

ACTION DOCUMENT

THE EUROPEAN UNION EMERGENCY TRUST FUND FOR STABILITY AND ADDRESSING THE ROOT CAUSES OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND DISPLACED PERSONS IN AFRICA

1. IDENTIFICATION

Title	Reference: T05-EUTF-HOA-SS-84 South Sudan Rural Development: feeder roads to strengthen the livelihoods and resilience of rural communities			
Zone benefitting from the action / Localisation	South Sudan: States of Northern / Western Bahr El Ghazal, and selected locations in Greater Upper Nile region.			
Total cost	Total estimated cost: 35 900 000 EUR Total amount drawn from the Trust Fund: 35 900 000 EUR EUR Co-financing amount: (to be determined)			
Aid modality(ies) and implementation modality(ies)	Project Modality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Indirect management (pillar assessed entities to be selected according to criteria indicated under para. 4.3) ○ Direct management: procurement of services 			
DAC – codes	210 - Transport & Storage / 21021 - Feeder Roads construction / 311 - Agriculture / 31120 - Agricultural development 430 - other Multi-sector / 43072 - Household food security			
Main delivery channels	Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society – 20000 / International NGOs – 21000 / Donor-country-based NGO – 22000 / Developing country-based NGO – 23000 Private sector institution – 60000 / Private sector in provider country – 61000 / UN – 41000			
Markers	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participatory development / good governance	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disability	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Rio Markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
Migration marker	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	

SDG	<p>Goal 2: Zero Hunger</p> <p>Other relevant SDGs: Goal 5: Gender Equality</p> <p>Goal 8: Decent work and Economic Growth</p> <p>Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure</p> <p>Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities</p> <p>Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities</p>
Valetta Action Plan Domains	1. Development benefits of migration and addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement.
Strategic objectives of the Trust Fund	2. Strengthening resilience of communities, especially the most vulnerable, as well as refugees and displaced people.
Beneficiaries of the action	<p>Target groups: 1. Individual households (with a focus on most disadvantaged food insecure HHs, women and the youth), smallholder farmers, agro-pastoralists and their organisations, including youth and women organisations. 2. State and county level authorities, notably State Ministry of Physical Infrastructures, State Ministry of Agriculture and Food security, State Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries and their technical services. 3. Private sector actors including traders, transporters, brokers and agro-dealers; 4. Customary Chiefs at Boma and village level (Paramount Chiefs, Village Chiefs) in the target Counties.</p> <p>Final beneficiaries: rural communities, private sector actors and local authorities, located in Northern and Western Bahr El Ghazal, as well as in food insecure priority locations in Greater Upper Nile Region</p>
Derogations, authorised exceptions, prior approvals	Events to be reported 25.a2)

2. RATIONALE AND CONTEXT

2.1. Summary of the action and objectives

This Action contributes to **EU Trust Fund objective 2:** strengthening resilience of communities and in particular the most vulnerable, as well as refugees and displaced people; it is aligned with the **Valletta Action Plan priority domain 1:** development benefits of migration and addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement. This Action is consistent and contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals 2 to “end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”.

This Action has been designed to complement, build synergies and to capitalise on the achievements of previous and ongoing EU funded interventions in the States of Northern and Western Bahr El Ghazal (BEG) in South Sudan, where rural infrastructures have been developed with the EU support. Specific interventions for recovery and resilience will also be extended to famine risk locations¹ in the Greater Upper Nile (GUN) region. Experiences and lessons learned from the on-going EU funded South Sudan Rural Development program (SORUDEV), Rural Development: Strengthening Smallholders' Resilience (SORUDEV SSR), and Zonal Effort for Agricultural Transformation - Bahr el Ghazal Effort for

¹ Cf. IPC Phases 4/5 (Integrated Phase Classification, Dec. 2020).

Agricultural Development (ZEAT BEAD) have both shaped the design of this Action, also in the light of the changing and evolving context in South Sudan.

From the previous investments in infrastructure development, positive outcomes with regards improved connectivity and access to basic services have since been noted and documented. However, other key roads and bridge infrastructures could not be developed due to budgetary constraints despite the fact that both state and county level authorities had since prioritized them due to their strategic importance. This funding therefore provides an opportunity to address the same and unlock potential in the target areas. Following up with accompanying agricultural development will allow communities to capitalise on the improved infrastructure and enhance their livelihoods and income opportunities. The Action will be aligned to the possible extent to the EU Gender Action Plan 2016-2020 priorities: “Access to decent work for women of all ages” (objective 14); “Equal access and control over clean water, energy, transport infrastructure, and equitable engagement in their management, enjoyed by girls and women” (objective 16) and “Equal rights and ability for women to participate in policy and governance processes at all levels” (objective 17).

The intervention logic of this action builds on the fact that improving the feeder road networks and infrastructure in rural areas with agricultural potential is a driver of social and economic development; enhanced connectivity generates multiplier effects that trigger increase in private sector presence and access to markets, thereby spurring smallholder farmers to produce. In terms of human rights, the action promotes the right to adequate food, the right to an adequate standard of living and the right to equality and non-discrimination. The application of the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights by private sector actors involved in the action will be promoted. The Action, through its **infrastructures component** aims at constructing and completing priority feeder roads and bridges in the focus areas. These roads were already considered in previous EU interventions, but implementation was not pursued mainly due to budgetary constraints. Completion of strategic bridges, a priority road rehabilitation and drinking water supply in selected locations will be also implemented through a budget increase to this component. Accompanying measures (**soft component**) of the Action will capitalise on the completed feeder roads networks, by linking populations to markets (including the recent WFP-led aggregation centres), promoting social cohesion, incomes, enhanced livelihoods and gender equality for resilience building, peace and stabilisation. Due to the widespread food & nutrition insecurity across the country² the geographic coverage of this component is expanded to the Greater Upper Nile region, with a view to delivering resilience-oriented operations in areas facing extreme levels of food insecurity (IPC Phase 4 / 5 locations³).

Local ownership and empowerment will be enhanced through participatory approaches involving community leaders and members, farmers associations, religious leaders, local organisations etc. The participation of women, including women’s organisations and women decision makers, will be promoted. Potential for synergies and complementarities with EU ZEAT-BEAD and EUTF ongoing projects that support resilience, livelihoods and agricultural / livestock production in the focus areas of BEG and GUN is high.

The **overall objective** of the programme is to contribute to improved stabilisation and livelihood resilience of rural vulnerable communities in Greater Bahr El Ghazal and Greater Upper Nile (South Sudan). **The specific objectives** of this Action are (1) To improve connectivity for the vulnerable communities in the States of Northern and Western Bahr El

² Cf. Integrated Phase Classification, Dec. 2020 – Projections April-July 2021

³ An initial list of locations include, but it is not limited to Aweil South (Northern BEG), Akobo and Uror (Jonglei), Pibor and Pochalla (Greater Pibor Administrative Area), areas along the Sobat River (Upper Nile), Rubkona (Unity). Final target locations concerned by the project geographic expansion will be defined by the time of concluding the rider to the contribution agreement (L2 commitment).

Ghazal (2) To improve food security of the target vulnerable rural populations, including highly food insecure communities in GUN region. The indicative implementation period of the action is 48 months.

2.2. Context

2.2.1. National context

Repeated wars and conflicts have negatively affected at least three generations of people in South Sudan. Almost 4 million people (nearly one in three) are displaced. This includes around 1.5 million who are internally displaced and around 2.3 million South Sudanese who sought safety in neighbouring countries. Half of population is severely food insecure and 7.2 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. In 2020 the situation has worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic impact and other factors (raise in intercommunal violence and conflicts, flooding events, desert locust invasion in some locations), leading to unprecedented food crises (IPC levels 4 and 5), mainly in the Greater BEG and GUN regions.

