# Invitation to Tender

| **Tender Name:** SCALE UP AND EXPANSION OF AN EXISTING SUDANESE DIGITAL EMARKET PLATFORM FOR OPERATION IN SOUTH KORDOFAN, BLUE NILE AND KHARTOUM STATES. | **Tender No: KRT-1011** |
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| **Location:** Khartoum, Sudan | **Correspondence Language(s):** English |
| **Brief Summary Description of Project:** The program will scale up the outreach and work to further improve functionality of the selected e-market platform. The needed platform is a digital farmer-to-business (F2B) and Business-to-business (B2B) market solution that brings together individual farmers, farmer cooperatives, small scale and medium scale rural agriculture produce aggregators, and large-scale buyers. |

| **Tender Package Available from:****(30/ March/ 2023)**  | **Tender Package Pickup Location:** [New tab (sudanbid.com)](https://www.sudanbid.com/) |
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| **Deadline for Offer Submission:** **(20 / April / 2023; 4:00PM)** | **Submit Offers to:** **sd-tenders@mercycorps.org**or hard copies at Mercy Corps Europe, House No:58 [Block No: 21 Alryadh Area | off Mecca Street | Khartoum](https://thehub.mercycorps.org/emailsignature/?utm_campaign=b4f237d678-UA-1555147-4&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Globe%20recipients&utm_term=0_637819aa0c-b4f237d678-302797229) |

*Mercy Corps reserves the right to accept or reject any late offers*

| **Questions and Answers (Q&A)** |
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| If any, Submit Questions in writing to: sd-tenders@mercycorps.org  |
| Last Day for Questions:(6 / April / 2023; 4:00PM) | Questions will be answered by:(10/ April/ 2023; 2:00PM) |
| Questions will be answered through: sd-tenders@mercycorps.org |

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| **Documentation Checklist** |
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| These documents are contained within this tender package:  | * Invitation to Tender
* General Conditions for Tender
* Criteria and Submittals
* Price Offer Sheet
* Supplier Information Form
* Scope of Work/Technical Specifications/BoQ
* Sample Contract
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# General Conditions for Tender

Mercy Corps invites proposals for the goods, services and/or works described and summarized in these documents, and in accordance with procedures, conditions and contract terms presented herein. Mercy Corps reserves the right to vary the quantity of work/materials specified in the Tender Package without any changes in unit price or other terms and conditions and to accept or reject any, all, or part of submitted offers.

**2.1 Mercy Corps’ Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption Statement**

**Mercy Corps strictly prohibits**:

* *Any form of bribe or kickback in relation to its activities*

This prohibition includes any *request* from any Mercy Corps employee, consultant or agent for anything of value from any company or individual in exchange for the employee, consultant or agents taking or not taking any action related to the award of a contract or the contract once awarded.  It also applies to any *offer* from any company or individual to provide anything of value to any Mercy Corps employee, consultant or agent in exchange for that person taking or not taking any action related to the award of the contract or the contract.

* *Conflicts of interests in the awarding or management of contracts*

If a company is owned by, whether directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, any Mercy Corps employee or any person who is related to a Mercy Corps employee, the company must ensure that it and the employee disclose the relationship as part of or prior to submitting the offer.

* *The sharing or obtaining of confidential information*

Mercy Corps prohibits its employees from sharing, and any offerors from obtaining, confidential information related to this solicitation, including information regarding Mercy Corps’ price estimates, competing offerors or competing offers, etc.  Any information provided to one offeror must be provided to all other offerors.

* *Collusion between/among offerors*

Mercy Corps requires fair and open competition for this solicitation.  No two (or more) companies submitting proposals can be owned or controlled by the same individual(s). Companies submitting offers cannot share prices or other offer information or take any other action intended to pre-determine which company will win the solicitation and what price will be paid.

Violations of these prohibitions, along with all evidence of such violations, should be reported to:

[**http://mercycorps.org/integrityhotline**](http://mercycorps.org/integrityhotline)

Mercy Corps will investigate allegations fully and will take appropriate action.  Any company, or individual that participates in any of the above prohibited conduct, will have its actions reported to the appropriate authorities, will be investigated fully, will have its offer rejected and/or contract terminated, and will not be eligible for future contracts with Mercy Corps. Employees participating in such conduct will have his/her employment terminated.

