) between displaced populations and the host community; and evaluate the effectiveness of community-based grievance mechanisms and the inclusion of diverse groups (women, youth, minority clans) in local decision-making.

5. Methodology

The consultant is expected to propose a robust, scientifically sound mixed-methods methodology combining quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. This ensures data triangulation and enhances the validity of findings. The following are proposed methodologies;

- **Desk Review:** A comprehensive review of secondary literature must be conducted before field deployment. This includes a review of the project proposal narrative and logical framework, the HDC country strategy, and previous evaluation reports from Upper Nile State, including UN cluster reports (FSL, WASH, Protection) for South Sudan, with specific to Renk context.
- **Quantitative Methods:** This includes undertaking a structured questionnaire administered to sampled households using mobile data collection tools (e.g., Kobo Toolbox). The consultant must use a probability sampling method such as multi-stage stratified cluster sampling to ensure findings are statistically representative of the target population. The sample size must be calculated using standard statistical formulas, accounting for a 95% confidence level, a 5% margin of error, and an estimated non-response rate.
- **Qualitative Methods:** The survey should employ Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), conducted with homogeneous groups (separated by gender and age) to capture nuanced social dynamics, safety concerns, and underlying vulnerabilities. A minimum of 12 FGDs should be conducted across the target areas. Besides, the survey will conduct semi-structured interviews with purposively selected individuals possessing specialized knowledge, including county commissioners, line ministry officials, health workers, and water committee chairs. The survey should also utilize a standardized observation checklist to verify the physical state of water sources, hygiene conditions at markets, and potential hazards in public spaces.



6. The Role of the Consultant (Technical Execution)

- **Drafting the Inception Report:** Outlining the precise survey methodology, sampling framework, and work plan.
- **Developing Data Collection Tools:** Designing quantitative questionnaires and qualitative Focus Group Discussion (FGD) or Key Informant Interview (KII) guides.
- **Digital Survey Scripting:** Programming tools into mobile data collection platforms like Kobo Toolbox / Kobo Collect.
- **Ethical and Safeguarding Compliance:** Aligning data protocols with research ethics, human rights, and protection policies.
- **Enumerator Management:** Recruiting, onboarding, training, and supervising local data collectors.
- **Pilot Testing:** Conducting field pre-tests of questionnaires to fix translation glitches, logical errors, or unclear wording.
- **Field Logistics:** Overseeing day-to-day data collection timelines and transport for field teams.
- **Quality Control & Spot Checks:** Performing real-time data monitoring to catch outliers, missing entries, or enumerator bias.
- **Data Cleaning:** Exporting raw datasets and resolving structural inconsistencies or duplicate entries.
- **Statistical & Qualitative Coding:** Running statistical cross-tabulations for quantitative data and thematic coding for qualitative findings.
- **Benchmark Calculation:** Measuring exact baseline values for every indicator found in the project's logical framework.
- **Drafting the Baseline Report:** Writing a comprehensive narrative that highlights key pre-project community conditions.
- **Facilitating Validation Workshops:** Presenting preliminary findings to stakeholders to verify facts and gather final feedback.
- **Handing Over Assets:** Delivering clean, anonymized raw datasets alongside the finalized report.

7. The Role of the Contracting Organization (Strategic Oversight)

- **Providing Project Documents:** Supplying the consultant with the initial project proposal, theory of change, and results framework.
- **Financing the Assignment:** Managing the consulting fees, milestone payments, and overall operational budget allocation.
- **Stakeholder Mobilization:** Introducing the consultant to community leaders, local authorities, and project partners to build trust.
- **Access Facilitation:** Arranging security clearance, permissions, or access to sensitive target areas, e.g., refugee camps
- **Technical Oversight:** Participating in regular progress updates and review meetings to ensure the consultant stays aligned with the scope
- **Consolidated Feedback:** Reviewing tool drafts, inception reports, and report iterations within contractual timelines.
- **Report Validation:** Formally signing off on deliverables once they meet institutional and donor technical quality standards



8. Consultant Key Deliverables

- **Inception Report:** A comprehensive document detailed within 7 days of contract signature. It must include an expanded methodology, sample size allocations per cluster, fully developed tools programmed in Kobo Toolbox, and a refined fieldwork itinerary.
- **Preliminary Presentation:** A slide deck summarizing primary field findings, raw baseline indicator matrices, and emerging operational realities presented to HDC staff before report compilation.
- **Draft Evaluation Report:** A comprehensive baseline report detailing findings across all sectors, including demographic breakdowns, cross-tabulations, and clear indicator tables.
- **Final Baseline Evaluation Report:** A highly polished, reader-ready document containing actionable recommendations, a clean final data matrix, and technical annexes.
- **Cleaned Datasets:** Anonymized, fully labeled raw and clean quantitative datasets (SPSS, Stata, or CSV format) accompanied by qualitative transcripts and media files.

9. Implementation Timeline and Work Plan

The assignment is expected to be completed within a total period of forty-five (45) calendar days from the date of contract signature.

Phase	Activities	Duration	% of time spent on Assignment
Phase 1: Inception	Literature review, inception report development, tool design, Kobo setup, and mobilization meetings.	3 Days	25%
Phase 2: Training & Field	Enumerator training, tool pre-testing, sampling validation, household data collection, FGDs, and KIIs.	7 Days	45%
Phase 3: Analysis	Data cleaning, data verification, analysis syntax execution, and draft report development.	3 Days	20%
Phase 4: Finalization	Stakeholder feedback incorporation, final reporting, dataset submission, and closeout briefing.	2 Days	10%

10. Data Quality Assurance

The consultant must detail measures to ensure high data quality, including pre-testing and piloting data collection tools in a non-target community, daily synchronization, cleaning of uploaded mobile data, and logical validation constraints embedded within the mobile survey script, along with close field supervision and random spot-checks by the lead consultant.