On 12 September 2018, the parties signed the Revitalised Agreement on the resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS). This marked the end of a process to revitalise the 2015 Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS), led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). There is broad acknowledgement that this is the only deal on the table and that there is a need to engage constructively in encouraging implementation. There has been some progress in term of implementation, most notably the ceasefire is being largely respected, some high profile political prisoners have been released, some members of the opposition have returned to Juba and regular meetings of the peace process various institutions and mechanisms are taking place. That said, there has been limited progress on challenging issues, including security sector reform, state boundaries and transparency and accountability on the management of the country's economy and resources. Security issues and the weak humanitarian and human rights protection systems continue to make South Sudan a challenging operating environment.

2.2.2. Sector context: policies and challenges

The total population is currently estimated at 11.56 million people, comprising 64 different ethnic groups. Livelihoods are dominated by seasonal agriculture, pastoralism, fishing and hunting. About 80% of the population lives in rural areas, with agriculture, forestry and fishing providing the livelihood for a majority of the households. Although 75% of the land area in South Sudan is suitable for agriculture only 4.5 percent of this is cultivated by mostly smallholder subsistence farmers⁴. Much of the rural sector activity is therefore focused on low-input, low-output subsistence agriculture.

A number of factors contribute to the vicious cycle of conflict, insecurity and poverty in South Sudan, particularly in the rural areas. Food insecurity in South Sudan is caused by a number of interrelated factors. With insecurity and conflict smallholder farming households cannot work on their farms. Localized conflict has also exacerbated the challenge of cattle-rustling and inter-ethnic clashes. At the household level, smallholder farmers in South Sudan are mainly subsistent farmers, producing barely enough to meet own consumption needs. Low production and productivity is mainly a result of poor access to good quality seeds, lack of animal traction / mechanization (which means the farming households can only cultivate an average of 0.8 ha), weak extension support systems and high post-harvest losses (up to 40%). Overall there is very little private sector participation in the agriculture value chain, with inputs such as seeds,

⁴ FAO Country Programming Framework for South Sudan (2016-2017)

farming tools and animal vaccines currently being provided through donor efforts. Like most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa South Sudan is increasingly facing challenges related to the climate change. Droughts, floods, pollution, together with deforestation, could worsen South Sudan's humanitarian crisis and jeopardize the livelihoods of over 90 percent of the country's 12 million people. As more than 10 million people depend on the country's natural resources, sustainable and equitable management of such resources is needed in order to put the country on the path to peace and wealth.

The lack of connectivity, in particular due to insufficient and/or deteriorated roads networks makes it difficult for the private sector to conduct business in remote rural areas as this increases costs of doing business and pushes the prices of goods and services way beyond reach of the rural communities. Poor infrastructure, mainly as a result of decades of war and under investment, has been identified as the most binding constraint for economic diversification and inclusive private sector-led growth and productive employment⁵. Given that about 80% of the population lives in rural areas, the lack of basic infrastructure for many years now has been a serious impediment to the development of the large agricultural potential of the country. Without basic roads and bridges, whole communities in rural South Sudan are cut-off and have no access to basic services, including education and health seriously undermining their rights.

To address these challenges afflicting the country, the South Sudanese Government with support from development partners and stakeholders, has developed key policies and strategic plans to guide investments:

The South Sudan Development Plan (SSDP): From a policy angle, this is the overarching strategic document for the development of the country. Originally designed for the period 2011-2013, its implementation period has been extended up to 2016 – although no further Plans have been released. The SSD is the first of a series of envisaged five-year development plans leading to the *South Sudan Vision for 2040* that envisages "*a nation that is educated and informed; prosperous, productive and innovative; compassionate and tolerant; free, just and peaceful*". SSD recognizes the central importance of agriculture (both crops and livestock) in South Sudan, noting that most South Sudanese are engaged in agriculture and agro-pastoralist activities. The need to diversify from an oil based economy is also highlighted in the strategy document, given the country's extreme vulnerability to changes in global oil prices and oil production levels.

Comprehensive Agriculture Master Plan (CAMP): CAMP was developed in a coordinated manner by the former Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Cooperatives and Rural Development (MAFCRD); the former Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Industry (MLFI); the former Ministry of Electricity, Dams, Irrigation and Water Resources (MEDIWR); development partners and members of the civil society with the technical assistance of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), between 2012 and 2015. It is aligned to the national development policies and objectives (*South Sudan Vision for 2040*) and also with the AU-led CAADP process (Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme). CAMP's primary focus is to achieve the overarching agriculture sector development objective, namely *Food security for all the people of the Republic of South Sudan, enjoying improved quality of life and environment*.

Some of the key areas earmarked for investment in this regard do include rural infrastructure - in particular roads and bridges, improved agricultural technologies and inputs, research and extension services, access to animal health and veterinary services as well as human development.

⁵ South Sudan: An Infrastructure Action Plan: A Program for Sustained Strong Economic Growth. A Report by the African Development Bank (2013)

The National Effort for Agricultural Transformation (NEAT) 2013: Launched by former Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Cooperatives and Rural Development, NEAT was an ambitious Government of South Sudan policy that articulates and shapes the agenda for investments in agricultural development in the country. The policy further provides a framework through which donors, the private sector and stakeholders can coordinate and work together to support agricultural transformation in South Sudan. The Zonal Effort for Agricultural Transformation (**ZEAT**) is a draw down programme from NEAT to guide implementation of the **NEAT** policy in the three regions (Zones) of South Sudan, namely Greater Upper Nile, Greater Equatoria and Greater Bahr el Ghazal⁶. The **ZEAT** programme supports efforts to enhance capacities to deliver agricultural inputs, supplies and services throughout the Bahr el Ghazal region.

The main challenges related to food insecurity and specific for the project areas (Western and Northern Bahr el Ghazal, GUN region) include: diffuse insecurity and inter-ethnic conflict; high number of returnees (from Sudan) concentrated in the border areas (Northern Bahr el Ghazal) with low socio-economic integration and vulnerable livelihoods. Weak institutions, restriction on livestock movements and competition for land & water threaten the traditional pastoral system; lack of reliable network of input suppliers and private sector investments; poor communication, transport and market infrastructures; lack of communication between farmers and service providers in remote areas; recurrent drought and floods; poor access to basic services, including markets, schools and primary health facilities.

According to the African Development Bank South Sudan ranks lowest amongst the 54 African Nations in terms of infrastructure development⁷. It ranks lowest amongst the 10 African countries with the lowest infrastructure development indices. Notably most of the countries in this category are fragile states or/and emerging from conflict.

Without the requisite infrastructure, development partners and the private sector have no access to these remote and isolated regions, making the communities (including youth) more vulnerable and likely to join the different armed groups and participate in activities that fuel displacement and forced migration of whole communities, either internally or across borders as refugees.

The Action proposes to implement interventions that connect rural communities with markets and services, improve decent employment opportunities for youth and other target groups, including paid work in feeder roads and bridges construction, operating as service providers in the agriculture value chain.

The Action places peace building, human rights and social cohesion at the core of its strategic approach and as such works to bring different ethnic groups together, reducing mistrust and creating an environment for them to co-exist while ‘doing no harm’. The accompanying measures to infrastructure development, including food system development, not only address food insecurity but also create room for economic development and rights realisation, through increased employment opportunities and increase in incomes.

