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USAID/SOUTH SUDAN MONITORING AND EVALUATION SUPPORT PROJECT

TASK ORDER 4 FINAL REPORT

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USAID/SOUTH SUDAN MONITORING AND EVALUATION SUPPORT PROJECT TASK ORDER 4 FINAL REPORT

October 2019 – March 2022

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CONTENTS

ACRONYMS	i
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
SUMMARY OF KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS	5
SUMMARY OF KEY CHALLENGES	6
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING	6
INTRODUCTION	7
COMPONENT I: PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND REPORTING	8
COMPONENT II: SUPPORT FOR EVALUATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, AND SPECIAL STUDIES	14
COMPONENT III: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS	16
PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION	22
STAFFING	22
KEY PERSONNEL	22
NON-KEY PERSONNEL	22
RECRUITMENT OF SPECIALISTS AND COMMUNITY MONITORS	22
ANNEX 1: INVENTORY OF REPORTS AND DELIVERABLES	23
ANNEX 2: TPM SITES VISITED	24

ACRONYMS

AAR	After Action Review
A/COR	Alternate Contracting Officer Representative
ACTED	Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ALC	Advisory Leadership Council
BCG	Bacille Calmette-Guerin
CARB	Complementary Action for Resilience Building in South Sudan
CCNs	Cooperating Country National
CLA	Collaboration, Learning and Adapting
CM	Community Monitor
CMD	Christian Mission for Development
CO	Contracting Officer
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer Representative
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CP	Cooperating Partner
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DA	Development Assistance
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DG	USAID/South Sudan Democracy and Governance Office
DI	Democracy International
DIS	Development Information Solution
DMS	Data Management Systems
DOC	Development Outreach and Communications
DQA	Data Quality Assessment

EA	Enumeration Area
ED	USAID/South Sudan Education Office
EG	USAID/South Sudan Economic Growth Office
FFE	USAID Food For Education
FFP	Food For Peace
FSNALC	Foreign Service National Advisory Leadership Council
FY	Fiscal Year
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
HA	Humanitarian Assistance
HCIMA	Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPSAA	Humanitarian Policy, Studies, Analysis, or Applications
HPF	Health Pooled Fund
IEEES	Integrated Essential Emergency Education Services
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IMA	IMA World Health
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Implementing Partner
IPC	Integrated Phase Classification
IPV	Inactive Polio Vaccine
IPTT	Indicator Performance Tracking Table
IRC	International Rescue Committee
JAMMG	Joint Assessment, Measurement and Monitoring Group
JHPIEGO	Johns Hopkins Program for International Education in Gynecology and Obstetrics

KM	Knowledge Management
KMOL	Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning
LTTA	Long-Term Technical Assistance
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MESP	USAID/South Sudan Monitoring and Evaluation Support Project
MSI	Management Systems International
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NCE	Non-cost Extension
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OHA	Office for Humanitarian Assistance
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OPV	Oral Poliomyelitis Vaccine
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
P&R	Pause and Reflect
PEA	Political Economy Analysis
PfRR	Partnership for Resilience and Recovery
PHCU	Primary Healthcare Unit
PHCC	Primary Healthcare Centers
PIRS	Performance Indicator Reference Sheet
PITT	Performance Indicator Tracking Table
PL	Policy Link
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
POC	Point of Contact
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PPL	USAID Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning

PPR	Performance Plan Report
PRO	USAID/South Sudan Program Office
RSM	Risk and Strategic Management
RTPM	Remote Third-Party Monitoring
SOW	Statement of Work
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistance
SUCCESS	Systems to Uphold the Credibility and Constitutionality of Elections in South Sudan
TCN	Third Country National
TO	Task Order
TOR	Terms of Reference
TPM	Third Party Monitoring
UNFAO	United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USN	United States National
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WG	Working Group
WHO	World Health Organization
WVI	World Vision International

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This final report of the South Sudan Monitoring and Evaluation Support Project (MESP) summarizes activities and achievements over the life of the contract from October 1, 2019 to March 31, 2022, carried out under Task Order 4 (TO4) of the MESP Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity contract. TO4 was a follow on to and expansion of work carried out by Management Systems International (MSI) under previous MESP task orders starting in 2013.¹

MEPS TO4 provided ongoing technical, management and administrative MEL support for the following components²:



MESP provided USAID with a comprehensive on-the-ground package of analytic and program support services. MESP support included monitoring and evaluation; strategic planning; collaborating, learning and adapting (CLA); knowledge management; strategic and crisis communications; research; and other technical assistance to support mission programming. The specific details of MSI's work over the life of MESP TO4, shifted periodically to accommodate and support evolving Mission needs and priorities, and the politically, economically and socially complex and fluid environment in which USAID/South Sudan operates. MESP has been instrumental in supporting USAID - South Sudan that was established following the country's creation in 2011, and in helping USAID address the enormous political, security, development and operational challenges with which it has had to contend in South Sudan.

The bulk of MESP's work has focused on improving the quality and reliability of performance monitoring data, collecting and analyzing credible evidence about the results of programming, and ensuring programming results are shared with internal and external audiences to raise awareness, and increase program collaboration and sharing of information. MESP also integrated Knowledge Management (KM) and Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA) principles and practices into its work and into Mission operations, to ensure knowledge is captured and shared for operational and program improvements. Combined, all these efforts focused on strengthening the sustainability of USAID development efforts,

¹ MSI began working with USAID in South Sudan in 2007, prior to the creation of MESP.

² There were six contract modifications to MESP. Through these modifications there were some changes to MSI's Statement of Work (SOW), reprioritization of activities by USAID, and correspondingly, revisions to how components were described. The three components as presented here represent the original contract.

strengthening evidence-based decision-making, strengthening linkages among key stakeholders, and building partner capacity to measure results.

Key Services under MESP TO4, included:

- Providing technical, analytic and advisory MEL services (including baselines, activity monitoring, third-party monitoring (TPM), and community monitoring);
- Conduct a baseline survey of household resilience;
- Providing knowledge management and adaptive management services;
- Carrying out special assessments, studies, and surveys;
- Conducting Data Quality Assessments (DQAs);
- Integrating CLA into MEL services;
- Carrying out activity mapping and enhanced Geographic Information System (GIS) analytics;
- Developing and implementing a dynamic and user-friendly dashboard that monitors mission programming; and
- Providing support for strategic communications, logistics, event planning and other related support services.

A key focus of MESP TO4 work has included conducting third-party monitoring (TPM) including community monitoring and verification in some of the most remote and hard-to-reach locations across South Sudan. The valuable information collected provides USAID with the opportunity to use monitoring data for critical decisions on program alignment and improvement across all technical sectors, including health, democracy and governance, and education.

MESP provided extensive CLA support to USAID/South Sudan. In August 2021, USAID requested that MESP undertake a new CLA Initiative, called Backbone Coordination, under which MESP facilitated IP workshops that prepared an IP coordination charter and a proposed action plan to strengthen coordination and knowledge sharing between USAID-funded partners focused implementation of USAID programs. This framework is a critical step forward given there are over 100 implementing organizations in South Sudan, most have little to no awareness of other implementers or activities, and historically, there was little sharing of learning, challenges, opportunities or needs. Backbone Coordination helped institutionalize CLA into Mission and IP operations.

Our team has also assisted the Mission with data quality assessments (DQAs) of USAID programming. The DQAs advise the Mission and its technical offices on the strengths, weaknesses, and limitations of their performance data; where vulnerabilities exist; and the degree to which data can be trusted to influence USAID management decisions in South Sudan. MESP also provided DQA training to IPs, CORs and AORs.