Violations will also be reported to Mercy Corps’ donors, who may also choose to investigate and debar or suspend companies and their owners from receiving any contract that is funded in part by the donor, whether the contract is with Mercy Corps or any other entity.

**2.2 Tender Basis:**

* All offers shall be made in accordance with these instructions, and all documents requested should be furnished, including any required (but not limited to) supplier-specific information, technical specifications, drawings, bill of quantities, and/or delivery schedule. If any requested document is not furnished, a reason should be given for its omission in an exception sheet.
* No respondent should add, omit or change any item, term or condition herein.
* If suppliers have any additional requests and conditions, these shall be stipulated in an exception sheet.
* Each offeror may make one response only.
* Each offer shall be valid for the period of [180 days] from its date of submission.
* All offers should indicate whether they include taxes, compulsory payments, levies and/or duties, including VAT, if applicable.
* Suppliers should ensure that financial offers are devoid of calculation errors. If errors are identified during the evaluation process, the unit price will prevail. If there is ambiguity on the unit price, the Selection Committee may decide to disqualify the offer.
* Any requests for clarifications regarding the project that are not addressed in written documents must be presented to Mercy Corps in writing. The answer to any question raised in writing by any offeror will be issued to that offeror. In some cases Mercy Corps may choose to issue clarifications to all offerors. It is a condition of this tender that no clarification shall be deemed to supersede, contradict, add to or detract from the conditions hereof, unless made in writing as an Addendum to Tender and signed by Mercy Corps or its designated representative.
* This Tender does not obligate Mercy Corps to execute a contract nor does it commit Mercy Corps to pay any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Furthermore, Mercy Corps reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, if such action is considered to be in the best interest of Mercy Corps.

**2.3 Supplier Eligibility**

Suppliers may not apply, and will be rejected as ineligible, if they:

* Are not registered companies
* Are bankrupt or in the process of going bankrupt
* Have been convicted of illegal/corrupt activities, and/or unprofessional conduct
* Have been guilty of grave professional misconduct
* Have not fulfilled obligations related to payment of social security and taxes
* Are guilty of serious misinterpretation in supplying information
* Are in violation of the policies outlined in Mercy Corps Anti Bribery or Anti Corruption Statement
* Supplier (or supplier’s principals) are on any list of sanctioned parties issued by; or are presently excluded or disqualified from participation in this transaction by: the United States Government or United Nations by the United States Government, the United Kingdom, the European Union, the United Nations, other national governments, or public international organizations.

Additional eligibility criteria, if applicable, are stated in section 3.2 of this tender package.

**2.4 Response Documents**

Offerors can either utilize the response documents contained in this tender package to submit their offer or they can submit an offer in their own format as long as it contains all the required documents and information specified by this tender.

**2.5 Acceptance of Successful Response**

Documentation submitted by offerors will be verified by Mercy Corps. The winning offeror will be required to sign a contract for the stated, agreed upon amount.

**2.6 Certification Regarding Terrorism**

It is Mercy Corps’ policy to comply with humanitarian principles and the laws and regulations of the United States, the European Union, the United Nations, the United Kingdom, host nations, and other applicable donors concerning transactions with or support to individuals or entities that have engaged in fraud, waste, abuse, human trafficking, corruption, or terrorist activity. These laws and regulations prohibit Mercy Corps from transacting with or providing support to any individuals or entities that are the subject of government sanctions, donor rules, or laws prohibiting transactions or support to such parties.