More specifically, the “accompanying measures” in the original and additional food insecure target areas will focus on all pillars of food security, with an emphasis on the operationalisation of the **humanitarian-development-peace nexus**. Food For Assets (FFA) and Smallholder Agriculture Market Support (SAMS) activities will complement each other to support increased **availability** and **stability** of food at the household level, while infrastructure developments will help to improve **access** to food. Nutrition-sensitive activities will help to promote improved

⁶ The EU current investments in agricultural development in South Sudan are currently channelled towards the Greater Bahr el Ghazal region through the Zonal Effort for Agricultural Transformation Bahr el Ghazal Effort for Agricultural Transformation Program (ZEAT BEAT).

⁷ African Development Bank Statistics: The Africa Infrastructure Development Index (July 2018).

utilization of food. This approach will help to address some of the underlying causes of food insecurity, while building capacities in food production and storage that are key to improving food security more sustainably.

2.2.3. Justification for use of EUTF funds for this action

South Sudan does not have access to programmable bilateral resources from the 11th European Development Fund, and hence there is reliance on other sources of funding, such as the EUTF Africa. The EUTF funds allocated to South Sudan aligns with the EUTF strategic objectives, and this action addresses essential stabilisation in South Sudan, the lack of which is a root cause for displacement and irregular migration.

2.3. Lessons learnt

The Action draws lessons and experiences from previous and current EU programmes in South Sudan, as well as development cooperating partners' programmes⁸.

In particular experiences from the on-going EU funded South Sudan Rural Development programme (SORUDEV) and Zonal Effort for Agricultural Transformation - Bahr el Ghazal Effort for Agricultural Development (ZEAT BEAD) have both shaped the design of this Action, drawing from key recommendations and lessons learned during implementation and also in light of the changing and evolving context in South Sudan.

A mid-term joint evaluation⁹ carried out in 2018 has recognized the construction of rural infrastructures and feeder roads network under the above EU flagship programmes as an outstanding achievement in terms of relevancy to the target populations and socio economic impact. However, given the post-conflict, fragile context of South Sudan with conflict-prone areas still existing across the country, the overall recommendation for EU cooperation programs was to be re-centred to support peace, dialogue and conflict mitigation, through an inclusive approach and strategic alliances (with local CSOs, religious leaders and customary authorities etc.), as well as mainstreaming the priorities of human rights, good governance, gender equality, women empowerment and improved nutrition.

Operational recommendations in relation to ongoing and future infrastructure investments concern the application of conflict sensitiveness to road rehabilitation and construction plans, strengthening the gender focus and support to improved sector governance transparency and accountability mechanisms. Of immediate interest is to pursue the discussion on the development of funding mechanisms for long term road maintenance, including feeder roads (see activity 1.2).

Overall, feeder roads have been seen to have positive and direct contribution towards long-term goals of poverty reduction, food security and improved nutrition in South Sudan.¹⁰

Benefits associated to infrastructure development, enhanced connectivity and transport facilitation in rural areas have been observed, as follows:

⁸ South Sudan: An Infrastructure Action Plan. A Programme for Sustained Strong Economic Growth. A Report Prepared by the African Development Bank (2013).

⁹ Rural Development/Food Security Programmes in South Sudan. Joint evaluation. Final Report (NIRAS, December 2018).

¹⁰ South Sudan Development Plan 2011-2013-Realising Freedom, Equality, Justice, Peace and Prosperity for All.

Improved access to basic social services: Communities and stakeholders have acknowledged that feeder roads are essential in improving access to markets, primary health services, and schools for their children with enhanced security guaranteed along the roads. Access to basic services, markets, education and health is amongst the key pillars for resilience.

Improved communication: Feeder roads, bridges and village track roads have enhanced communication between communities and their customary authorities and local government officials. Communication becomes quicker and easier for community members to reach local authorities offices at Payam, County or State level. Experience shows that feeder roads and bridges do open up the areas and reduce risks and travel time significantly to major trading markets or centres where socio-economic services are located.

Reduced cost of travel, goods and services: Improved road infrastructure networks in South Sudan (as in other countries of the sub region) reduce transportation costs of goods, people and services by up to 40% due to reduced costs of doing businesses especially during the rainy season, including operation and maintenance costs, whilst promoting crowding-in (competition) of private sector actors (for instance transporters).

Increased productivity and incomes: There is a direct correlation between improved roads network/accompanying infrastructures with increased agriculture productions and incomes for communities along and surrounding the roads in the target areas. Indirect effects included increased areas under cultivation due to new incentives offered through improved market access, reduced cost of inputs and services.

Improved stability and social cohesion: Road and bridges infrastructures increase connectivity amongst communities and different ethnic groups and as such they offer opportunities for fostering peace and social cohesion through improved interactions (trade and through access to common basic services and markets). Strategic alliances with customary / religious leaders and local authorities must be established: field observations show that tribal clashes amongst communities have diminished since the opening of feeder roads under EU programs in Western BEG and Warrap.

A territorial approach where rural infrastructure works and transportation are integrated with agricultural development interventions and access to markets and basic services maximize the benefits from these investments and build resilience.

Further key lessons and recommendations have also been drawn with respect to delivering infrastructure development¹¹ works, as well as agricultural development¹² interventions in the target areas and across South Sudan.

- Need to ensure that all cooperation efforts should be designed with full conflict sensitiveness supporting the mainstreaming in all cooperation efforts of principles of human rights, non-discrimination, gender equality, neutrality, impartiality and inclusiveness, while “doing no harm”.
- Need for close cooperation and engagement with national, state and county level authorities throughout the process to ensure ownership and full support. This has particularly been important in ensuring that the roads and infrastructure works that need to be rehabilitated or developed are part of local priorities and there is a long-term vision with regard to sustainability of the developed facilities.
- Need to strengthen inclusiveness of design and implementation with benefits streaming to all ethnic groups, with special attention to victims of conflict and disadvantaged social categories. Ensuring full participation of local leaderships, communities and

¹¹ South Sudan Comprehensive Agriculture Master Plan (CAMP)

¹² Rural Development/Food Security Programmes in South Sudan: Joint Evaluation Final Report (2018).

stakeholders, that also represent the voice of women and youth, is key in fostering a local ownership of the development outcomes, social cohesion, rights and long-term sustainability.

- Need to promote local participation to ensure maintenance of feeder roads and other infrastructure works post project.
- Seeking out opportunities for youth participation in development interventions, not just as beneficiaries but also as service providers and private sector actors, is a way to promote peace building, social cohesion and reduce conflict in the target areas.
- Need to promote a mix of labour -intensive and mechanized approaches during roads and rural infrastructure development works, while promoting labour rights and standards. Labour-intensive approaches offer opportunities for peace building and to foster social cohesion especially if the youth from different ethnic groups are targeted and work together over a common cause¹³.
- Having transparency, accountability and protection systems in place will motivate the government, state, county level authorities and stakeholders.
- Use of cash for work / cash for assets modalities (during infrastructure development works) to promote cash injection into the local economy and allow markets to function.
- Whilst private sector is still weak in the target regions (as is the general case in South Sudan), accompanying measures such as agricultural interventions should always seek to ensure participation of private sector actors, be it as providers of inputs (such as seeds and other inputs), animal drugs and vaccines, as well as buyers of produce.

2.4. Complementary actions and synergies

This Action has been designed to complement, build synergies and to capitalise on the achievements of previous and ongoing interventions in the States of Northern and Western Bahr El Ghazal. Strategic synergies and complementarities within the framework of WFP's Smallholder Agriculture Market Support (SAMS) and the Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) Programmes¹⁴ are sought, especially in target locations of GUN region.

