**Consultant Terms of Reference**

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| --- | --- |
| **Project / Consultancy Title**: | Technical support to strengthen staff capacity and integrate systems change measurement into the Regional Livestock Programme MEL system |
| **Project Location(s):** | Remote; Based in Kenya or Ethiopia |
| **Timeframe:** | The expectation is that the Technical Assistance will be 40 billable days spread out over 6 months with varying degrees of intensity through the period. |

**About Mercy Corps**

Mercy Corps is a leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible. At Mercy Corps, we aim to be on the cutting edge of developing more efficient, effective paths to social impact at scale. We believe that solutions - to even the most “sticky” problems - are within reach, be that at the community level or the global level. Our years of experience have taught us that often, to break through on a particularly tough challenge, we have to be bold in our thinking and disrupt, we have to innovate, to achieve a lasting and transformative solution. For solutions to advance along a pathway to scale, data, research, and evidence are needed at key stages. Mercy Corps is committed to generating and using evidence to understand and improve our impact to benefit vulnerable populations, and to enhance the humanitarian and development community’s ability to address the world’s most complex challenges. As part of this commitment, Mercy Corps is co-leading the Regional Livestock Programme to catalyse systemic change along 5 livestock and camel milk corridors in the Horn of Africa.

**About RLP**

The Regional Livestock Programme (RLP) is a 12-year 3-country and 5-corridors initiative funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD). The RLP is implemented by a partnership that includes IGAD, Helvetas, Welthungerhilfe, and Mercy Corps. Mercy Corps collaborates with partners in implementation and leads the overall monitoring and results measurement system including reporting.

The RLP aims to bring about transformative change in the pastoral and agro-pastoral areas of the Horn of Africa by creating a more productive, climate-resilient, inclusive, and competitive livestock sector. During its first phase (2023-2027), the program is establishing a foundation for future phases by building relationships, gathering evidence, and laying the groundwork for geographical scaling and expansion in Phase II & III.

**The Consultancy**

The livestock sector within the RLP corridors of implementation has enormous potential for sustainable and inclusive economic growth with food security benefits. Despite this potential, producers, livestock-related businesses as well as the government officials face significant and interconnected challenges. The RLP was designed to sequence, layer and integrate strategic, corridor-level interventions to unlock the full potential of the livestock sector, enhance resilience, improve livelihoods, and strengthen both national and regional economies.  We seek to intentionally put learning back into the systems in ways that are accessible to all affected actors and redress rather than exacerbate knowledge and information asymmetries.

As part of the efforts, the RLP envisions coordinated corridor-level development approaches that strengthens livestock production and trade by strengthening the respective sub-systems (e.g. rangelands and water, animal health, feed and fodder market, live animal trade, meat/milk market, access to finance and business development services etc.) for the sector to realize its full potential. The RLP team knows that attention must be given to program activities and contexts beyond single interventions. We aim to move beyond a traditional MEL that is focused on trying to isolate and measure the (expected) impact of a single project or intervention; that straightforward cause-and-effect relationships do not exist.

Mercy Corps seeks a systems change measurement expert to review and adapt the current MEL system to be a systems-based MEL system capable of looking at the context in addition to traditional parameters and capturing what is emerging with a focus on both expected and unexpected changes as well as looking at specific interventions and the wider systems context.

**Consultancy Objective**

The objective of the TOR is to provide technical expertise and capacity strengthening support to refine intervention results chains and update the RLP MEL systems to include systems-level change measurement.