As a demand-driven activity to support USAID/South Sudan, MESP has required continual flexibility, rapid response, adaptive management, and strong M&E technical expertise. MESP's approach has thus



Food Distribution in Process

been predicated on providing a range of technical and MEL support options that can be tailored and adapted to meet the Mission's needs. MESP required close collaboration with the USAID contracting officer's representative (COR) to identify priorities, address emergent needs and ensure that outputs are responsive to USAID's requirements within the TO4 SOW, annual work plans and budget parameters.

As a fast paced and dynamic project, MESP has been a formative experience for many staff members. At the end of MESP TO4 a number of interviews with long term project employees were recorded and compiled into an online [lessons learned page](#). While views expressed are personal, they offer insights into the evolution of the project and the insights gleaned from participation in numerous activities to support USAID/South Sudan

Key Services and Achievements under MESP are summarized below and described in more detail in the body of this report.

HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY SERVICES AND ACHIEVEMENTS



COMPONENT ONE

Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Carried out Household Baseline Survey:

In 2021, MESP carried out a Household Survey of 7,876 households across 13 Counties in 5 States of South Sudan. The purpose of the household baseline was to gather quantitative baseline data at the household level for resilience indicators included in the Mission's four-year strategy. It is intended to support planning, evidence-based decision making, and learning and adapting.

Provided Performance Monitoring and Reporting: Over the life of the task order MESP monitored 727 activities implemented by the Mission's IPs. Overall, 480 of the activities monitored were for OHA, 192 were for the Health Office and 55 were for DG. Due to travel restrictions related to COVID-19, a total of 233 activities were monitored remotely.

Adopted Third-Party Monitoring to Deal with COVID: MESP adopted a remote third-party monitoring (RTPM) approach in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, in FY 2021, in response to a request from

USAID/South Sudan, MESP expanded third-party monitoring (TPM) for the Office of Humanitarian Assistance utilizing dedicated Community Monitors (CMs).

Provided Context Monitoring: To continuously monitor the context in which USAID activities were being implemented, MESP compiled weekly scenario reports which included updates about the security situation, commodity food prices, and COVID-19 awareness. This activity was curtailed following the establishment of the PLSO but resumed in a different form using community monitors. Other data for these reports were collected by Democracy International, the MESP Security Advisor and MESP CMs.

Monitored OHA Activities: Through the MESP Task Order 04 the Office of Humanitarian Assistance (OHA) procured both traditional and community monitor based third-party monitoring services. Overall MESP team conducted monitoring visits and provided

reporting on OHA activities in South Sudan across 13 technical sectors.



COMPONENT TWO

Support for Evaluations, Assessments, and Special Studies

Supported USAID's Strategic Planning:

MESP supported the development of the Performance Management Plan (PMP) for the Mission's Strategic Framework (2020-2024), working closely with the Program Office (PRO) and Technical Offices to identify and select indicators for the results included in the Strategic Framework. MESP also supported the preparation of Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) for the PMP indicators.

Conducted Donor Investment Survey:

In FY 2020 MESP conducted a donor investment survey of eight (8) different donors and developed various donor investment maps showing the geospatial distribution of donor activities across the country, focused on Humanitarian Assistance (HA), Democracy and Governance (DG), Health, and Economic Growth (EG). MESP also prepared USAID target counties and COVID-19 maps to show the distribution of interventions across the country.

Carried out Data Quality Assessments

(DQAs): MESP carried out four DQAs, which were used to inform Mission and IP staff on the quality of performance monitoring data.

Completed DQAs included;

- a 2020 DQA report for 13 Performance Plan and Report (PPR) indicators;

- large 2021 DQA of IP programming that included 23 indicators across 10 IPs
- 2021 DQA of two PPR Indicators reported by Democracy International's SUCCESS Activity,
- DQA of four (4) PPR indicators reported by the Health Pooled Fund (HPF).

All DQAs were followed by After-Action Reviews and/or Learning Events to ensure that lessons learned were captured and shared.

Carried out Special Studies and Analyses:

MESP carried out several special studies for USAID, including a South Sudan Conflict Assessment, an Agriculture Assessment, a Meta-Analysis Desk Review and a Gender Desk Review. These important analyses were carried out in support of the development of the Mission's new Strategic Framework. The South Sudan Agriculture Assessment was a comprehensive assessment that provided the Mission with guidance on options for restoring the country's production systems and for helping communities rebuild their resilience to shocks and crises. The assessment focused on identifying major constraints to agricultural sector development, the existence of value chain opportunities, and the identification of potential partners.



COMPONENT THREE

Strategic Communications

Enhanced Coordination Among IPs:

MESP worked extensively to increase coordination among IPs over the life of the contract. This included working closely with USAID/South Sudan's Resilience Advisor to co-design an adaptive approach to enhancing coordination among IPs and improving service delivery. This included the design and initiation of the Backbone Coordination initiative described in the CLA section of this report.

Provided Support for Conferences, Meetings and Consultants:

Over the life of the Task Order MESP provided the Mission with on-site conferencing facilities and logistical support for workshops, meetings, and other stakeholder consultations. The project provided workshop facilities for 43 different meetings attended by approximately 1,025 participants who conducted Partnership for Resilience and Recovery (PfRR) technical and joint analysis group discussions, the NGO Forum national general meeting, the private sector envisioning workshop, learning activities with IPs, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) technical working group meetings and TPM debrief sessions. Additionally, MESP supported the Mission in the printing and delivery of 1,000

locally made USAID-branded face masks as a COVID-19 mitigation measure.

Supported Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning (KMOL)

initiative: In FY2020, the Mission began a Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning (KMOL) initiative to enhance the capture and harnessing of institutional knowledge for increased efficiency and effectiveness. USAID/South Sudan, the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning (PPL), the Program Office, and MESP collaboratively developed tools and processes to facilitate a seamless transfer of knowledge between transitioning USAID staff. MESP supported the design of innovative solutions for improving knowledge transfer between employees and put Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) at the center of the KMOL effort given their long-term and continual presence and institutional memory. USAID also complemented the quality and usefulness of the KMOL work in the MESP 2020 CPAR.

In addition to the knowledge management work to harness institutional learning, MESP supported the Mission in the procurement of Insights Discovery training. This training supported up to 137 USAID staff in improving collaboration through the insight's discovery process.

Supported Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA): Under TO4, MESP provided extensive CLA support to USAID and its IPs, and participated in relevant CLA activities organized by other USAID projects. Select CLA Activities included:

- In support of the Mission's learning agenda, MESP facilitated a series of workshops with Technical Offices to refine learning questions and develop a learning plan for the PMP.
- MESP held a virtual Pause & Reflect (P&R) for TPM to identify key lessons learned and opportunities for improvement. Discussions centered around viability of the RTPM approach, efficacy of Community Monitors, and implications of COVID-19 on IP service delivery.
- MESP facilitated data quality assessment After Action Reviews (AAR) to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of indicators reported to USAID/Washington.
- After each TPM exercise, MESP delivered a debrief presentation to the Mission and IPs and circulated debrief notes. This practice enhanced shared ownership of TPM findings and recommendations.