The Action's infrastructure component aims at completing the network of rural feeder roads which has been developed under the EU EDF flagship programmes: "South Sudan Rural Development Programme" (SORUDEV) and "Zonal Effort for Agricultural Transformation - Bahr el Ghazal Effort for Agricultural Development" (ZEAT-BEAD). Priority bridges in Northern and Western BEG for which a request of completion was submitted by the State Ministry of Physical Infrastructures will be considered under the infrastructures. USAID is also funding a 30 Km extension of an EU funded road (under ZEAT-BEAD), in the above focus area.

The road maintenance program which started in 2020 under ZEAT-BEAD (Feeder road construction in support of trade and market development in South Sudan / UNOPS), will cover the entire feeder road network developed with EU support in the Action's focus areas.

The assets provided in the focus geographic areas under the above mentioned ZEAT- BEAD programme (notably market places, slaughterhouses and agro-processing centers) through various projects (Agricultural Marketing and transformation investment programme / GIZ,

¹³ Personal Communication with WFP South Sudan Key Staff.

¹⁴ The two programmes are mutually reinforcing with FFA supporting HHs to increase food production and pastoral livelihoods, while SAMS provides post-harvest management, processing and value addition support.

Feeder road construction in support of trade and market development in South Sudan / UNOPS, Enhanced local value addition and strengthening value chains / UNIDO) will be enhanced.

A direct operational linkage with the WFP's local aggregation model¹⁵ which is being replicated in Northern BEG, is sought. This model promotes market access for farmers where households produce surpluses. Aggregation centres will be established in catchment areas where the feeder roads networks are improved. The commodities aggregated and purchased from farmers will be used to support children in the WFP school feeding programme¹⁶.

This Action will also exploit the potential for synergies and complementarities with the EU ZEAT-BEAD and EUTF ongoing projects that support resilience, livelihoods and agricultural / livestock production in the focus areas of BEG and GUN (Productivity Enhancement and Resilience Strengthening (PERS) / HARD, Sustainable Agriculture and Livestock Production Initiative / VSF-Suisse, Farm Enterprise Development through Inputs and Services (FEDIS) / VSF-Germany, Strengthening smallholders' resilience in Northern BEG / FAO, Food security & Resilience in Transitioning Environments / World Vision, Strengthening Smallholders' resilience in Greater Upper Nile / IRC).

Coordination and synergies are sought with the country wide FAO programs such as the Emergency Livelihood Response Programme (ELRP). ELRP targets households facing severe food insecurity (IPC Phases 3, 4 and 5) through the emergency support, while households having a certain level of stability and exposed to a lesser degree of food insecurity will be linked to longer-term resilience-building activities.

The EU is engaged as well in basic services delivery across the country and strategic operational links are foreseen with the following initiatives:

Health: contribution of EUR 15 000 000 to achieve increased equal access to quality health, including nutrition services, with a special focus on pregnant women and children under five (new programme);

Education:

OUTREACH – Support to education of children and young people in hard to reach areas in South Sudan EUR 14.7M (ongoing).

Education in Emergency Programme (WFP/UNICEF) – EUR 22M - Improve child protection, nutrition and equitable access to primary education (ongoing).

Other relevant projects with which synergies are foreseen are the following:

The **USAID** funded “Famine Early Warning Systems Network” (FEWSNET) country wide project. It aims to sustainably prevent food insecurity by providing early warning and building capacity of partners in food security assessment, monitoring and analysis.

The **UK** Department for International Development (DfID) funded “Building Resilience through Asset Creation and Enhancement - WFP&FAO and NGO components” - Phase Two (BRACE II) and also DfID large “Humanitarian and Resilience in South Sudan” program (HARISS) for 2016-2020.

¹⁵ Successfully applied in Yambio, Western Equatoria.

¹⁶ The WFP is implementing with UNICEF the EU funded Education in Emergency Programme in four former states of Northern Bahr El Ghazal, Western Bahr El Ghazal, Warrap and Eastern Equatoria.

2.5. Donor coordination

There is a limited resident donor community in Juba, including six EU Member States (France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden). Other donors include United States, United Kingdom, Norway, Canada, Switzerland, Japan and China.

Overall coordination will be managed through existing coordination mechanisms:

- Political: weekly EU Head of Missions meeting and extended EU Head of Mission meetings (extend participation to UNMISS, African Union, World Bank, US, China, Japan, Canada, Switzerland, Ethiopia, South Africa etc.).
- Operations: monthly European Heads of Cooperation meetings, bi-weekly Heads of Cooperation meetings.

At technical level coordination will be ensured through the following mechanisms / initiatives:

The Roads & Transport Steering Committee hosted by the Ministry of Roads and Bridges (MRB) has been recently reactivated (July 2019) after a protracted break of activities imposed by the 2016 crisis. This Committee, which is chaired by MRB, includes donors and implementing partners as members and provides a platform for coordination, information sharing and discussion on technical / policy issues pertaining to the infrastructure and transport sector.

Partnership for Recovery and Resilience (PfRR): this initiative launched in 2018 consists of peace building, humanitarian and development partners committed to working together to reduce vulnerability and build the resilience of individuals, communities and institutions, thus contributing to the transition from aid to development. The actions of the Partnership contribute to and will benefit from existing strategies and operational plans of partners, including the UN, donors, and NGOs. It will bring a focus to operationalizing the concern for strategic integration (co-location, collaboration, coordination, and commitment) across the peace building – humanitarian – development nexus. The Partnership provides a basis for joint work programs that are impact-driven and focused on the local/community level in areas exhibiting a certain stability and inclusive dialogue among different groups. The following two pillars of the Programme framework 1) Re-establish access to basic social services (education, primary health services) and 2) Restore productive capacities, are particular relevant to the Action.

Aweil (Northern BEG) and Wau (Western BEG) are amongst the partnership areas where common results framework and joint work plans are being developed, as well as inclusive coordination mechanisms.

Quarterly Review Meetings (QRM): they focus on EU rural development sector interventions and provide an outstanding inclusive platform for dialogue, lessons sharing, coordination and quality review of interventions.

The Agriculture and Livelihoods Donors Working Group (ALDWG) which is currently co-chaired by JICA and EU holds monthly meetings and provides a platform to discuss coordination issues, to share information on current and upcoming interventions, to agree on common positions and principles with respect to policies and regulations that relate to agriculture, food security, rural development and other relevant topics. Members of the ALDWG are donors who finance agricultural, food security and other livelihoods interventions in South Sudan and also relevant agencies from the UN family, the World Bank, as well as the humanitarians' agencies represented by the Food Security & Livelihoods Cluster and ECHO. A comprehensive projects' mapping database offering geo-referenced information at County, Payam and Boma level has been developed with the EU support for project coordination and monitoring (the "Community Intervention Information System" - CIIS).

The Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster (FSL Cluster) for South Sudan provides a coordination platform which may be considered for enhancing the nexus humanitarian-development in the sector of food security. Other sectoral Clusters (notably Education, Health & Nutrition) may be relevant for the Action.

3. DETAILED DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives and expected outputs

The overall objective (expected impact) of this action is: to contribute to improved stabilisation and livelihood resilience of rural vulnerable communities in Greater Bahr El Ghazal and Greater Upper Nile Regions (South Sudan).