# Criteria & Submittals

| **3.1 Contract Terms** Mercy Corps intends to issue aFixed Price contract to one company or organization. The successful offeror shall be required to adhere to the statement of work and terms and conditions of the resulting contract. The anticipated contract is incorporated in Section 6 herein. By submitting an offer, offerors certify that they understand and agree to all the terms and clauses contained in Section 6. |
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| **3.2 Specific Eligibility Criteria** Eligibility criteria must be met, and the corresponding supporting documents listed below under “Tender Submittals” **must** be submitted with offers. Offerors who do not submit these documents may be **disqualified** from any further technical or financial evaluation.Eligibility Criteria:* The offeror must be legally registered Sudanese based company
* The offeror must be in good standing with its governing tax authority
* The offeror must have an existing digital eMarket platform that already serves farmers and traders or can be adapted to do so.
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| **3.3 Tender Submittals**Documents and required information listed in tender submittals are necessary to support the eligibility criteria and to conduct technical evaluations of received offers (and due diligence). While absence of these documents and/or information does not denote mandatory disqualification of suppliers, the lack of these items has the potential to severely and negatively impact the technical evaluation of an offer. **Documents supporting the Eligibility Criteria:*** Legal Business Registration
* Latest Tax Registration Certificate
* Insert other supporting documents as needed

**Documents to conduct the Technical Evaluation and additional Due Diligence: [To be completed according to the specific items to be tendered]*** Company Profile, 2-page max
* References from previous work projects (including contact information)
* CVs, 3-page max of the person/s who will manage the project and serve as the focal contact person.

**Price Offer:**The Price offer is used to determine which offer represents the best value and serves as a basis of negotiation before award of a contract. As a Fixed-Price contract, the price of the contract to be awarded will be an all-inclusive fixed price basis, either in the form of a total fixed price or a per-unit/deliverable fixed price. No profit, fees, taxes, or additional costs can be added after contract signing. Offerors must show unit prices, quantities, and total price, as displayed in the Offer Sheet in Section 4. All items must be clearly labeled and included in the total offered price.Offerors must include VAT and customs duties in their offer. |
| **3.4 Currency** Offers should be submitted in: USD or SDG Payments will be made in: USD providing the offeror has a valid USD bank account that can receive USD funds. If not, payment will be made in SDG equivalent.  |

| **3.5 Tender Evaluation (Trade-Off Selection Method)**Based on the above submittals, a Mercy Corps Tender Committee will conduct a tender evaluation process. Mercy Corps reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, and to accept the offer(s) deemed to be in the best interest of Mercy Corps. MC will not be responsible for or pay for any expenses or losses which may be incurred by any Offeror in the preparation of their tender.Evaluations will be conducted as described in the following subsections: |
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| **3.5.1 Scoring Evaluation** ***Trade-Off Method***Mercy Corps Tender Committee will conduct a technical evaluation which will grade technical criteria on a weighted basis (each criterion is given a percentage, all together equaling 100%). Offeror's proposals should consist of all required technical submittals so a Mercy Corps committee can thoroughly evaluate the technical criteria listed herein and assign points based on the strength of a technical submission.Award criteria shall be based on the proposal’s overall **“value for money”** (quality, cost, delivery time, etc.) while taking into consideration donor and internal requirements and regulations. Each individual criteria has been assigned a weighting prior to the release of this tender based on its importance to Mercy Corps in this process. Offeror(s) with the best score will be accepted as the winning offeror(s), assuming the price is deemed fair and reasonable and subject to the additional due diligence in section 3.5.2.When performing the Scoring Evaluation, the Mercy Corps tender committee will assign points for each criterion based on the following scale:

| **Point** | **Rationale** |
| --- | --- |
| 0 | Not acceptable; has not met any part of the specified criteria |
| 1-4 | Has met only some minimum requirements and may not be acceptable |
| 5 | Acceptable |
| 6-9 | Acceptable; has met all requirements and exceeds some |
| 10 | Acceptable; has exceeded all requirements |

| **Evaluation Criteria** | **Weight****(%)** | **Possible Points** **(1 to 10)** | **Weighted Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **(A)** | **(B)** | **(A\*B)** |
| Must have been providing digital and communication solutions for at least 2 years and have an existing eMarket platform. Higher scores will be awarded to those whose platforms are already tailored for agriculture and serving farmers and traders.  | 35% | 10 | XX |
| Price/Cost | 20% | 10 | XX |
| The owners of the platform must be capable and willing to finance part of the cost of developing increased functionality and deploying the e-market product together with Mercy Corps. | 15% | 10 | XX |
| Platform providers with demonstrated specific efforts, tools, and capacity to serve women clients should provide details. | 10% | 10 | XX |
| Demonstration of creativity and technology in improving access and reducing operational costs for farmers, traders, and companies in rural areas | 10% | 10 | XX |
| Platform sustainability plan. | 10% | 10 | XX |
| **TOTAL POSSIBLE SCORE:** | **100%** | **XX** | **XX** |