- In Quarter 3 of FY 2020, MESP conducted a stock-taking review of the Mission’s CLA activities. The exercise involved dialogue with staff from the different technical offices to understand how CLA activities had contributed to collaborating, learning and adapting, and decision-making.
- MESP assisted the Mission in facilitating the quarterly Implementing Partner (IP meeting, the FFP partner meeting and the communications workshop. MESP also worked closely with the Mission and its partners to plan and facilitate the December 2019 Partnership for Resilience and Recovery (PfRR) Learning Event in Juba.
- On November 9 and 10 of 2021, MESP organized and carried out a two-day CLA workshop in Juba to establish a Backbone Coordination Framework that will support USAID’s resilience agenda and help increase coordination between IPs related to their resilience programming. *This is described in more detail under Component 3.*

SUMMARY OF KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- MESP successfully led the development of the Performance Management Plan (PMP) for the Mission’s Strategic Framework (2020-2024).
- MESP completed a baseline household survey of 7,876 households across thirteen USAID target counties.
- MESP conducted a Donor Investment Survey obtaining feedback from eight (8) different donors. With the data collected, MESP produced a series of donor investment maps depicting the geospatial distribution of donors’ activities across the country.
- MESP conducted research for and delivered four important analyses supporting the development of the Mission’s new Strategic Framework: a Gender Desk Review, the South Sudan Conflict Assessment study, an Agriculture Assessment and the Meta-Analysis Desk Review report.
- MESP launched the OHA Community Monitoring system, recruited three Food Security specialists, two WASH and Nutrition Specialists, and trained and deployed 26 Community Monitors (CMs) to conduct monitoring and verification of OHA activities in the 13 OHA priority counties.
- MESP and USAID/South Sudan’s Resilience Advisor co-designed an adaptive approach to enhancing backbone coordination among IPs and improving service delivery.
- MESP completed the development of a TPM data visualization tool for USAID/South Sudan.
- MESP carried out four DQA assignments and associated DQA After-Action Reviews to assess strengths and weaknesses of performance indicators.
- MESP helped institute and support the Mission’s successful KMOL initiative.
- In response to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic, MESP quickly rolled out RTPM approach in 26 counties across South Sudan.
- MESP procured and delivered to the Mission 1,000 locally made USAID-branded face masks.

SUMMARY OF KEY CHALLENGES

- Following the February 2021 shift which diverted funds to the Household Baseline Survey, there was decreased demand for other MEL services including TPM, evaluations and special studies.
- The COVID-19 pandemic meant no field trips could be conducted for TPM for direct observation and verification from March 2020 onwards. As a result, MESP transitioned to Remote TPM, relying significantly on Community Monitors. However, data collection and coordination were difficult due to poor phone network coverage.
- Staff coordination was challenging at times as staff worked from home from approximately April to November 2021 given COVID restrictions. This necessitated greater coordination in the timely production of deliverables.
- Limitations in internet and mobile connectivity posed challenges for coordination, security, and syncing of data for the household survey.
- Poor road conditions and security threats necessitated adaptations to the data collection schedule.
- Identification of EA boundaries for Baseline Survey data collection proved to be a challenge in some areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING

- A/CORs should be encouraged to fully utilize the MEL services that are available to support and improve activity service delivery and results.
- The Mission should continue employing the flexibility required to quickly arrive at solutions, as were needed under TO4 to deal with flooding, the COVID-19 situation, recurring insecurity, and on-going conflicts. This requires active and open communication and planning to quickly mobilize to support the Mission's information needs.
- Early planning is essential for successful RTPM so that sufficient time is given for arranging interviews with IPs. In instances when IPs delay responding to TPM requests for information, the COR/AOR should be requested to facilitate the receipt of the required information from partners.

INTRODUCTION

USAID/South Sudan operates in a politically, economically and socially complex environment. The outbreak of civil war in 2013, widespread violence, and armed conflict in 2016 created a particularly challenging development context. Despite the formation of a transitional government in February 2020, which many hoped would bring peace and stability after years of conflict, the operating environment in South Sudan has remained complex, unstable and fluid. The protracted, politically linked subnational conflict, heavy rains and unprecedented flooding for two consecutive years, the COVID-19 global pandemic, a weakened South Sudan economy, and bureaucratic impediments, all exacerbated the fragile humanitarian situation and negatively impacted the already dire food security situation in the country. According to the Humanitarian Needs Overview report issued in January 2021, a total of 8.3 million people in South Sudan (approximately 69 percent of the population) were estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance in 2021. This is 800,000 more than the 7.5 million people that were in need in 2020, and 1,100,000 more than the 7.2 million people that were in need in 2019.

Within this complex and dynamic environment, the South Sudan Monitoring and Evaluation Support Project TO4, between October 1, 2019 and March 31, 2022, provided ongoing technical, management and administrative support to USAID under these three TO components:

- Component One: Performance Monitoring and Reporting.
- Component Two: Support for Evaluations, Assessments, and Special Studies.
- Component Three: Strategic Communications

MESP provided extensive technical, analytic and advisory MEL services; provided Knowledge Management and Adaptive Management Services; carried out special assessments, studies, and surveys; carried out data quality assessments (DQAs) of performance monitoring data; integrated CLA into MEL services; carried out activity mapping and enhanced Geographic Information System (GIS) analytics; managed a dynamic and user-friendly dashboard that monitored Mission programming; and provided support for strategic communications, logistics, event planning and other related support services.

MESP served as a demand-driven activity that provided a range of technical and MEL services that were regularly tailored and adapted to meet the Mission's needs in the fluid and complex environment of South Sudan. MESP has required continual flexibility, rapid response, adaptive management and strong M&E and CLA technical expertise.

As described in the Executive Summary, TO4 has included six contract modifications. Key modifications were carried out to:

- Shift resources to carry out a baseline household survey in 13 counties. This served as a baseline for measuring results under the Mission's Strategic Framework (2020–2024);
- Provide funding for Backbone Support under Component 3, to support USAID's resilience agenda and help increase coordination and sharing of knowledge and resources between IPs working on resilience programming. This is described in more detail in the CLA section under Component Three; and
- Support the recruitment and deployment of 26 field-based Community Monitors (CMs) and five Juba-based specialists to monitor Office of Humanitarian Assistance (OHA) activities.

Contract Amendment 6 provided a no-cost extension for the period of performance, shifting the TO4 end date from December 31, 2021 to March 31, 2022. The extension was intended to solely focus on

Component 2: Evaluations, Assessments and Special Studies. All other MESP activities were subsumed into a new MEL contract for South Sudan, under which MSI will continue providing services in a sub-contractor role.

COMPONENT I: PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND REPORTING

BASELINES, INDICATORS AND TARGETS

THE BASELINE HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

In 2021 MESP carried out an extensive household-level Baseline Study³ to gather quantitative baseline data at the household level for all indicators included in the Mission's four-year strategy. It focused on the Mission's 13 priority counties. The baseline was needed to support planning, evidence-based decision making, and learning and adapting related to resilience programming. Specifically, the survey assessed household resilience capacities and coping strategies, with a focus on food security, exposure to shocks and stresses, the level of social cohesion, and the prevalence of social norms, etc.

Implementation of the study occurred in two phases: Phase 1 took place between February and June, 2021 and included Akobo, Budi, Duk, Leer, Pibor, and Uror counties; Phase 2 took place between July and November, 2021 and included Baliét, Jur River, Kapoeta North, Mayendit, Paynijar, Ulang, and Wau counties.

The survey reached 7,876 households across 13 counties. The survey instrument incorporated modules from previous MESP household questionnaires in South Sudan, USAID's Feed the Future Zone of Influence Survey, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United

Nations modules on household dietary diversity and food insecurity experience, and modules from TANGO International's Resilience and Resilience Capacities Household Questionnaire. The instrument contained eight sections: 1. Consent, 2. Identification Information, 3. Household Schedule, 4. Household Income and Consumption, 5. Household Involvement in the Community, 6. Conflict and Resilience, 7. Health, and 8. Social Practices in the Community. The survey was translated into 16 local languages and had a 96% response rate.

