



Country/Context Desk Review and Market Study Work Assignment Guidance

Purpose and Objectives

BHA proposes a resilience, food and nutrition security desk review and market study (DRMS) and the associated deliverables to inform the BHA multi-year activity design process and serve as a publicly available resource for implementing partners developing concept notes and applications to BHA multi-year solicitations.

The DRMS has two specific objectives:

- To provide BHA and potential implementing partners with a deep contextual understanding regarding the resilience and food and nutrition security context, stakeholders, and key activity design issues for consideration.
- To inform the Bellmon determination and the selection of food assistance modalities for each of the targeted geographic areas.

Objective 1 – Understanding of the Context and Stakeholders

This objective seeks to provide an overview and synthesis of the current, projected, and recent historical trends of the resilience and food and nutrition security context and stakeholders in a targeted geographic area. The purpose of this objective is not to provide recommendations for programming, but to provide BHA and implementing partners with a deep understanding of the context and stakeholders to make informed activity design decisions. This objective will involve reviewing the academic literature, project documents, evaluations, meta-analysis and conducting consultations by phone, skype or other ‘remote’ technology platforms with key international, regional, national, and local stakeholders.

Objective 2 – Inform the BHA Bellmon Determination and Selection of Food Assistance Modalities

This objective seeks to provide USAID/BHA and potential BHA awardees with sufficient evidence to inform response analysis for a specific geographic context (most often sub-national). More specifically, this objective aims to provide information about the appropriateness of various food assistance transfer modalities (cash, vouchers, LRP, and U.S. In-kind) based on local market conditions, as well as feasibility to deliver those modalities.. The study will provide an analysis of the operating environment in a specific sub-national area of a BHA country of interest and is designed to integrate directly into the BHA Modality Decision tool to inform the Tool’s first two tiers of questions around appropriateness and feasibility. The study’s intent is not however to provide specific modality recommendations.

The DRMS will document the general country and targeted sub-national context, the food security situation, and the food and nutrition security related strategies, initiatives, and programs, as well as the lessons learned from such efforts. The following list of contextual questions are of concern to BHA and potential partners working to address food insecurity for the most vulnerable in the targeted departments. To the extent possible, awardees should use these guiding questions to inform the analysis. BHA understands that information sources and time may be limiting factors in seeking to comprehensively research all of the factors highlighted below.

Each of the questions should be considered at two different levels of analysis, the local (defined household and community levels) and non-local (which includes the provincial, national, and regional contexts) levels. Further, the target beneficiaries of BHA multi-year programming will focus on the most vulnerable. All core questions should include a focus on those populations.

1. Demographic and Social Characteristics:

● Gender, Age, and Social Inclusion:

- What are the key demographic characteristics, scale, and distribution of the population in the targeted geographic area? Specific characteristics should include but are not limited to: gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language, religious, disability, socially excluded, and livelihood.
- What are the characteristics, scale, and distribution of populations that have the highest levels of need for humanitarian assistance, food insecurity, poverty, and chronic and acute malnutrition?
- To what extent are groups excluded from food and nutrition security related strategies, resources, and decision-making?
- How do social dynamics influence food and nutrition security strategies, resources, and decision-making? Specific characteristics should include but are not limited to: marriage, fertility, family size and distribution, migration, and group affiliation (ethnic, political, religious, etc.).
- How does women's access to resources (money, fuel, and water) and women's time affect food choices, food access, and food preparation, meal frequency, dietary diversity, and nutrition?
- How do shocks influence and impact social dynamics related to food and nutrition strategies, resources, and decision-making?

● Youth engagement:

- How are youth engaged in village life? How engagement vary by age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and other social or demographic characteristics?
- What options do youth view as their future opportunities? What opportunities do they aspire to/wish they had?
- To what extent do youth have access to education? What factors drive school attendance?
- What role do youth play in family farming, food production, and livelihoods?
- What livelihood opportunities do youth have access to? How does education impact livelihood opportunities?
- What are the important differences between adolescent girls and boys, given early marriage and childbearing among adolescent girls – how does this differentially affect youth roles in farming, access to livelihoods and income, and ability to meet food security needs – either their own or their families?
- What is the role of youth in childcare and household chores?
- How is the balance of gender reflected in the youth's role in childcare and household chores?

2. Food availability:

● To what extent is food available in sufficient quantities and quality to meet local demand, at all times?

- **What is the market structure, conduct and performance for key food staples (by key commodity – to be provided in the work assignment) in the proposed geographic area, and the marketing basins that serve those areas?**
 - What is the geographic area's production capacity? Is it typically self-sufficient, deficit or surplus-producing? What is the most likely trend in the next one-three years?
 - What commodities do households primarily grow for own-consumption and what do households grow for potential marketing?