**Consultant Activities[[1]](#footnote-1)**

The Consultant will complete the following activities. Activities will be revised and finalized through the Inception Report (section below)

* Review strategic M&E documents, current M&E workplan and principal M&E and research system components (e.g. protocols and data flow for M&E and research; information management; M&E Plan; Learning Plan; AAER framework; Data collection tools) to assess needs and prioritize actions for strategic support.
* Consult internal and external RLP stakeholders to validate understanding of program and priority areas for stimulating systems change, measuring change in systems as well as communicating change and impact and internal learning.
* Conduct training on systems change and change measurement (hybrid participation) to relevant RLP staff including implementation partners.
* Collaborate with MEL team members, led by the MRM Manager, to co-create and cost a systems measurement plan. Ensure that the systems measurement is consistent with Mercy Corps’ MEL Policy, including the adoption of mandated technologies and MEL budget guidance, and is integrated in the existing MEL Plan.
* Consult/advise MEL team to understand the priority areas for learning and impact monitoring.
	+ In coordination with the HQ Learning Advisor, support a process that aligns the learning agenda with the RLP’s M&E resources and research plans, including both existing and planned data collection and analysis.
* Review existing programmatic tools (e.g. intervention and activity concept notes, internal reporting mechanisms). As needed, recommend revisions to tools to improve information capture and ease monitoring and reporting processes.
* Support RLP technical leadership to review results chains *vis a vis* interventions. Provide guidance in identifying gaps in approaches, partnership models or activities to achieving intended impact including changes to how livestock systems function in target areas.
* Assess existing interventions against systemic change criteria and revamp, with HQ MEL team and RLP MEL team, the routine monitoring plan tailored to RLP that informs routine decision making.
	+ Work with the HQ MEL team and MEL RLP team to develop tools that can fit in the existing data analysis processes for real/near-time learning and decision making.
* Support MEL and technical team members to consult external stakeholders to identify information and knowledge systems that are working poorly for some and well for others typically because of asymmetries of information. Advise on opportunities for stakeholder feedback mechanisms to reduce asymmetries of information and knowledge.
* Guide the RLP technical leads, MEL team and MC HQ support teams to operationalize the systems measurement plan.
* Provide routine and ad hoc technical support to be outlined in the inception report and consultancy workplan.
* With the HQ MEL Advisor and MEL RLP team, support the team’s annual and quarterly reflections with key stakeholders.

**Roles & Responsibilities**

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| --- | --- |
| **Title** | **Role & Responsibility in Consultancy** |
| Systems Measurement Consultant | * Technical assistance
* Trainer
* Facilitate integration of systems measurement
 |
| Director Regional Livestock Programme | * Consultancy supervisor
* Oversight
* Technical resource
* Reviewer
 |
| RLP Monitoring and Results Measurement Manager | * Primary point of contact
* Internal coordinator
* Lead MRM processes and practices
 |
| RLP Deputy Director & Technical Lead | * Technical advisor/resource
* Reviewer
 |
| Regional Director Evidence & Learning – Resilient Dryland Production Systems | * Technical advisor/resource
* Internal coordination support
* Reviewer
 |
| Knowledge Management and Communication Manager | * Knowledge Management & Communications advisor/resource
* Reviewer
 |
| Director MEL Data Systems  | * MEL technology, data flow, automation advisor/resource
* Reviewer
 |
| MEL Advisor | Program Learning | * Learning advisor/resource
* Reviewer
 |
| Director of Strategy Measurement | * M&E system advisor/resource
* Oversight of integration of system measurement with existing M&E plan
* Reviewer
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**Deliverables:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Product** | **Lead** | **Due Dates[[2]](#footnote-2)** |
| Inception report – outlining approach and consultancy workplan | Consultant | 7 days after the kick-off meeting |
| Systems measurement & monitoring plan as a component of existing RLP M&E plan | Consultant | 30 days after contract signing (draft for review) |
| Systems measurement training report | Consultant | 60 days after contract signing (draft for review) |
| Final consultant report | Consultant | 30 days before end of contract (draft for review)5 days before end of contract (final report) |