In Phase One, MESP designed and developed the survey methodology and instruments that aligned with the Mission's PMP indicators, field tested the instruments in local languages, calculated the optimal sample size for each target county, designed a rigorous method for selecting the sample of households in the field, and collected data from 3,567 households in the initial six counties.

To carry out the survey MESP recruited, trained and deployed 21 county supervisors to pilot test the survey instrument and identify and recruit enumerators. MESP deployed county Team Leads in each county to assist the county supervisors with field recruitment of enumerators and provide technical



³Phase 1 of the Household Baseline Survey was originally reported under Component 2 though Phase 2 of the survey shifted to Component 1 based on a contract amendment.

backstopping during enumerator training and the survey rollout. MESP also deployed County Coordinators who are seasoned data collection experts from the NBS to develop rollout deployment plans

The baseline survey report provided analyses and maps by county of responses related to each indicator assessed. An example is provided in Figure #1 for Indicator 4: The % of households reporting symptoms of trauma.

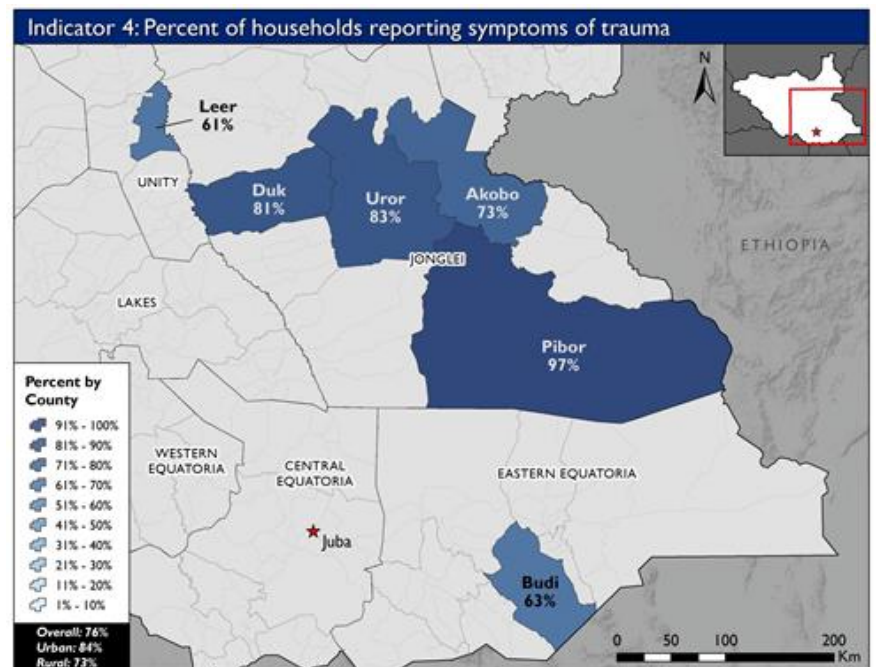


Figure #1: Illustrative Map of Household Baseline Survey Responses by County

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Over the life of the contract MESP monitored 687 activities implemented by the Mission’s IPs across 66 counties (see Figure #2 below).

Figure #2: Total Activities Monitored by MESP

	Total Activities Monitored			
	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	Total
Number of Activities Monitored	377	310	40	727
Number of Counties	23	42	4	N/A

THIRD-PARTY MONITORING (TPM) AND REMOTE THIRD-PARTY MONITORING (RTPM)

Due to travel restrictions related to COVID-19, beginning in March 2020 MESP could not conduct any monitoring trips. To mitigate this challenge, MESP pivoted to a RTPM approach towards the end of Q3 and continued to present RTPM findings through enhanced debrief documents and increased use of visual presentations to both USAID/South Sudan and IP staff.

To make this transition MESP reviewed data collection tools for FFP activities (i.e. warehouse management, health, etc.) to make them consistent with the RTPM approach. COVID-19 awareness and prevention questions were integrated into the tools to assess COVID-19 awareness in the communities. Data collection tools for Integrated Essential Emergency Education Services (IEEES) and Food for Education (FFE) were not reviewed because schools were closed.

The RTPM approach was piloted in Rumbek, Yei and Tombura to assess the status of health service delivery in Health Pooled Fund (HPF)-supported facilities. The approach was scaled up to reach



WFP warehouse in Kapoeta South, June 2021

additional counties. Challenges encountered included poor phone network coverage especially in Tombura, unavailability of health facility in-charge personnel, and high telephone costs. At times this necessitated further follow-up for supplemental data collection.

To carry out RTPM, MESP recruited Community Monitors (CMs) for the seven (7) PfRR Partnership areas of Yei, Rumbek, Yambio, Wau, Aweil, Bor and Torit. The CMs were trained in data collection and interviewing techniques, COVID-19 preventive measures, photography, informed consent and do-no-harm principles.

Monitoring by Technical Office: As shown in Table #1 below, in FY 2021, 84 percent of the activities monitored were for OHA, followed by the Health Office (13 percent) and DG (13 percent). Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, 233 activities were monitored remotely. However, immediately after the restrictions were lifted in Q4, in-person Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) resumed and MESP monitored 77 OHA activities in six counties of Akobo, Ulang, Mayendit, Rumbek North, Duk and Fangak.

Table #1: Activities Monitored by Technical Office and Method in FY2021

OFFICE	RTPM	TPM	TOTAL	%
OHA	184	77	261	84%
DG	5	0	5	2%
ED	0	0	0	0
EG	0	0	0	0
HEALTH	44	0	44	14%
OVERALL	233	77	310	100%

Monitoring Debriefs: Following all TPM/RTPM visits and data collection exercise, MESP prepared and circulated debrief notes to USAID and relevant IPs, including 78 RTPM debriefs and 77 TPM debriefs. Once monitoring transitioned to RTPM, MESP enhanced debrief documents and increased the use of visual presentations.

MESP also provided debrief presentations for all education, Ebola virus disease (EVD) prevention and FFP activities. All presentations were attended by the USAID/South Sudan Program Office (PRO), relevant USAID technical office members, IPs, counterparts and other donors. Through these sessions MESP gained a better understanding of the needs of the client, leading to continued improvement in our methods and the information collected and presented. The debriefs also highlighted any service delivery gaps for follow-up by the IPs and the Mission technical teams.

During FY2021 alone, MESP delivered 32 debrief notes and 15 debrief presentations to the Mission and IPs. Most of the debrief notes were for OHA (20), followed by Health (7), and DG (5). MESP delivered 10 debrief presentations for OHA, 3 for Health, and 2 for DG.

TPM and RTPM Challenges: Beyond COVID there were numerous challenges that affected monitoring. These included poor phone network coverage, high telephone costs, limited internet and mobile connectivity, poor road conditions and security threats. For example, in FY2021, during Q1, MESP could not monitor Tambura County as requested by the Health office due to lack of internet connectivity caused by growing insecurity in the county, making it impossible to get fuel to run generators. Also in FY 2021, MESP could not monitor WASH/GBV activities in Jur River, Magwi, and Rubkona for the Health office because IOM suspended implementation of activities due to conflict. For OHA, MESP could not monitor Pibor due to an unstable telephone network in the county, and Renk because the cooperating NGO pulled out after local youth staged riots demanding employment. MESP also could not monitor Abyei FM because the DG Office has not shared the IP contact details. In Q4, MESP could not travel to Ayod, Pibor, and Tonj North.