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| **3.5.2 Additional Due Diligence**Upon completion of both the technical and financial evaluations Mercy Corps may choose to engage in additional due diligence processes with a particular supplier or supplier(s). The purpose of these processes is to ensure that Mercy Corps engages with reputable, ethical, responsible Suppliers with solid financials and the ability to fulfill the contract. Additional due diligence may take the form of the following processes (though it is not limited to):* Reference Checks
* Supplier’s facility visits
* Analysis of audited financial statements
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# Offer Form

| **Offerors must submit their own independent offer including at least (but not limited to):*** All documents requested in the “Eligibility Criteria” section of this Tender Package
* All documents requested in the “Tender Submittals” section of this Tender Package
* All information listed in the “Documents Comprising the Proposal” section below

**All offers must be duly signed (including position and full name of the signer) and stamped, with the date of completion.** |
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***Documents Comprising the Proposal***

[Mercy Corps Procurement department to adjust content based on country context and nature of procurement]

The following information must be included in the offer of any potential offeror:

* **Cover Letter** explaining interest to be a contracted vendor or supplier, and the details of the Proposal. The content of the cover letter shall include the following information:
* A detailed specification of the offered goods, services and/or works (Proposal)
* Warranty (if necessary and appropriate)
* Delivery time
* Price validity date (for this purpose and as stated on the advertisement, quote given shall remain unchanged for 180 working days)
* A Price Offer detailing the unit price only, using the **Price Offer Sheet** template provided in section 7
* Completed and signed Mercy Corps **Supplier Information Form** (template provided in section 7)
* Other important documents offeror feels need to be attached to support their proposal

The original proposal shall be signed by the offeror, or a person or persons duly authorized to bind the offeror to the contract. Financial offer pages of the proposal shall be initialed by the person or persons signing the proposal and stamped with the company seal.

Any interlineations, erasures, or overwriting shall be valid only if they are initialed by the person or persons signing the proposal.

# 5. Scope of Work/Technical Specifications

**5.1 Background**

The program will scale up the outreach and work to further improve functionality of the selected e-market platform. The needed platform is a digital farmer-to-business (F2B) and Business-to-business (B2B) market solution that brings together individual farmers, farmer cooperatives, small scale and medium scale rural agriculture produce aggregators, and large-scale buyers. The platform will provide farmers and farmer groups with a channel to communicate to buyers the available agricultural produce for sale and preferred price. The traders on the other hand will communicate the required products, standards/quality demanded, quantities, and when the products will be required. The platform will also be used to provide other market information such as price trends and could also be expanded to improve access to inputs and tillage services among others.

**5.2 Scope of Work (for Service)**

**SCOPE OF WORK FOR SCALE UP AND EXPANSION OF AN EXISTING SUDANESE DIGITAL EMARKET PLATFORM FOR OPERATION IN SOUTH KORDOFAN, BLUE NILE AND KHARTOUM STATES.**

**SOW Objective**: **To enable the scale up and expansion of an existing Sudanese digital platform that connects farmer to business (F2B) and business to business (B2B) markets.**

The program will scale up the outreach and work to further improve functionality of the selected e-market platform. The needed platform is a digital farmer-to-business (F2B) and Business-to-business (B2B) market solution that brings together individual farmers, farmer cooperatives, small scale and medium scale rural agriculture produce aggregators, and large-scale buyers. The platform will provide farmers and farmer groups with a channel to communicate to buyers the available agricultural produce for sale and preferred price. The traders on the other hand will communicate the required products, standards/quality demanded, quantities, and when the products will be required. The platform will also be used to provide other market information such as price trends and could also be expanded to improve access to inputs and tillage services among others.