The specific objectives (expected outcomes) of this Action are (SO1) To improve connectivity for the vulnerable communities in the States of Northern and Western Bahr El Ghazal and (SO2) To improve food security of the target vulnerable rural populations, including highly food insecure communities in GUN region

The expected outputs of the Action are (two related to the first specific objective and two related to the second specific objective):

Outputs SO1 "To improve connectivity for the vulnerable communities in the States of Northern / Western BEG":

- 1.1 Improved feeder roads network and rural infrastructures in areas with agriculture potential
- 1.2 Improved social cohesion of communities and gender equality across the focus areas, including selected GUN locations

Outputs SO2 "To improve food security of the target vulnerable rural populations, including highly food insecure communities in GUN region ":

- 2.1 Improved food systems efficiency in selected focus areas
- 2.2 Increased household incomes of target vulnerable populations

In addition technical assistance will be provided for overall coordination, monitoring and technical back up.

The four expected outputs do complement each other. Improving the feeder road networks in areas with agricultural potential enhances connectivity and generates multiplier effects that trigger increase in private sector presence, access to markets, thereby spurring smallholder farmers to produce. The action will mainstream conflict prevention / mitigation and peaceful co-existence of different groups and tribes, as well as gender equality (output 1.2) in order to sustain benefits from increased connectivity. With respect to Food Security an enabling environment for food production (food availability), food trade and functioning of markets (food stability) will be promoted (output 2.1), while regular access to food will be addressed through increased household incomes of vulnerable populations (output 2.2). The outputs will be achieved through implementation of complementary activities within the framework of FFA & SAMS programmes, according to their relevance and appropriateness to the target locations and communities' needs. The **humanitarian-development-peace nexus** will be operationalised to the possible extent as overarching approach for increased effectiveness and sustainability of the interventions.

An indicative logical framework reflecting objectives and results is included in Annex of this Action Document

3.2. Main activities

3.2.1. Activities associated with each output

Output SO1

1.1 Improved feeder roads network and rural infrastructures¹⁷ in areas with agriculture potential.

Priority activities for this output include:

- Construction of all-weather feeder roads (indicatively 50-60 Km), road rehabilitation (40-50 Km), complemented by completion of priority bridge. Drainage structures at critical locations of the constructed feeder roads will be reinforced to increase resilience to climate shocks (heavy rains), and a number of boreholes¹⁸ for drinking water supply will be installed where most needed, at proximity of selected roads. Wide consultation and participation of all concerned communities, including women, community-based organisations (CBOs), local authorities and leaders will be promoted throughout the construction process. Conflict analysis and conflict sensitiveness approach will be applied during planning and implementation to avoid "harm" and to contribute to stability and peace.

The maintenance mechanism in the short term will be based on community-based activities and maintenance by local and regional commercial contractors, under the upcoming EU maintenance program of feeder roads¹⁹. The latter includes as an exit strategy the capacity building of the State Ministry of Physical Infrastructure (SMoPI). Meanwhile, solid engagements by the MRB at National and State level may be required as pre-condition for EU investments. In this respect the revitalised Roads & Transport Steering Committee will be used as a platform for advocacy and policy dialogue on leveraging public resources for long term road maintenance.

1.2 Improved social cohesion of communities across the focus areas, including selected GUN locations.

Interventions that allow different social segments and categories of the local population to interact and rally together as they address common challenges afflicting their community do offer opportunities for enhanced social cohesion.

The Action will prioritize the following activities:

- Construction of a network of priority rural tracks (indicatively up to 90 - 120 km) connecting villages amongst them and to nearby feeder roads. Track roads are essential and allow for connectivity of people, goods and services amongst villages and from villages to feeder roads, thereby linking communities and ensuring rural people move easily and access basic services (primary health, education), markets and

¹⁷ Based on the experience and lessons learned from EU past and ongoing infrastructure interventions, a unit cost of 80,000 to 100,000 USD/km for the feeder and access roads has been considered, while for the rural tracks a lower unit cost of 20-25,000 USD is applied. For completion of a priority bridge the cost estimate is 850,000 USD. Management / indirect costs (up to 40%) are also accounted for.

¹⁸ Boreholes complete with solar power, elevated tanks and supply kiosks.

¹⁹ The Project Feeder Road Construction in support of Trade and Market development in South Sudan (FED/2014/ 353-248) includes a feeder roads maintenance component that will be implemented for a period of two years, starting 2020.

livelihoods opportunities. This activity will be largely employ through labour intensive approaches. Cash for work will create seasonal employment especially for youth. This activity will mainly capitalize on infrastructure development by EU funded projects in the Greater BEG region, while in the project expansion to GUN region complementarities are sought with other investments in road and river corridors to facilitate linkages between communities, promote market access, and encourage investment by private sector actors.

- Promote participation of youth in labour intensive track roads works
Implementing partners are expected to focus on the youth using the cash for assets model which is already being implemented in the country. Targeting youth will give them a sense of belonging and will reduce the risk of military recruitment, cases of cattle rustling, conflict as well as incitement for migration.
- Promote participation of communities in common assets creation works.
The activity will carry out a diagnosis that will address local priority needs. The understanding of local dynamics will be pursued before any intervention. A participatory process will be undertaken to promote dialogue and ensure inclusive planning and community-led identification and prioritization of the common assets. A labour intensive / cash for work modality will be adopted as well as a conflict sensitive, “do no harm” approach²⁰. Possible repercussions of money injection into the markets through cash for assets will be investigated as appropriate, through an ex-ante market assessment. Key common assets include: wells, watershed dams (*haffirs*) and water ponds for domestic or agricultural / livestock use; repair of broken down schools and health infrastructure; construction and repair of small bridges; storage facilities; forestry plantations; protection works against natural disasters.
- Promotion of peace committees
The activity will engage with state, county and community leaderships and target communities to carry out a conflict analysis necessary to develop a conflict- prevention and mitigation plan and conflict-sensitive approach. The activity will do this through support to peace committees in coordination with other ongoing EU projects in the regions (notably ongoing projects for improving rural livelihoods and resilience under the EUTF and ZEAT-BEAD programs).
- Inter-communal trade promotion
Building off community interest in inter-communal trade as a means of promoting and sustaining peace: livelihood and market access activities will be supported in border areas between communities at conflict with one another. Specific activities that can promote inter-communal trade and establish marketing opportunities on either side will be jointly identified with the concerned communities.
- Provide support to improving local transport
Promotion of basic means of transport (bicycles, oxcarts, donkey or horse carts etc.) is proven to have a tangible and positive socio-economic impact on rural communities. It is also a way for optimising the use of constructed rural tracks and feeder roads. Local procurement of transport items from artisans / blacksmiths will be privileged and supported through training. Free distribution will be avoided, while cost recovery or cost sharing schemes and revolving fund creation will be applied as sustainable approach.

Outputs SO2

2.1 Improved food systems efficiency in selected focus areas

²⁰ The “do no harm” approach is a minimum standard of practice to avoid causing inadvertent harm in the implementation of a project.

This output will focus on priority issues which hinder the efficient functioning of the food systems: availability and access to productive farm inputs (tools and seeds), development of professional linkages and trust amongst the V-C actors, as well as organisation of the smallholder farmers into associations. A diagnostic analysis of the local agri-food systems (including private sector actors' involvement and potential for partnerships) will be carried out in order to ensure the relevancy and effectiveness of support, considering that local procurement activities and market-based opportunities will likely be limited within the scope of the geographic expansion to GUN region. A particular emphasis will be put on the inclusion of rural women and the youth in all activities, as key actors for the agrifood system transformation and improvement.