OHA ACTIVITY MONITORING



Road conditions in Budi County, May 2021

Over the life of the contract, OHA tasked MESP to monitor activities in 13 sectors, including Agriculture; Economic Recovery and Market Systems; Food Assistance; Health; Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA); Humanitarian Policy, Studies, Analysis, or Applications (HPSAA); Logistics Support; Emergency Response - Food and Nutrition Complementary Services; Nutrition; Protection; Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Practice; Shelter and Settlements; and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH). MESP designed 13 sector-specific tools for this purpose. MESP also designed the context monitoring tool to monitor contextual factors affecting implementation of OHA activities in the 13 counties.

On October 14, 2021, OHA revised its list of sectors from 13 to seven. Correspondingly, on November 1, MESP submitted the seven draft sector monitoring tools for Agriculture, Economic Recovery and Market Systems, Food Assistance, Health, Nutrition, Protection, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH). MESP has also developed data analysis plans for each of the seven sectors.

DATA/GIS SUPPORT

Over the life of the contract, MESP provided GIS and mapping support. For example, in support of its efforts to support the Mission in developing its Strategic Framework, MESP produced geographic maps to show the spatial distribution of activities implemented by USAID and other donors. MESP also produced a series of sector-specific geographic and other maps showing actual and projected returns, climatic disasters including frequency of floods, frequency of abduction of aid workers, PfRR locations, historical territorial control for Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and opposition, integrated phase classification (IPC) levels, and economic potential.

To support this effort, MESP submitted to the COR printouts of high-resolution sector-specific geographic maps of 100cm x 70cm, depicting targeted areas under the new strategic framework. The maps also depict Partnership for Resilience and Recovery locations, actual versus projected IDP returns, including individual household returns, population estimates, frequency of abduction of aid workers, and Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) levels.

As part of the preparations for the Mission’s IP meeting, MESP produced thirteen (13) individual county maps depicting geospatial settlement density across targeted counties, including administrative boundaries of payams and bomas, and topographic details.

Additionally, MESP generated maps depicting Policy Link expansion in Jur River, Budi, Kapoeta North and Akobo counties; the presence of USAID/South Sudan IPs at payam level in the 13 target counties; administrative boundaries of bomas and payams, including relevant topographic features; and distribution of IPs working in Humanitarian Assistance (HA) and Development Assistance (DA) in the 13 target counties.

MESP also conducted a donor investment survey of eight (8) donors and developed varied donor investment maps showing the geospatial distribution of donor activities across the country spanning key sectors. Donor maps focused on eight (8) different donors and their work in Humanitarian Assistance (HA), Democracy and Governance (DG), Health, and Economic Growth (EG) sectors. MESP also prepared target counties and COVID-19 maps to show the distribution of COVID-19 interventions across the country.

Using geospatial data (GPS coordinates) from USAID technical offices and IPs, MESP continued to update state-level maps of activities as new geospatial data became available.

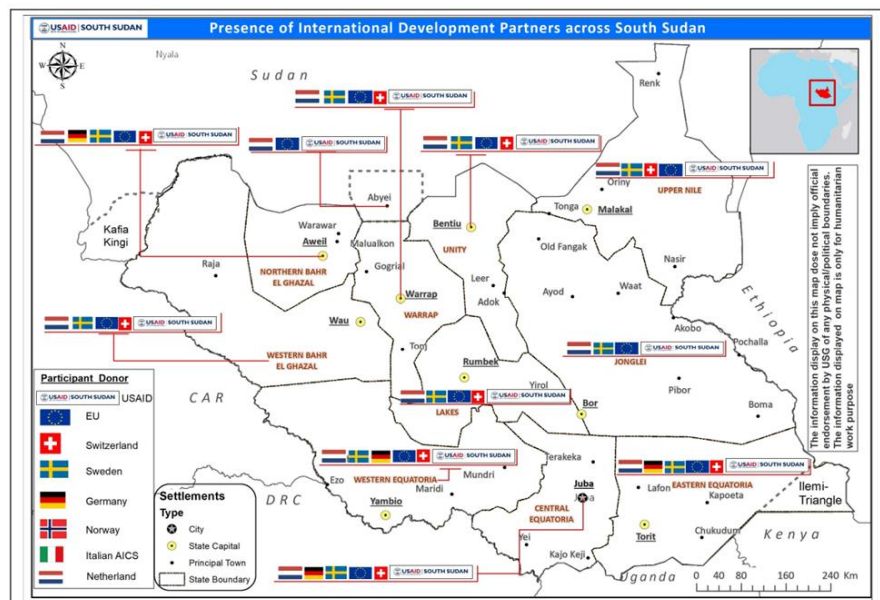
DATA QUALITY ASSESSMENTS (DQA'S)

MESP carried out four DQAs assignments, including 42 indicators, used to advise Mission and IP staff on the quality of their performance monitoring data and what it officially reports, and to help it understand whether its data is reliable for decision making. Each DQA assessment focused on the Data Quality Standards of Validity, Reliability, Precision, Integrity and Timeliness and complied with ADS DQA requirements.

The following DQAs were completed by MESP:

- In FY2020 MESP carried out a DQA of 13 Performance Plan and Report (PPR) indicators - two (2) reported by UNICEF under the Integrated Essential Emergency Education Services (IEEES)

Figure #3: Example of Map Produced on Donor Programming



program, three (3) reported by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and eight (8) reported by IOM.

Based on this DQA, MESP also facilitated a DQA AAR to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the 13 indicators. The exercise generated recommendations for improving future assessments, including early planning and preparation, conducting field level assessments, and strengthening coordination with IPs. As a result of the DQA, the IOM indicator “Number of water and sanitation sector institutions strengthened to manage water resources or improve water supply and sanitation services as a result of USG assistance” was amended to focus on counting the number of Water Management Committees trained.

- In October 2021, MESP completed a DQA of four (4) PPR indicators reported by the Health Pooled Fund (HPF). The assessment found that the data reported were of good quality and suitable for the PPR. A recommendation was made for HPF to document data collection procedures in Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) to standardize the data collection processes.
- In CY 2021, MESP completed a large DQA of IP programming that included 21 indicators across 10 IPs. The DQA report was submitted to USAID on October 21, 2021. It included 19 individual F-Indicators and two custom indicators.
- In CY 2021, MESP conducted DQAs for two PPR indicators reported by Democracy International/SUCCESS for the FY2020 PPR. Due to the COVID-19 social distancing requirements, discussions with the IP were conducted virtually. The assessment found that, overall, the data reported met the USAID data quality standards and were good for the PPR reporting.

Example of DQA Findings: The overall findings from the 2021 DQA revealed that all ten IPs represent either no immediate risk, or a low risk to the quality of the data. Overall, IP Data Management Systems (DMSs) were found to be acceptable, although there were wide variations among them. Each question in the DQA tool is scored according to an answer score: ‘Yes’ (Y) = 3; ‘Partially’ (P) = 2; ‘No’ (N) = 1; and ‘Not Applicable’ (N/A). Scores were provided for each of the DQA Standards: Validity (V), Reliability(R), Integrity (I), Precision (P), and Timeliness (T). DQA scores across the ten IPs are show in Table #2 below.