**Key activities: Support and strengthen a digital eMarket platform to better serve the needs of farmers, pastoralists, and agribusinesses.**

**Project Location**: South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Khartoum States.

1. **Introduction:**

Sustainable AgriFood Systems Approach for Sudan (SASAS)’ program aims to promote gains in food security and livelihoods through a demand-driven approach, with locally appropriate value chains developed in a co-creation process with communities and organizations. SASAS will deliver a range of activities to engage private and public sectors to create demand-pull agricultural development, induce technology change and sustainable value chain development. The project is funded by USAID

Mercy Corps is a leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible. In disaster, in hardship, in more than 40 countries around the world, we partner to put bold solutions into action — helping people triumph over adversity and build stronger communities from within. Now, and for the future.

1. **Purpose / Project Description:**

The SASAS program’s overall goal is to reduce vulnerability, increase income and food security of small-scale farmers and herders. This program is not implemented through an approach which is based on buying and distributing goods and services to its beneficiaries. It is being implemented through an approach which seeks to improve the way the agribusiness companies and institutions in the agricultural value chain market operate and engage with their customers to ensure farmers are better served.

This approach aims to support these agribusiness companies and institutions which buy products from or provide goods and services to farmers to enable them to expand their outreach to farmers and adapt the way they work with them so that more farmers receive better services. In doing this, the program will facilitate long term development of the agricultural market systems resulting in greater benefit to all parties involved in the system.

1. **Digital eMarket Platform:**

South Kordofan and Blue Nile states are among the top rainfed agriculture production states in Sudan. The most purchased agricultural products are sorghum, sesame, groundnuts, gum Arabic, millet, cowpeas, hibiscus and a variety of seasonal vegetables. Most of the agribusinesses which buy agricultural produce (crop yields) in and around these states do not have direct produce buying business points in the villages where farmers are located. Only small and medium buyers operate at the village and locality level respectively.

As a result, farmers either (1) must travel long distances to get to the main markets to sell their crops yields, or (2) sell their produce to middlemen who may pay a lower price. At the village level, some of the small-scale crop yield buyers buy directly from farmers' homes, through agents, from small weekly markets or when farmers bring the produce to their shops. The major crop yield buying companies and small-scale businesses at village level who want the crop yield also are not aware of the specific producers or the quantity and quality of the yields they have for sale. This may increase their cost of doing business since they have to put more effort in searching for and aggregating the crop yields.

The key players in the produce market are however interested in having (1) better quality and increased quantity of agricultural produce, (2) efficient produce buying market structures (3) reduced transaction costs to increase profitability for themselves and farmers. Additionally, in some cases the companies which sell seeds, livestock fodder and other inputs have limited access to farmers in villages. As such farmers knowledge about the various types of improved seeds available and their benefits may not be widely understood. There could be a possibility of the eMarket platform addressing this knowledge gap for farmers and seed suppliers.

Specifically, the main constraints faced by smallholder farmers and businesses while taking part in the produce markets can be summarized as follows:

* Limited operating capital of small-scale farmers to transport their crop yields to bigger markets and meet with bigger buyers offering better prices.
* Limited ability of female farmers to travel to bigger markets to get better prices because of cultural norms, insecurity, lack of connections and access to capital.
* Limited information flow between farmers and produce buyers on aspects such as pricing, quantities, and type of agricultural products available or demanded.
* Limited negotiating ability of small-scale farmers due to lack of knowledge of market prices.
* Reduced ability of small-scale farmers and buyers to travel during the rainy season to sell or buy crop yields due to poor often impassable roads and bridge conditions. Further, storing crop yields is not always possible due to limited storage points in rural areas.
* Limited knowledge on the types, prices, and characteristics of the different types of improved seeds and tools on sale.
* Limited ability to book tractors for ploughing at the beginning of the season or other equipment such as harvesters and threshers.
* Many farmers with small quantities of yields are scattered in large areas thereby making it uneconomical for big companies to buy directly from them, hence missing better prices.
* Limited production and marketing records of small-scale farmers which would have served to attract the bigger companies to engage more directly with farmers.
* Limited information from crop yield /produce buying companies about the quality and standards they require. This would have guided farmers to manage quality at production, harvesting, threshing, cleaning and storage stage.
1. **Statement of Opportunity for digital eMarket platform provider:**

This is an opportunity for an eMarket provider with an existing platform to further develop and expand the functionality and geographic reach of their solution to better serve farmers, buyers, and agribusinesses to address the above listed challenges and more.