11. Management and Governance Arrangements

11.1 Reporting Lines

The consultant will report directly to the Executive Director, with secondary technical coordination provided by the Programme development lead, MEAL, FSL, WASH, and Protection Managers.

11.2 HDC Responsibilities

- Furnish all relevant project background literature, the logical framework, and existing strategic data.
- Provide logistical support, including field transportation within Renk County and security briefings.
- Facilitate entry into local communities, introducing the consultant team to local authorities and relevant stakeholders.
- Provide timely feedback on draft deliverable submissions.

11.3 Consultant Responsibilities

- Manage all technical implementation steps, including tool configuration, data analysis, and report generation.
- Cover insurance costs, field communications, laptop computers, and individual operational upkeep tools.
- Hire, pay, and manage qualified local enumerators and field guides.
- Maintain professional independence and adhere to agreed-upon deadlines

12. Budget and Payment Modalities

12.1 Cost Structure

The consultant must submit an all-inclusive financial proposal detailing daily technical fees, enumerator remuneration, data transcription charges, field expenses, and administrative overheads.

12.2 Payment Schedule

Disbursements will be managed based on performance milestones:

Phase	Activities	% of payment disbursements
Phase 1: Inception	Literature review, inception report development, tool design, Kobo setup, and mobilization meetings.	20% upon approval of the Inception Report
Phase 2: Training & Field	Enumerator training, tool pre-testing, sampling validation, household data collection, FGDs, and KIIs.	40% Upon delivery of the Draft Report
Phase 3: Analysis	Data cleaning, data verification, analysis syntax execution, and draft report development.	
Phase 4: Finalization	Stakeholder feedback incorporation, final reporting, dataset submission, and closeout briefing.	40% Upon acceptance of the Final Report



13. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be assessed based on technical merit and cost efficiency;

- A. Technical Approach & Methodology (40%)
- B. Profile & Relevant Sector Experience (30%)
- C. Cost Efficiency & Budget Alignment (30%)

14. Ethical Considerations and Guiding Principles

14.1 Informed Consent and Do No Harm

The evaluation team must obtain voluntary, documented informed consent from every respondent before data collection. Participation must be entirely voluntary, with clear options to opt out or decline specific questions without penalty. All evaluation procedures must adhere to "Do No Harm" protocols, ensuring that data collection does not jeopardize the safety or security of participants or staff.

14.2 Child Protection and GBV Standards

When interacting with vulnerable populations or assessing protection risks, the consultant must follow international standards for Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence data collection. Enumerators must be trained to recognize distress signals and be equipped with up-to-date, functional referral sheets to guide individuals who request immediate support. Qualitative discussions addressing gender-based vulnerabilities must be facilitated by trained, gender-matched enumerators in private spaces.

14.3 Data Protection and Confidentiality

All quantitative and qualitative data must be completely anonymized at the point of collection. Personally Identifiable Information (PII) must not be uploaded to cloud platforms or included in report drafts. Collected data must be encrypted, stored securely on password-protected devices, and made accessible only to designated evaluation team members.

15. Requirements and Qualifications of the Consultant

The prospective consultant or consulting firm must possess the following qualifications:

- **Academic Background:** Master's degree or Postgraduate Diploma in Development Studies, Monitoring and Evaluation, Rural Development, Public Policy, Economics, Statistics, Public Health, Humanitarian Action, or a related field.
- **Demonstrated Experience:** Minimum of 7 years of experience designing and leading baseline surveys or evaluations for multi-sectoral programs (FSL, WASH, Protection, DRR) in complex humanitarian contexts.
- **Geographical Knowledge:** Proven experience working within South Sudan, with specific operational familiarity in Upper Nile State or Renk County considered a strong asset.



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- **Technical Skills:** Advanced mastery of mobile data collection tools (Kobo Toolbox, ODK) and quantitative analysis packages (SPSS, Stata, or R), along with strong qualitative analysis capabilities.
- **Language Proficiency:** Complete professional fluency in written and spoken English is required; working knowledge of Arabic or local languages spoken in Renk is highly desirable

1. Submission and Application Process

1.1 Required Documentation:

Interested independent consultants or firms must submit an application package containing:

- A. **Technical Proposal:** Explaining the proposed methodology, data quality assurance plans, and timeline adjustments (Maximum 10 pages).
- B. **Financial Proposal:** Itemized budget breakdown in USD, including daily rates and clear line-item descriptions.
- C. **Curriculum Vitae (CVs):** Detailing relevant experiences and qualifications of the lead consultant and core team members.

[To: info@hdcafria.org](mailto:info@hdcafria.org)

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ADMINISTRATION ISSUES

The Consultant shall not, either during the term or after termination of the assignment, disclose or authorize the disclosure of any proprietary information related to this consultancy service. Proprietary interests in all materials and documents prepared by the consultant under the assignment shall become and remain the property of Humanitarian and Development Consortium.

A zero-tolerance policy on conduct that is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the HDC, including sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination, applies to this consultancy, and all selected candidates will be expected to adhere to these standards and principles.



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