**Timeframe / Place:**

The consultant services are expected to be conducted 01 September 2025 – 01 March 2026[[3]](#footnote-3), over a period of 40 working days. The consultant will provide remote (on-line) support as well as in-person support in Nairobi, Kenya, Hargeisa, Somaliland or Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

| **Activity** | **Dates** |
| --- | --- |
| * Review existing MEL system and project documents and consult internal stakeholders
 | 01 – 03 October 2025 |
| * Consultancy Kick-off Meeting
 | 03 October. Date dependent on participant schedules |
| * Draft initial intervention and program level result chains
* Draft initial system changes measurement framework
* Draft initial evidence and learning framework for ease of program implementation
* Contribute to RLP Annual Learning Event
* Conduct training on MSD and systems change measurement
 | 01 – 31 October 2025 |
| * Participate in RLP Annual Learning Event, conduct systems change measurement overview session.
 | 11-17 October 2025 |
| * Bi-weekly check-in with program leadership
 | 29 September – 30 November 2025 |
| * Co-create and operationalize upgraded RLP MEL system
 | 18 October – 31 November 2025 |
| * Check-in call with program/technical leadership
 | Ad hoc |
| * Coordinate and lead quarterly review meetings.
* Provide on-request technical assistance
 | 01 Nov 2025 – 31 March 2026 |

**Consultant will report to:**

* Director, Regional Livestock Programme

**The Contractor will work closely with:**

* RLP Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Manager
* RLP Technical Director
* RLP Trade Corridor Coordinators and Program Managers
* Director Evidence & Learning, Resilient Dryland Production Systems, ESA
* MC Global Director Strategy Measurement
* MC Global Director MEL Data Systems
* MC Global Program Learning Advisor
* MC Global Director, Market Systems (TRaQ)

**Required Experience & Skills:**

* Greater than five (5) years in MEL systems and technical capacity strengthening.
* The consultant should be a seasoned professional with a proven track record in systems-measurement and development of monitoring systems.
* She/He will have demonstrated experience in supporting development project staff in analysing agricultural sectors to identify systemic barriers and developing and monitoring intervention plans that overcome and remove these barriers.
* She/He will have demonstrated excellent technical, analytical, and facilitation skills specific to designing and managing MEL systems for systems change monitoring and impact measurement.
* She/He will have demonstrated experience in technical and data management solutions for complex programming.
* She/He will have proven experience in technical advising and mentorship.
* She/He will have prior work in East Africa or the Horn of Africa region is strongly preferred; knowledge of local and regional agricultural production and marketing systems, livestock systems experience preferred.

**Tender details:**

The consultant will submit a proposal including the proposed methodology and approach, relevant experience and references along with a cost proposal.

Consultants or applicants are to submit a digital proposal and CV to tenders.mck@mercycorps.org by **24th September 2025**

**Team Engagement and Effectiveness**

Achieving our mission starts with how we build our team and collaborate. By bringing together individuals with a variety of experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives, we strengthen our ability to solve complex challenges and drive innovation. We foster a culture of trust and respect, where every team member is valued for their contributions, empowered to reach their full potential, and motivated to do their best work.

We recognize that building a strong and effective team is an ongoing process, and we remain committed to learning, improving, and growing together.

**Equal Employment Opportunity**

Mercy Corps is an equal opportunity employer committed to providing equal employment opportunities to all employees and qualified applicants for employment without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other characteristics protected under applicable law.

**Safeguarding & Ethics**Mercy Corps is committed to ensuring that all individuals we come into contact with through our work, whether team members, community members, program participants or others, are treated with respect and dignity. We are committed to the core principles regarding prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse laid out by the UN Secretary General and IASC. We will not tolerate child abuse, sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment by or of our team members. As part of our commitment to a safe and inclusive work environment, team members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner, respect local laws and customs, and to adhere to [Mercy Corps Code of Conduct Policies](https://www.mercycorps.org/who-we-are/ethics-policies) and values at all times. Team members are required to complete mandatory Code of Conduct elearning courses upon hire and on an annual basis.

1. See Roles & Responsibilities section for support people. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Days are calendar days, not workdays. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Dates will be adjusted during final contracting [↑](#footnote-ref-3)