**Project/Consultancy Title**: Cash Consortium of Sudan Political Economy and Conflict Analysis of Cash and Markets

**Project Location(s)**: Remote, overseeing data collection in Sudan

**Background:**

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.

The Cash Consortium of Sudan (CCS), a collaborative platform to advance a progressive vision of the potential of cash and markets assistance to transform humanitarian response and recovery in partnership with vulnerable conflict-affected populations in Sudan. CCS leverages common programmatic approaches as well as M&E for harmonized and scaled delivery and learning. The core intervention areas for the CCS include:

* Cash assistance for basic needs, inclusive of:
  + Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (targeting households)
  + Group Cash Transfers (targeting community-based organizations, both formal and informal)
* Market strengthening interventions, with focus on enhancing availability, affordability and resilience of supply chains for basic needs items (food and non-food)
* Capacity strengthening with local NGOs
* Generation of evidence to inform refinements to program design as well as the broader response

The CCS is a multi-donor platform with an anticipated initial funding base of $50M USD to enable a nationwide response, though the majority of resources will be focused at the outset on famine prevention and response in the Greater Darfur Region, as well as Greater Kordofan Region and Khartoum.

CCS is led by Mercy Corps, building on its extensive global experience as lead agency within a cash consortium, with cash coordination and breadth of technical resources. The partnership includes eight international NGOs, each of which bring strong cash and complementary technical competencies, as well as expansive operational coverage in Sudan. The CCS also includes eleven Sudanese NGOs as partners in alignment with global aid sector commitments to enhance the prominence of local actors in driving humanitarian response and recovery. IMPACT is a non-implementing partner dedicated to Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning. IMPACT will support quality data systems and an objective evidence base that will be essential to CCS’ accountability and adaptive management to refine programming approaches to enhance impact as the Sudan crisis context evolves. The CCS will work closely with other consortia and actors in Sudan to deliver an effective CVA response for communities affected by the crisis.

**Purpose / Project Description:**

The CCS requires support from a researcher(s) to deepen understanding of political economy dynamics shaping the crisis landscape, with particular focus on aspects affecting cash and markets. The CCS has received initial funding to support cash transfers (both to households as well as to community-based groups), and is also working to secure funds to enable complementary market strengthening interventions. While the CCS’ primary imperative is rapidly delivering life-saving assistance to mitigate the worst potential outcomes of famine, its partners recognise that there is a need to ground the design of assistance within the contextual reality for two aims: 1) maximizing support to marginalized populations and 2) limiting ways in which our aid has negative impacts or perpetuates current conflict dynamics or serves to entrench negative power structures and, 3) minimizing negative long-term impacts of humanitarian assistance on future peace processes or local solutions.

Potential questions for the research to explore include:

* What has been the impact of the conflict on local political economies? What has changed, and what has remained the same?
* Who is controlling different aspects of trade? Different aspects of the economy? In which ways does this control interact with the current conflict dynamics?
* Where are the most significant risks for actors engaging in market strengthening interventions for humanitarian purposes?

Target geographies for CCS activities include the Greater Darfur Region, as well as Greater Kordofan Region and Khartoum. It is envisaged that each geographic area will require a separate analysis (and perhaps sub-analyses within regions, as relevant).

**Consultant Objectives:**

* Synthesis of relevant literature review; deliver session with CCS partners to scope current levels of understanding across partners
* Work with CCS partners and key stakeholders to complete key analysis questions/ framework for consultancy
* Conduct research on gaps in existing understanding to inform cash and markets crisis approach
* Work with CCS partners and key stakeholders to frame recommendations for actions humanitarian actors
* Improve the consortium risk matrix related to cash and market interventions, including mitigation measures, to inform a conflict sensitive approach..

**Consultant Activities:**

The Consultant will:

* Review existing documentation relevant to political economy of cash/ markets assistance
* Desk review of selected locations political economy up until the current conflict outbreak in Sudan
* Synthesize findings and discussion points related to literature review for discussion with CCS partners
* Establish key analysis questions/ framework for consultancy with input from key stakeholders
* Establish tools for data collection
* Training with data collection leads
* Coordinate and manage data collection with commercial market actors and key informants
* Synthesize findings
* Initial presentation and discussion of findings with TWG and key stakeholders
* Document analysis within a brief report oriented toward practitioners, including recommended actions for humanitarian actors on how to strengthen practices to work with and through commercial actors (including considerations for monitoring/ updates over time)

**Consultant Deliverables:**

The Consultant will deliver:

* Literature review
* Literature review synthesis for practitioners
* Key analysis questions and analytical framework
* Draft methodology and data collection tools
* Training and support to data collection team
* Coordination and management of data collection
* Initial analysis outputs
* Final analysis outputs including but not limited to final report and presentation of findings

**Timeframe / Schedule:**

Mid-September – December 2024 (approximately 50 days)

**The Consultant will report to:**

Cash Consortium of Sudan Director

**The Consultant will work closely with:**

CCS Technical Working Group, CCS Partner Access Advisors, CCS Partner Heads of Programs, Mercy Corps’ global Cash and Markets Technical Support Unit.

**Required Experience & Skills:**

* + Expertise in Sudan political economy analysis as demonstrated through relevant publications
  + Established network in Sudan (greatest focus on Darfurs, Kordofans, Khartoum)

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**Achieving our mission begins with how we build our team and work together. Through our commitment to enriching our organization with people of different origins, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of thinking, we are better able to leverage the collective power of our teams and solve the world’s most complex challenges. We strive for a culture of trust and respect, where everyone contributes their perspectives and authentic selves, reaches their potential as individuals and teams, and collaborates to do the best work of their lives.

We recognize that diversity and inclusion is a journey, and we are committed to learning, listening and evolving to become more diverse, equitable and inclusive than we are today.

**Equal Employment Opportunity**We are committed to providing an environment of respect and psychological safety where equal employment opportunities are available to all. We do not engage in or tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender identity, gender expression, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability (including HIV/AIDS status), marital status, military veteran status or any other protected group in the locations where we work.

**Safeguarding & Ethics**Mercy Corps team members are expected to support all efforts toward accountability, specifically to our stakeholders and to international standards guiding international relief and development work, while actively engaging communities as equal partners in the design, monitoring and evaluation of our field projects. Team members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and respect local laws, customs and MC's policies, procedures, and values at all times and in all in-country venues.

**Requirements for the application:**

1. Technical Proposal
   1. Technical Proposal
   2. Proposed Methodology
   3. Work Plan/Timeline (including number of working days to complete assignment.
   4. Composition of team
2. Detailed Financial proposal
3. Profile of organization to include:
   1. General Profile
   2. CVs of Experts who will undertake the consultancy
   3. Historical examples of relevant work

**Selection criteria:**

* Narrative proposal (75%)
  + Demonstrated research experience in Sudan & capacity to operate in current environment + geographic access - 30%
  + Demonstrated capacity in thematic area(s) (cash and markets, political economy analysis, conflict sensitivity) - 20%
  + Composition of team — pragmatism of design (please attach CVs) - 15%
  + Coordination - demonstrated experience implementing complex research frameworks and design, across a range of stakeholders (including local, national, and regional), within a discrete timeline (10%)
* Financial proposal (25%)