The following activities are foreseen (but not limited to) under this output:

- Facilitate access to agricultural inputs (notably seeds) and agricultural tools (appropriate technologies).
The Action will prioritise activities that promote timely availability of seeds, tools and other related farm implements (environmental friendly inputs are privileged) to increase production and productivity. A mix of approaches will be explored, including working with local agro-dealers and providing vouchers to target beneficiaries to access seeds. Linkages with other projects in BEG area and FAO are sought in order to build partnerships in this respect. Direct seeds distributions will be considered, in a cost sharing approach or pay back schemes for increased sustainability. The Action may support youth and artisans to set-up workshops for manufacture and repair of farm tools (synergies with the EU supported Technical Vocational Education & Training Department in the MAFS are sought in this respect). This activity will also be coupled with training and / or extension on improved sustainable farming systems. Given the challenges of extreme weather patterns in the target areas (likely increased risks of drought and floods), the Action will mainstream climate change adaptation in the smallholder farming systems.
- Support towards linking smallholder farmers to aggregation centres / markets.
Northern Bahr el Ghazal is a structurally producing deficit area, but there is good potential for increase. The creation of commodities aggregation centres that is being piloted in South Sudan to provide humanitarian partners with locally produced cereals and other staple food for emergency food assistance and school feeding programs will create market opportunities for surpluses grown by the stallholder farmers. The benefits include: a) to encourage farmers to move from subsistence to commercial production, as a result of a reliable, stable demand; b) to strengthen the capacities of smallholder farmers and communities to produce good quality and quantity; c) to contribute to rural transformation and promotion of a sense of ownership amongst communities and farmers involved.
- Support to achieving market quality standards for agricultural products and reducing post-harvest losses.
The Action proposes activities that will prioritize training and capacity building of smallholder farmers to ensure they meet the quality standards that are required by market actors. Capacity building of smallholder farmers in harvesting techniques, post-harvest management and conservation, including drying and adhering to minimum residual moisture commercial standards will be promoted.
- Other activities include training in construction of grain storage facilities at household level, with increased capacity and conditions that minimise pests and disease infestation. The Action will also promote value addition, including milling of grains and packaging (where possible) to improve shelf life and enhance market value and hence incomes for the farmers.

2.2 Increased household incomes of target vulnerable populations

The Action will promote activities that enhance agriculture-related incomes of the target population and collective saving schemes, as follows:

- Support smallholder farmers' incomes through agricultural activities.
The target region has high potential for agricultural production as already shown with the EU's current Rural Development Programmes (ZEAT-BEAD and SORUDEV-SSR). Opportunities for increasing agricultural production and incomes have been identified in cereals (mainly sorghum), vegetables and groundnut.
- Promotion of employment with agricultural markets
The envisaged linkage to the Rural Aggregation Centres – RAC – (to promote market access for smallholder farmers and their communities) offers opportunities for employment, especially for the rural youth and women.
- Promotion of Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLA)
The Action will promote the replication and expansion of the VSLA approach in the project target areas, without duplication with the previous and current projects. VSLA proved to be successful especially for groups of women and offer potential for investments in agriculture and non-agriculture income generating activities.

Concerning both SO1 and SO2, the provision of Technical assistance is foreseen in order to support coordination of the action components at various levels (project level, institutional, other donors and IPs) and liaise with the State and County Governmental authorities, during implementation. Technical assistance will also contribute to capacity building of concerned public technical services, as well as advisory service, quality control and project monitoring so as to ensure improved cost effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the EU cooperation interventions.

3.2.2. Target groups and final beneficiaries

The target groups for this Action include:

- (1) Individual households (with a focus on most disadvantaged and food insecure HHs, women and the youth), smallholder farmers, agro-pastoralists and their organisations.
- (2) State and county level authorities, notably State Ministry of Physical infrastructures, State Ministry of Agriculture and Food security, State Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries and their technical services.
- (3) Private sector actors including traders, transporters, brokers and agro-dealers.
- (4) Customary chiefs at Boma and village level (Paramount Chiefs, Village Chiefs) in the target Counties.

The final beneficiaries for this action are rural communities, private sector actors and local authorities, located in Northern and Western Bahr El Ghazal, as well as famine –risk locations in the GUN region.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

Risk	Level of risk	Mitigating measures
Insecurity and conflict of various origin (at local level).	High	<p>A constant coordination with the implementing partners, as well as concerned State Governments and a security warning network could anticipate any deterioration of security. The Action should follow a contingency planning approach to address changing security conditions in the areas. Moreover State Government will be involved in settling conflicts of various origin and applying security measures, as appropriate. Better roads to larger towns or hubs contribute to quicker action by police in case of banditry or cattle raiding in the areas.</p> <p>A conflict sensitive and ‘do no harm’ approach will be adopted throughout implementation to address local root conflicts. A conflict analysis during the inception phase of the actions along with a conflict mitigation strategy is envisaged, as appropriate.</p>
Risk of human rights violation regarding land issues and roads infrastructure development and especially conflict and compensation related to the land on which the roads will be built on.	Medium	<p>The implementing partners will work closely with the Roads and Transport Steering Committee, as well as the State Ministries of Physical Infrastructures to ensure roads are developed without prejudicing the rights of individuals and community members. A "do not harm" and conflict sensitive approach will be adopted and locally led settlement of issues related to properties and rights violation will be privileged, as happened in previous interventions. The development of roads infrastructure will be participatory with community leaderships and local authorities fully engaged.</p>
Risk of corruption	Medium	<p>All bidding processes and contracting will be realised according to IPs guidelines and procedures, under full transparency. IPs will be accountable and responsible for financial management of EU funds.</p>
Extreme weather conditions negatively affecting agricultural production and/or access to project areas (floods, mid-season dry spells, drought).	Medium	<p>Collaborate closely with specialized agencies notably FAO and WFP to get and disseminate timely information through early warning systems and put in place response plans that make it possible for stakeholders and communities to react effectively.</p>
Pests and diseases (including Fall Army Worm which has been detected in many areas of South Sudan, including GBEG)	Medium	<p>Promote agronomic practices that reduce crop vulnerability, integrated pest management and use of phytosanitary standards that minimize risk and exposure to pests and diseases infestations.</p> <p>Develop field monitoring mechanisms and cooperate closely with the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster, GoSS Ministry of Agriculture and FAO to adopt early warning systems, whenever appropriate.</p>
High turnover of national, state and county level government officials; low capacity of local authorities and state institutions.	High	<p>Constant engagement with local authorities to ensure that different government bodies and services at various levels are kept informed and involved in implementation and decision-making. Capacity building activities under both infrastructure development and accompanying measures will be conducted in association with a dialogue at national level with the concerned Ministries, in order to create an enabling environment for ownership and sustainability.</p>

Resistance to the effective participation of women and youth.	Medium	Project will ensure the inclusion of women and youth throughout all stages of implementation and set realistic targets for their inclusion in all activities. Awareness raising activities that highlight the benefits of women and youth inclusion will accompany activities.
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The **assumptions** for the success of the project and its implementation include:

- State and county level authorities, as well as traditional authorities are able to get involved and are supportive of the Action. Any newly deployed Government officials at both State and County levels (following establishment of Transition Government) will be accessible and supportive of the Action.
- Inflation rate does not undermine the Action efforts to improve the households' incomes and their access to goods and basic services.
- The GoSS at central and local level remains consistent to the current development objectives and policies, including the division of tasks between public and private sector, the partnership with the private sector, including NGOs and the partnership with the EU and other donors.