This platform is meant to increase the linkages between buyers and sellers of crop yields, input and output providers, and should be further designed to increase functionality to meet the needs and local context of the farmers and businesses. Innovative strategies, including those clearly targeting women and youth to expand/increase their interaction with and use of the eMarket platform is strongly encouraged.

The digital eMarket platform is envisioned to provide the following benefits:

1. Provide farmers and farmer groups with a channel to communicate available commodities for sale to traders and agricultural produce/yield buying companies. This channel should be available to feature phone and smartphone users.
2. Provide traders and agricultural producer companies with information on available agricultural commodities and preferred pricing for the produce by the farmers and farmer groups.
3. Provide farmers, traders, and agricultural producer companies with market price information of various agricultural produce across selected geographical regions.
4. Provide initial communication channels between buyers and sellers of agricultural produce to reach agreement on price, quality, and delivery modalities.
5. Provide information to farmers and farmer groups on expected quality and demand for agricultural produce.

Additionally, functionality considered can be expanded to include but not limited to the following:

1. Provide farmers with information on the types of improved seeds and tools for sale by different companies.
2. Provide farmers with a means of booking and hiring tractors and other equipment for ploughing, harvesting and threshing services.
3. Provide advisory services. For example, tips and educational material on improved practices for crop/livestock health.
4. Insurance products
5. Weather information

**Note: the e- Market platform belongs to the company which developed it, and this company should have a plan to commercially sustain and keep improving the platform. Mercy Corps’ role will be to provide funding for expansion and scaling of the platform, technical support, and linkage to farmers.**

1. **Proposed activities to be carried out by the selected digital eMarket provider:**

The company selected by Mercy Corps to expand functionality and increase participation on the digital eMarket platform for farmers and buyers is expected to conduct the following activities in collaboration with Mercy Corps:

1. Develop and expand functionality and increase usage of the existing digital eMarket platform customized to the technological and cultural needs and context of farmers, traders, and agricultural companies.
2. Hold meetings with other SASAS project partners and private sector companies to determine if synergies exist. (Mercy Corps has entered or is in the process of entering into agreements with companies such as seed companies, produce buying companies, and banks/ MFIs to promote development of the agriculture sector and increase productivity of male and female smallholder farmers. These partnerships complement each other and improve outcomes for business and farmers. The provider of the eMarket platform can ride on these partnerships and the structures created on the ground to recruit users on the e-Market platform.)
3. Publicize and promote new functionality via short codes for accessing the service and deploy the service to farmers, farmer groups, traders and agricultural produce buying companies through means such as meetings, sensitizations, promotions, advertisements etc.
4. Provide ongoing support to the platform and implement improvements to increase adoption and uptake by targeted audiences.
5. Provide a feedback mechanism for users of the platform to respond to their questions and the overall user experience.
6. Provide reporting and analytics showing participation numbers by age, gender, feature, time of day, etc.
7. **Outputs from activities carried out by the eMarket platform provider:**
	1. A functioning digital platform which connects buyers, traders and produce buying companies and possibly seed companies and tractor tillage, threshing and harvesting serve providers by June 1, 2023.
	2. Meetings with agreed upon SASAS project partners to be accompanied by a 1–2-page summary report to determine possible benefits of platform inclusion. Completed by July 15, 2023.
	3. At least 2,000 farmers, 20 traders and 4 agricultural produce buying companies registered and using the platform to buy and sell agriculture products by end of September 30, 2023.
	4. A commercially sustainable e-market platform by December 15, 2023.
	5. Monthly activity reporting to MC showing platform usage.
8. **Support from Mercy Corps for the listed activities:**

To facilitate the listed activities, Mercy Corps will:

1. Meet up to 70% of the cost of the budget for undertaking the activities and the company is expected to meet the 30%
2. Provide guidance when requested by the company or deemed necessary.
3. Provide the forms which Mercy Corps deems necessary for recording progress.

# 6. Sample Contract

This is the anticipated contract. However, if required, additional terms and conditions may be added by Mercy Corps in the final contract.

**[Insert Sample Contract]**

# 7. Attachments to the Tender Package

**Attachment 1 -Supplier Information Form template**

**Attachment 2 -Price Offer Sheet template**

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