Table #2: DQA Average Scores for All Ten Implementing Partners

IP	V	R	I	P	T	IP TOTAL
DI	2.83	2.77	3.00	2.63	3.00	2.85
DT-GLOBAL	2.77	2.92	2.60	2.88	3.00	2.83
IMA	2.83	2.92	2.50	2.43	3.00	2.74
INTERNEWS	2.83	2.92	3.00	2.56	3.00	2.86
IOM	2.83	2.92	3.00	2.75	3.00	2.90
IRC	2.86	2.82	2.00	2.08	3.00	2.55
RSM	2.83	2.75	2.50	2.40	3.00	2.70

UNFAO	2.76	2.93	2.60	2.50	3.00	2.76
WCS	2.87	2.77	3.00	2.75	3.00	2.88
WVI	2.86	2.92	2.50	2.40	2.83	2.70
DQ TOTAL	2.83	2.87	2.67	2.54	2.98	2.78

Example of DQA After-Action Review: On November 4, 2021, MESP conducted a virtual After-Action Review (AAR) for the FY2021 DQA with staff from PRO, Office Directors, and A/CORs from the Technical Offices. Discussions focused on key findings from the FY21 DQA, what went well and didn't, and recommendations for future DQA processes. In retrospect, members commended the A/COR refresher training and IP orientation training, the cooperation of IPs in scheduling DQA consultations, and the timely sharing of requested documentation by IPs. However, members agreed to ensure DQA plans are prepared well in advance, to improve communication with IPs when scheduling consultations, to encourage participation of A/CORs in the consultations, to prioritize indicators reported across IPs, and to provide MEL training to IPs. MESP submitted the final consolidated DQA report and individual IP reports on December 2 after addressing USAID comments received on November 15.

CONTEXT MONITORING:

As part of MESP efforts to continuously monitor the context in which USAID activities were implemented, MESP shared 26 weekly scenario reports, which included updates about the security situation, commodity food prices, and COVID-19 awareness. Data for these reports were collected by Democracy International, the MESP Security Advisor and CMs.

For OHA, MESP Community Monitors continued to monitor contextual factors affecting implementation of OHA activities in the field by collecting data on security, floods, and food commodity prices. The CMs also collected data on service availability such as nutrition, health and WASH site service, in OHA locations using thematic monitoring tools. These data were collected using Tablets and the analyses were displayed in the Data Visualization Tool.

COMPONENT II: SUPPORT FOR EVALUATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, AND SPECIAL STUDIES

The objective of TO4, Component 2 was to further refine and expand the services provided in earlier Task Orders, focusing on analysis of key program technical areas, project evaluations, assessments and special studies.

SUPPORT FOR USAID'S STRATEGIC PLANNING:

MESP supported the development of the PMP for the Mission's Strategic Framework (2020-2024), for which MESP worked with PRO and Technical Offices to identify and select indicators for the results included in the Strategic Framework. MESP also supported the preparation of Performance Indicator Reference Sheets for the PMP indicators.

ASSESSMENTS AND SPECIAL STUDIES

MESP carried out the South Sudan Agriculture Assessment, the Conflict Analysis, a Gender Desk Review and a Meta-Analysis Desk Review to inform the development of the Mission's Transitional Strategy. These are described below:

SOUTH SUDAN AGRICULTURE ASSESSMENTS

In February FY2021, MESP and IFPRI completed a South Sudan Agricultural Assessment. The purpose was to provide USAID with information and analyses to inform future USAID investment options for the agriculture sector in South Sudan. Such a comprehensive assessment was requested to help the Mission restore the country's production systems and help communities rebuild their resilience to shocks and crises. The assessment focused on identifying major constraints to agricultural sector development in targeted counties;



- Aweil Centre
- Aweil North
- Awerial
- Bor Duk
- Rumbek Centre
- YirolRumbek East
- Torit
- Twic East
- Wau
- Wulu
- Yambio

The key questions relate to value chain opportunities that exist, development organizations that could serve as potential partners, and how agricultural investments could support other mission strategic objectives, while increasing household and community resilience.

The assessment also identified which existing autonomous local systems (such as local agricultural extension services) are developed or established enough to provide an entry point into communities with which USAID could work. Lastly the assessment explored how humanitarian assistance networks facilitated the bridging of social capital. For example, the assessment team examined how future agricultural investments addressed the emerging strategic themes of social cohesion, agency or self-efficacy, conflict, youth, and gender, with a particular focus on women's empowerment and elimination of violence against women.

CONFLICT ASSESSMENT

In January 2020 MESP delivered a South Sudan Conflict Assessment. The report provided an overview of the conflicts and various key actors and dynamics, including key drivers and mitigators of conflict. This conflict assessment was designed to increase awareness of the current conflict in South Sudan in order to enable USAID/South Sudan to develop programming strategies that are sensitive to conflict-related risks and peacebuilding opportunities

GENDER DESK REVIEW

MESP delivered a gender desk review in January 2020 to assist USAID/South Sudan in making informed decisions about how to effectively integrate gender considerations into its new four-year Strategy. This desk review presented findings, drew limited conclusions and offered sector-oriented recommendations for addressing gender disparities in many aspects of South Sudanese communities to promote gender equality in South Sudan.

META-ANALYSIS DESK REVIEW

In February 2020 MESP delivered a Meta-Analysis Desk Review. It was conducted to assist USAID/South Sudan to make informed decisions about how to effectively integrate key thematic issues into the development of its new Strategy. This desk review presented findings and offered recommendations for addressing key challenges in selected thematic areas including governance and corruption; conflict breakdown and social cohesion, aid dependence, refugees, IDPs, and returnees; health and WASH; education; youth; gender, GBV and trauma; infrastructure and private sector development; natural resource management and climate change; and locally led development, resilience and livelihoods.

OTHER COMPONENT TWO SUPPORT:

TRAINING OF SPECIALISTS AND COMMUNITY MONITORS

In September of 2021, MESP conducted a three-day training for the 25 CMs in Juba. The training focused on data collection techniques, USAID's Strategic Framework (2020-2024), and OHA activities in South Sudan. The three-day training for the 25 CMs in Juba, between 7-9 September 2021. The training was delivered based on an eight-session curriculum based on the approved data collection instruments, designed to strengthen skills in data collection and to enable specialists and CMs to become familiar with USAID's strategy and OHA activities implemented by field-level cooperating partners. Following the training, CMs were deployed in their respective counties to begin pilot testing the community monitoring system, with context monitoring. To complement the training and pilot test, MESP provided CMs will ongoing supervisory mentoring visits from Juba-based Specialists.

TPM DATA VISUALIZATION TOOL

MESP supported development of a TPM data visualization tool for USAID/South Sudan. The tool is a technological advance toward enhancing the Mission's capability to monitor and verify activities implemented by its IPs. The tool will reduce lags in reporting by providing the Mission with access to site visit reports as soon as they are uploaded into the Knowledge Management (KM) portal, thus expediting decision-making on the TPM findings. MSI Home Office staff visited Juba to train OHA and PRO staff on the system. Work on the development of the tool will continue in FY2022 under the new MELS contract. During the MESP Period of performance the basic system design was developed through Mission consultations and MESP staff defined requirements. Following initial development, MESP conducted training for USAID and solicited further feedback which guided the further development plans to be completed during the follow-on project.

COMPONENT III: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

MESP provided extensive services under Component III to strengthen knowledge management and CLA, and to provide USAID with extensive strategic communications and logistical services, described in more detail below.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

The Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning (KMOL) initiative under MESP was in direct response to the Mission's commitment to capturing and harnessing institutional knowledge within the mission and ensuring management efficiency and effectiveness. This was particularly critical in South Sudan where Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) generally serve shorter one-year tours, and there is typically little to no in-person overlap between incoming and outgoing FSOs.