3.4. Mainstreaming

Rural feeder roads and infrastructure development works will duly consider **environmental** protection, avoiding environmental impacts or mitigating them when necessary. Implementing partners and also contractors are expected to follow strict guidelines and best practices, including environmental impact assessments as part of the feasibility studies. Roads will be designed so as to be climate-proof and stand all-weather conditions in order to optimise access to the targeted localities. Soil and water conservation measures, including promotion of tree planting will be encouraged during cash for assets initiatives as well as sensitization on agro-forestry and environmental-friendly agronomic practices.

Extreme weather conditions (drought and floods) occur with increased frequency especially in the Greater Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal Regions of South Sudan (the key target areas for EU interventions in South Sudan) and as such there is need to mainstream climate change adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) whenever possible, including through the promotion of equal access to natural resources (including for instance, quality land, drinking water), and Climate Smart Agriculture approaches.

Road infrastructure development works can potentially expose women and adolescent girls to abuse. As such awareness campaigns and prevention measures against potential abuse and harassment of women will be adopted. Counselling reporting and protection mechanisms in case of any forms of harassment are foreseen. **Gender equality** will be pursued by ensuring women are given equal chance of fair employment during the project activities (paying attention to any risk of work overloads).

The critical role that women play throughout agri-food value chains, in the management of natural resources and in ensuring food and nutrition security is recognized, therefore **gender-empowerment** challenges must be addressed as a substantial contribution to development outcomes. For example, customary laws exclude access to land ownership for women, which appears incoherent when considering that 71% of women engage in crop farming and provide 80% of the farm labour. Among the households living below the poverty line (51% of the total of the country), 57% are headed by women. But, even in the households headed by men, women are the one responsible for food, water, firewood and many other food security related tasks. As such, whilst Actions should continue to promote women participation and gender equality in income generating activities and improving food systems, there is a need to ensure women's control over the proceeds. Since the Action has a result area on promoting income generating

activities and micro finance mechanisms (VSLAs), sensitization of communities, in particular of men, are foreseen as complimentary measures. This is expected to trigger a positive chain reaction that will ultimately lead to sustainable development and better life for all.

Nutrition sensitive approaches will be adopted in order to contribute to the possible extent to mitigate chronic malnutrition of children under 5 of age.

3.5. Stakeholder analysis

Community's households in the focus areas: mainly subsistence small holder farmers and households (with a focus on women-led vulnerable HHs) in need of support to produce more and to market surpluses; most of them have no access to basic services, including markets, schools and primary health services due to poor road networks and absence of bridges, with the situation being more critical during the rain seasons. Community households are also affected by conflicts of various origin and initiatives related to community cohesion are in the interest of everyone.

Youth groups: with no economic activity and prospects, youth are generally idle and prone to participate in robberies notably cattle rustling and other crimes, a major driver of insecurity and instability in the focus areas. Provision of employment opportunities to youth gives them a sense of belonging and pride as they take charge of their own lives.

Smallholders' farmers associations, cooperatives, CSOs and service providers: generally weak with not well-established economic base, although some women coops are doing well. A mapping of existing organisations and their capacities to deliver services will be done as they must have a voice with regards to priorities and support needed to spur agricultural production, as well as well enhance on-farm or off-farm incomes.

Agro-pastoralists: they own large cattle herds and practice transhumance in the dry season, gathering the herds in large "cattle camps". Availability of water in the dry season is vital for them and so are the rural track roads for mobility of animals.

Private sector, including agribusinesses, agro-vets and agro-dealerships: generally weak; no business tradition and lack of experience; often supported by projects, unable to supply the market with the needed products; currently most of the business dealers in South Sudan are foreigners from neighbouring countries, motivated by short term cash gain rather than long-term investments. Private operators in the inputs' production are very few and mainly operating in the green belt. They also experience problems with connectivity and high transaction costs of doing business due to poor roads and connectivity issues.

Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC), State Ministries, mainly Agriculture, Livestock and Physical Infrastructures and their technical services, as well as customary authorities: they know the territory and the socio-economic structure, they have linkages with other key stakeholders, have control of some physical assets of buildings, equipment, land and infrastructures. They will play a key role in creating an enabling environment for development including security, to settle communities' disputes over the territory in relation to the interventions, to help coordinating the humanitarian and development actions. Counties' Agricultural Departments will be involved in planning and implementation of activities in order to ensure the continuation in the provision of services.

Other development partners and NGOs, in particular those that can represent the voice of women and youth, which implement activities on the ground in the focus areas (cf. para. 2.4).

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Financing agreement, if relevant

Not applicable.

4.2. Indicative operational implementation period

The implementation period will begin from the date of signature by the last party of the first contract implementing this Action, or from the earliest starting date of implementation period at contract level in case of retroactive financing, whichever occurs first, and will last until the 31/12/2024. This operational implementation period will be followed by a liquidation period of 18 months which will end on the 30/06/2026.

4.3. Implementation modalities

The foreseen implementation modalities are:

1. Indirect Management with pillar assessed entities

All activities (except technical assistance) will be implemented in indirect management with pillar assessed entities which will be selected by using the following criteria:

- a. having successfully implemented similar multiannual interventions in the country, preferably in the geographic focus areas of the Action;
- b. established presence, which also reaches out (directly or through implementing partners) to remote and challenging regions of the country;
- c. technical competence in the sector of intervention, due to their mandate and expertise including expertise on rights-based, gender sensitive and conflict sensitive programming;
- d. administrative capability and proven capacity to manage the required significant volume of funding;
- e. extensive network of national and international partners, which can be drawn on;
- f. previous satisfactory experience in coordinating implementation of similar projects through third parties, showing managerial ability to monitor, to build synergies and to exploit complementarities.

The implementation by these entities entails the design, monitoring and implementation (directly or through implementing partners) of actions to achieve the results mentioned under 3.2.

2. Direct management (procurement of services)

The activity will be implemented in direct management through the procurement of services to provide technical assistance and advisory services for the effective management, monitoring and coordination of the infrastructure component of this action and other ongoing and future EU funded infrastructure projects.

All actions financed under the EU Trust Fund for Africa are covered by a crisis declaration allowing for the application of flexible procedures.

Moreover, following the renewal of the declaration of crises situation in South Sudan, the application of flexible procedures in South Sudan remains specifically possible. Event to be reported 25a2) (Services: negotiated procedure instead of call for tenders, “emergency assistance or crisis situation following declaration of crisis situation by DG) is applicable as per section 8.5.1 of the DEVCO Companion.

4.4. Indicative budget

Component	Amount EUR
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1. Indirect Management (with pillar assessed entities)	35 100 000
1.1 Activity 1.1 under SO1	13 000 000
1.2 Activity 1.2 under SO1, all activities under SO2	22 100 000
2. Direct Management (procurement of services)	600 000
Communication and visibility	50 000
Monitoring, evaluation and audit (direct management: procurement)	150 000
Total	35 900 000

4.5. Monitoring and reporting

The implementing partner must establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and prepare regular progress reports and final reports.

In the initial phase, the indicative logical framework agreed in contract and/or the agreement signed with the implementing partner must be complemented with baselines, milestones and targets for each indicator. Progress reports provided by the implementing partner should contain the most recent version of the logical framework agreed by the parties and showing the current values for each indicator. The final report should complete the logical framework with initial and final values for each indicator.

For the accompanying measures component of the Action, baseline, mid-line and end-line surveys will be conducted as part of the contractual obligations with the implementing organisation, so as to monitor the outcome and impact indicators.

The final report, financial and descriptive, will cover the entire period of the implementation of the action.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

The implementing partner(s) will report on a number of common EUTF indicators of the selected results for this Action²¹.

Indicators will be disaggregated by sex and age and even further when appropriate (disability, ethnic group, location etc.). Key stakeholders will participate in the monitoring process whenever possible.