To increase institutional knowledge within the Mission, MESP collaborated with USAID's Bureau of Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL) and USAID/South Sudan to undertake the KMOL pilot. KMOL created a more systematic approach for knowledge management, generated knowledge and applied it to organizational improvements, and capitalized on existing centers of knowledge within the Mission. Our team identified solutions for improving knowledge transfer between transitioning employees. It also placed Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) at the center of the KMOL effort given their long-term presence and institutional memory. To support this process MESP created tools, including a handover memo template to standardize handover notes from outgoing to incoming staff, agendas and templates for welcome emails, and a book to include profiles of incoming staff. The MESP team also created a resource guide for the Mission's Foreign Service National Advisory Leadership Council (FSNALC), which provides an overview of USAID learning resources available on USAID University, Program Net, and the Learning Lab. Ultimately, because the KMOL pilot was designed to retain organizational information and knowledge in a more organized and systematic way and most approaches can be used in the virtual environment, it proved to be particularly valuable during the COVID 19 pandemic. The successful KMOL initiative was cited by USAID in a MESP CPARS and served as a model for missions in other countries.

In addition to the knowledge management work to harness institutional learning, MESP supported the mission in the procurement of Insights Discovery training. This training supported Mission internal group discussions and dynamics through a Myers-Brigg' type training. MESP procured this training twice, one in person, with a group from Uganda, and the 2nd one online. MESP also ensured that two FSNs were certified so they could replicate the training in the future.

ENHANCING COORDINATION AMONG IPS

MESP worked extensively to increase coordination among IPs over the life of the contract. This included working closely with USAID/South Sudan's Resilience Advisor to co-design an adaptive approach to enhancing coordination among IPs and improving service delivery. Using the agreed approach, MESP commenced consultations with USAID/South Sudan's flagship IPs. Finally, MESP also designed and led the Backbone Support effort (described below), through which IPs agreed on a charter of coordination, information sharing, and learning.

COLLABORATING, LEARNING AND ADAPTING

MESP provided extensive CLA services to the Mission and IPs under TO4. This included the integration of CLA principles and activities into MESP monitoring, evaluation and analytical services; as well as the provision of support to USAID to support the Mission's extensive CLA efforts across its portfolio. Our CLA activities are described in more detail below.

INTEGRATION OF CLA INTO MESP PROGRAMMING

- MESP held a virtual Pause & Reflect (P&R) session for TPM to assess key lessons and opportunities for improvement. Discussions centered around viability of the RTPM approach, efficacy of Community Monitors, and implications of COVID-19 on IP service delivery.
- As described under the DQA section above, MESP facilitated a data quality assessment After Action Review to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of 13 indicators reported to USAID/Washington.
- After each TPM exercise, MESP delivered a debrief presentation to the Mission and IPs and circulated debrief notes. This practice enhanced shared ownership of TPM findings and recommendations.
- MESP incorporated CLA processes in development of the baseline survey. This included a post phase-I Pause and Reflect debrief in August 2021 and another in December 2021.
- On November 29, 2021, MESP held a Pause and Reflect workshop with OHA and PRO to review the performance of community monitors, identify bottlenecks, and generate recommendations for improved performance. Discussions focused on the humanitarian landscape, current tools and outputs, tradeoffs and limitations, and opportunities for improvement. Members observed that CMs are performing well because CMs are local residents with the capability to access hard-to-reach areas, and because data collection tools are user-friendly. However, there were challenges identified, including the fact that some CMs are not familiar with Cooperating Partners (CPs), some counties are vast, and telephone networks are poor. These issues will need attention in future programming.

SUPPORT FOR MISSION'S CLA INITIATIVES

- In support of the Mission's learning agenda, MESP facilitated a series of workshops at a multi-day event held in November 2021. During the workshops Technical Offices worked with MESP staff to refine learning questions and develop a learning plan for the PMP.



- In collaboration with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), in 2020 MESP delivered findings of the agriculture assessment desk study conducted to assess future investment options for the agriculture sector and examine major constraints to growth in the targeted locations.
- In support of the Mission's CLA agenda, MESP submitted to OHA three field debrief notes from Tonj North, Kapoeta South, and Kapoeta East and delivered a debrief presentation to OHA and IPs. During the debrief, OHA and their IPs acknowledged the usefulness of TPM data in highlighting successes and bottlenecks and providing evidence for strategic decision making.
- In Quarter 3 of FY2020, MESP conducted a stock taking review of the Mission's CLA activities. The exercise involved dialogue with staff from the different technical offices to understand how CLA activities had been operationalized and integrated into USAID decision-making.

- MESP assisted the Mission in facilitating the quarterly IP meeting, the FFP partner meeting and the communications workshop. MESP also worked closely with the Mission and its partners to plan and facilitate the December 2019 PfRR Learning Event in Juba.
- MESP staff were continuously engaged in the Mission’s MEL Working Group (WG). This included attending virtual MEL working Group meetings, participating in a WG online survey, and engaging in discussions about ways to improve learning and MEL capacity building across the Mission,
- MESP held joint weekly progress review meetings with Policy Link (PL) to enhance coordination and information sharing between the two platforms. MESP Backbone Coordination staff attended two sense-making workshops in Jur River County from November 29 to December 7, 2021, in order to continue building momentum towards effective collaboration between the citizens of Jur River and USAID IPs, by preparing communities for joint integrated planning. An additional objective was to kick off a bottom-up approach to evidence-informed resilience priority-setting and decision-making, with a review of the community resilience mapping findings; to engage citizens in dialogue for voicing aspirations and document the articulated resilience priorities, needs, and actions; and to select Payam representatives for the county-wide workshop planned for January 2022.
- MESP staff participated in numerous JAMMG meetings to identify a common framework for measuring resilience in PfRR areas and to review progress of the Mission’s resilience interventions.

DEVELOPMENT OF CLA BACKBONE SUPPORT FRAMEWORK

Over the last half year of MESP, the project team was asked to facilitate creation of a Backbone Support Framework for implementing partners carrying out USAID-funded resilience programming in South Sudan. This framework is deemed critical given there are over 100 implementing organizations in South Sudan, most of which have little interaction with each other and limited opportunities to share knowledge and information. This framework will support horizontal collaboration (implementer to implementer) and vertical collaboration (implementer national offices to cooperating partners at the local level). Going forward the framework encourages the sharing of work plans, information on local dynamics and locally identified needs, and lessons learned across all USAID implementing partners.

To launch the Backbone Support Framework, in November of 2021, MESP organized and carried out a two-day CLA workshop in Juba to discuss possible coordination mechanisms and develop a draft Coordination Charter - an agreement governing coordination between IPs – a draft work plan to support coordination. The charter promulgates that through strategic coordination, USAID IPs can achieve greater impact than any one partner can achieve alone. The charter also represents a behavioral

contract - a commitment to pursue thoughtful coordination in service of beneficiaries to contribute to a

A Framework for Considering Different Levels of Coordination

Level	Definition
Fully Integrated Action	Partners establish protocols for collective or fully aligned actions, unified metrics, common reporting, and mutual accountability.
Resource Sharing	Partners agree to share access or co-fund, key inputs, services or infrastructure.
More Systematic and Intentional Joint Planning	Partners identify key points at which joint planning occurs as a part of a systematic process (e.g. annual work planning, learning events, etc..).
Organic Planning	Partners identify targets of opportunity to initiate coordination as opportunities emerge; implementation remains largely independent.
Information Sharing	The most basic form of coordination; it involves sharing information between partners to influence or facilitate coordination.

more self-reliant South Sudan

The workshop served to facilitate networking opportunities/backbone coordination between IPs, which is critical under USAID’s new strategy that requires significant coordination, communication, and partnering between IPs, and between IPs and USAID.

At the workshop, IPs focused on the following questions:

- What are practical approaches you have used to coordinate with others to leverage greater impact?
- How can we expand incentives and minimize disincentives around coordination?
- What are some practical ways to leverage impact that do not involve more meetings?
- What problems should be avoided? What successes should be replicated?

**Backbone Framework CLA Workshop:
Participant Comments**

“Excellent workshop, participants able to conclude the workshop knowing what is next”

“Looking forward to collaboration with USAID IPs in the 13 counties”

“Very practical discussions, the IP spotlight was great, USAID participation encouraged the IP to share more.”

“Well-structured facilitation, practical approach to gather inputs, active participation, and level of knowledge.”

- In trying to bridge the gap between humanitarian assistance (HA) and development assistance (DA), what are the key challenges? What are the key opportunities?
- What are the best ways to overcome competition among IPs?
- How can USAID better encourage/support coordination?

The workshop also focused on identifying IPs core strengths and competencies, with the intent of sparking discussion about how IPs can leverage each other’s strengths. During the workshop each IP provided a brief presentation on their work and discussed the following

- What are your organization’s core competencies? What are you known for? Or is your organization multi-dimensional – humanitarian, development, stabilization?
- Are there any examples, you would like to highlight that demonstrate these strengths/ core competencies? Have you used any innovative approaches in South Sudan based on your core competencies?
- Have you developed an approach or tool that grew out of your core competencies? E.g., an assessment tool? a community mapping tool?

On December 8, 2021, MESP shared the draft charter with the IPs to invite their feedback/inputs and support institutionalizing it within their programming. MESP also delivered two presentations on backbone coordination services to the Mission’s Resilience Advisory Group (RAG).

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

Produced Customized Information Product: At the request of the Program Office (PRO), in FY2021, MESP printed 50 booklets of the South Sudan Revitalized Peace agreement. Additionally, MESP submitted to Development Outreach Communications (DOC) office photographs and articles for the USAID/South Sudan bi-weekly newsletter. MESP also attended the virtual quarterly IP communications meetings convened by the DOC to discuss USAID branding and marking requirements, and guidelines for photography and success stories. Beyond the Information Packets there was no additional demand by USAID for Strategic Communications products and services.

WEEKLY SCENARIO REPORTING

MESP provided USAID with weekly reports on the indicators proposed for the Mission’s scenario reports between May 2020 and November 2020 as requested by USAID. These reports provide the Mission with a weekly, evidenced-based overview of the South Sudan context focusing on indicators related to instability, conflict and market costs. MESP also continued to contribute to the Mission bi-weekly report.

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT FOR CONFERENCES, MEETINGS, AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

MESP provided the Mission with extensive on-site conferencing facilities and logistical support for workshops, meetings and other stakeholder consultations. During FY 2020, the project provided workshop facilities for 43 different meetings attended by approximately 1,025 participants who conducted Partnership for Resilience and Recovery technical and joint analysis group discussions, the NGO forum national general meeting, the private sector envisioning workshop, learning activities with USAID IPs, MEL technical working group meetings and TPM debrief sessions. Additionally, MESP supported the Mission in the printing and delivery of 1,000 locally made USAID-branded face masks to mitigate COVID risk.

MESP has also provided coordination and logistical support for Mission staff to carry out Insights Discovery Profiles team building workshops for new Mission staff. We also supported accreditation training for three Mission Foreign Service National (FSN) staff to lead future Insights Discovery Profiles workshops. These activities were carried out twice.

Although MESP conference rooms had been closed for about a year due to COVID-19 given restrictions on public gatherings, in Q4 of FY2021 MESP reopened its rooms to USAID/South Sudan. On September,

23, 2021, MESP hosted a half-day workshop on Family Planning, Abortion and HIV/AIDS Statutory and Policy Requirements. The event was organized by the Health Office and drew 25 participants from IMA World Health, JHPIEGO, World Relief, and MESP.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

STAFFING

As of October 2021, the MESP staffing structure had 74 staff including 12 LTTAs and 62 STTAs (Annex I). MESP also had 147 enumerators, one Safety and Security Advisor subcontractor, and one IT subcontractor.

KEY PERSONNEL

MESP had four key personnel, i.e. one USN COP, one TCN Senior M&E Advisor, one CCN DCOP, and one CCN Director of Finance & Administration, with Home Office support team comprising one Technical Director, one Senior Project Manager, and one Project Manager.

NON-KEY PERSONNEL

Under Component 1, MESP had 21 CCN STTA county supervisors, 147 enumerators, and three HO support staff. Component 2 had three CCN STTA Subject Matter Specialists and 26 Community Monitors assisted by five HO support staff; Component 3 had one CCN STTA and one HO support staff, and Component 4 had four CCN LTTAs, seven CCN STTAs, and one TCN STTA. Operations had four LTTAs, three STTAs, and two service providers supported by one HO staff.

One M&E Specialist resigned in February 2020 and was replaced in May 2020. MESP also recruited a Senior Field Monitor, a Data Utilization and Reporting Specialist, a Field Monitor and a short-term technical specialist to support the agriculture assessment.

RECRUITMENT OF SPECIALISTS AND COMMUNITY MONITORS

After a collaborative process and successful vetting by OHA, MESP onboarded one Food Security specialist and two WASH and Nutrition Specialists recruited to conduct monitoring and verification of OHA activities in South Sudan. MESP also recruited 25 Community Monitors (CMs) and deployed two CMs to each of the 13 OHA priority counties. The Specialists and the CMs were hired to conduct interviews with local and traditional authorities, beneficiaries, stakeholders, and service providers, and any other meetings required under the SOW.

ANNEX I: INVENTORY OF REPORTS AND DELIVERABLES

QUARTERLY REPORTS

FY20 Quarter 1 (October – December 2019) Progress Report	January 2020
FY20 Quarter 2 (January – March 2020) Progress Report	April 2020
FY20 Quarter 3 (April – June 2020) Progress Report	July 2020
FY21 Quarter 1 (October – December 2020) Progress Report	January 2021
FY21 Quarter 2 (January – March 2021) Progress Report	April 2021
FY21 Quarter 3 (April – June 2021) Progress Report	July 2021
FY22 Quarter 1 (October – December 2021) Progress Report	January 2021

ANNUAL REPORTS

FY 20 Annual Progress Report	October 2021
FY 21 Annual Progress Report	October 2022

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT REPORTS

Rapid Conflict Assessment Report Republic of South Sudan	June 2020
Agriculture Sector Assessment in South Sudan	April 2021
Baseline Household Survey Report	January 2022

DESK REVIEWS

Gender Analysis Desk Review	February 2020
Meta-Analysis Desk Review	March 2020

WORKPLANS

FY 20 Work Plan	December 2019
FY 21 Work Plan	September 2020
FY 22 Work Plan	January 2022

ANNEX 2: TPM SITES VISITED

FY2020

PROGRAM	TOTAL COUNTIES	TOTAL SITES
HEALTH	18	124
FFP	16	179
EVD	8	24
IEEES	5	31
CEC	5	5
i-STREAM	3	3
RAPID	5	5
SAFER	10	10
Total	66	377

FY2021

Office	TOTAL COUNTIES	TOTAL SITES
BHA		261
DG		5
ED		0
EG		0
Health		44
Total		6*

* Akobo, Ulang, Mayendit, Rumbek North, Duk and Fangak

FY2022

BHA ACTIVITIES*	TOTAL SITES
Community Outreach	12
Food for Education	2
General Food Distribution	1
Out-patient Therapeutic Program	10
Targeted Supplementary Feeding Program	11
Warehouse Management	4
Total	40

* Ayod, Tonj North, Leer, and Mayendit