Project Implementing Partners will be required to provide regular data, including the evolution of the actual values of the indicators (at least every three months) to the contracting authority, in a format which is to be indicated during the contract negotiation phase. The evolution of the indicators will be accessible to the public through the EUTF website (<https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/>) and the Akvo RSR platform (<https://eutf.akvoapp.org/en/projects/>).

²¹ EN : https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/sites/eutf/files/eutf_results_indicators_41.pdf
FR : https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/sites/eutf/files/eutf_results_indicators_41_fr.pdf

4.6. Evaluation and audit

If necessary, ad hoc audits or expenditure verification assignments could be contracted by the European Commission for one or several contracts or agreements.

Audits and expenditure verification assignments will be carried out in conformity with the risk analysis in the frame of the yearly Audit Plan exercise conducted by the European Commission. The amount allocated for external evaluation and audit purposes is shown in EUR in table under previous para. 4.4. Evaluation and audit assignments will be implemented through service contracts; making use of one of the Commission's dedicated framework contracts or alternatively through the competitive negotiated procedure or the single tender procedure.

4.7. Communication and visibility

Communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU. This action shall contain communication and visibility measures which shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action, which will be developed early in the implementation. The measures are implemented by the Commission, the partner country, the contractors, the beneficiaries and/or the entities responsible in terms of legal obligations regarding communication and visibility. Appropriate contractual obligations will be included in the financing agreement, purchase and grant agreements and delegation as well as contribution agreements.

Communication and visibility requirements for the European Union are used to establish the communication and visibility plan for the action and the relevant contractual obligations.

List of acronyms

ALDWG	Agriculture and Livelihoods Donors Working Group
BEG	Bahr el Ghazal
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CAMP	Comprehensive Agriculture Master Plan
CIIS	Community Intervention Information System
CBOs	Community-based organizations
CSOs	Civil Society organisations
DDR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FFA	Food Assistance for Assets
FSLC	Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster
GoSS	Government of South Sudan
HHs	Households
IDPs	Internally displaced people
IPs	Implementing Partners
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
MRB	Ministry of Roads and Bridges
NALEP	National Agriculture and Livestock Extension Policy
NEAT	National Effort for Agricultural Transformation
PfRR	Partnership for Recovery and Resilience
QRM	Quarterly Review Meetings
RAC	Rural aggregation centres
RRC	Relief and Rehabilitation Commission
SAMS	Smallholder Agriculture Market Support
SORUDEV	South Sudan Rural Development Program
SSDP	South Sudan Development Plan
VSLAs	Village Saving and Loan Associations
ZEAT BEAD	Zonal Effort for Agricultural Transformation - Bahr el Ghazal Effort for Agricultural Development

Annex: Indicative Logical Framework Matrix

Additional note: The term "results" refers to the outputs, outcome(s) and impact of the Action (OECD DAC definition).

	Results chain: Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (baselines and targets will be set during the inception phase - at least one indicator per expected result)	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Impact (Overall objective)	To contribute to improved stabilisation and livelihood resilience of rural vulnerable communities in Greater Bahr El Ghazal and Greater Upper Nile regions (South Sudan).	<p>Number of people forced to migrate, disaggregated by cause of displacement and by age, sex and disability (if appropriate)</p> <p>Number of months of HH self-reported food insecurity (food gaps)</p> <p>Number of households with improved resilience to shocks (Resilience Capacity Index) – (TBD)</p>	<p>Annual reports and statistics from GoSS departments.</p> <p>Annual reports from IPs working in project areas.</p> <p>Report studies, assessment from national and international organizations.</p> <p>Monitoring missions reports</p> <p>Baseline, mid-line and end-line surveys</p>	
Outcome(s) (Specific Objective(s))	<p>SO1: To improve connectivity for the vulnerable communities in the States of Northern and Western Bahr El Ghazal</p> <p>SO2: To improve food security of the target vulnerable rural populations, including highly food insecure communities in GUN region</p>	<p>1.1 Incidence of conflicts in target communities, disaggregated by cause</p> <p>1.2 Self-reported degree of satisfaction in facilitated access to main markets and other services, disaggregated by sex.</p> <p>2.1 Hectares of land benefitting from improved agricultural management, including % controlled by women</p> <p>2.2. Average monthly HHs incomes in target areas, disaggregated by category of HHs (sex) and source of revenues</p>	<p>Annual reports and statistics from GoSS departments.</p> <p>Evaluation Reports.</p> <p>Annual reports from IPs working in project areas.</p> <p>Monitoring missions reports</p> <p>Baseline, mid-line and end-line surveys</p> <p>Knowledge survey attitudes and practices (KAP reports)</p>	<p>Peace continues to prevail at National Level</p> <p>Inter communal conflict does not deteriorate to a level where access to project areas is not possible.</p>

<p>Outputs /activities</p>	<p>1.1: Improved feeder roads network and rural infrastructures in areas with agriculture potential. - Construction of all-weather feeder roads complemented by completion of priority bridge(s) and access roads in target rural areas. - Roads and infrastructure maintenance system developed and in place.</p> <p>1.2 Improved social cohesion and gender equality of communities across the focus areas, including selected GUN locations - Rehabilitation or construction of a network of priority rural tracks - Promote participation of youth in labour intensive track roads works. - Promote participation of communities in common assets creation works. - Promotion of peace committees. - Promote inter-communal trade - Support improving of local transport</p> <p>2.1: Improved food systems efficiency in selected focus areas - Facilitate access to agricultural inputs (notably seeds) and agricultural tools (appropriate technologies). - Support linking smallholder farmers to aggregation centres / markets. - Support to achieving market quality standards for agricultural products and reducing post-harvest losses</p> <p>2.2: Increased household incomes of vulnerable populations. - Support smallholder farmers' incomes through agricultural activities - Promotion of youth employment with agricultural markets - Formation of Village Saving and Loan Associations facilitated.</p>	<p>1.1.1. No of kilometers of feeder roads constructed / rehabilitated. 1.1.2. No of bridges completed 1.1.3. No of equipped boreholes installed 1.1.4. Community –led infrastructure maintenance system in place and functional, % participation of youth and women.</p> <p>1.2.1. No of kilometers of rural track roads constructed / rehabilitated 1.2.2. No of youth from different ethnic groups and localities recruited to work in infrastructure rehabilitation works. 1.2.3. No of men, youth and women (disaggregated by ethnicity and locality) recruited to develop common assets. 1.2.4. No of common assets developed. 1.2.5. No of peace committees formed and supported and % participation of women and youth. 1.2.6 No. of basic means of transport made at disposal of each community</p> <p>2.1.1. No of vulnerable households (disaggregated by gender, ethnicity and locality) supported with agricultural inputs, tools and extension support. 2.1.2. No. of small-farmers delivering production to the aggregation centers (disaggregated by sex and locality).. 2.1.3. No of farmers receiving training in post-harvest control and using recommended quality control standards (disaggregated by sex and locality).</p> <p>2.2.1 Average surpluses commercialised by smallholders disaggregated by crop 2.2.2. No of youth (disaggregated by sex, ethnicity and locality) recruited to provide services at RAC. 2.2.3. No of VSLAs created and/or supported, and % of participation of women.</p>	<p>Annual reports from IPs working in project areas.</p> <p>Market survey reports</p> <p>Monitoring missions reports</p>	<p>State and county level stakeholders continue to cooperate with the Action</p> <p>IPs continue to have access to project areas</p> <p>Beneficiaries and their communities continue to cooperate in delivery of Action interventions.</p>
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