- Related to the above, how have household commodity production trends (i.e. crop selection) shifted over time? What is the most likely trend in the next one-three years?
- What are the greatest risks associated with commodity production in the targeted geographic area and what mitigation measures are used?
- How do government policies and macroeconomic conditions influence agricultural production and staple food commodity availability? What is the anticipated trend over the next one-three years?
- What is the basic profile of key reference markets in and serving the selected geographic areas, including an inventory of key commodities sold, the number of markets/vendors broken down by category along with a typology of market size/type, quantities traded (broken down by post-harvest and lean season), market days/schedule, contacts?
- How do shocks (especially conflict), migration, and other contextual factors influence the capacity of the private sector, government and non-government actors to provide agricultural production related services (inputs, extension, marketing, etc.) for staple food and livestock?
- o **To what extent do markets for staple foods and livestock function in the targeted area?**
 - What are the current and longer-term commodity price trends (for multiple years if available) for staple food and livestock markets in the targeted area?
 - How do government policies and macroeconomic conditions influence agricultural trade and staple food prices?
 - To what extent are property rights secure and contracts enforceable in the targeted geographic area?
 - Are economic policies and conditions sufficiently predictable to encourage planning and investment?
 - To what extent are the local markets in the given geographic area well integrated with national, regional, and/or international markets?
 - Do key commodity markets operate in a competitive manner across the marketing basins relevant for programming? Describe the level of competition amongst market actors (wholesalers, retailers and transporters) and price setting behavior. What are the primary barriers/constraints faced in conducting and/or scaling up business?
 - When supply of locally produced food is insufficient to meet local demand, does the market meet demand (price responsive)? What are the barriers to market functionality?
 - How do shocks (especially conflict), migration, seasonality, and other contextual factors influence the functionality of the market and staple commodity price trends?
 - To what extent are there other factors that are known to introduce variability (or instability) in availability and price levels? These may be localized, national, regional, or international.
 - To what extent are there any localized gender dynamics related to purchasing and selling?
- **If the program includes US in-kind or large-scale local/regional procurement:**
 - o To what extent will there be adequate storage facilities available in the recipient country at the time of the arrival of the commodities to prevent spoilage or waste of the commodity?

- o To what extent would the distribution of the commodity in the recipient country (at the proposed scale) result in a substantial disincentive or interference with domestic agricultural production or marketing?
 - o What is the recent history of export restrictions from neighboring countries and how might they affect the reliability of regional procurement options?
 - o What, if any, restrictions does the Host Government impose on the importation of commodities, e.g., Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) considerations?
- **If the development program includes cash transfers, food vouchers, or small-scale local procurement:**
 - o How does the current macroeconomic context, particularly as it relates to uncertainty around local currency and US dollar exchange fluctuations, affect the feasibility of cash and voucher-based transfers?
 - o To what extent are markets able to provide the necessary commodities in the quantity and quality needed and meet increases in effective demand without inducing price increases at a rate above an appropriate benchmark for average inflation?
 - o Assuming current market conditions hold in the next one-two years, which transfer modalities could be implemented and at what scale without significantly distorting markets?
- **What are the range of feasible modality delivery mechanisms within the geographic area of concern?**
 - o What is the state of the transportation and storage infrastructure, including regional analysis if markets are integrated and reliant on external markets?
 - o To what extent would financial service providers be able to facilitate cash transfers in the current context? To what extent are mobile money transfers advisable given currency and exchange rate uncertainty?
 - o To what extent are there any restrictions on modalities and/or delivery mechanisms by relevant authorities (e.g., formal or informal government policies)?
 - o What food security and food assistance activities are currently or have recently been implemented in the area and what modalities/delivery mechanism did they utilize? What were the key lessons learned and challenges faced?
 - o What are the particular risks to delivering assistance across modalities (security, fraud, liquidity, government interference, etc.)?
- 3. Food access:**
- **How do populations currently access food in the selected geographic areas?**
 - o What are the main sources of income by livelihood zone for BHA target population? To what extent do livelihoods and income sources meet basic food requirements.
 - o What are the main staples accessed through own-production, and how does that vary by livelihood zone and/or wealth group (to the extent known)? What proportion is this of their total food needs?
 - o What is the typical food basket profile of households in the selected areas? To what extent are there differences in how people access food based on level of wealth, vulnerability and other social characteristics (sex, age, ethnicity, political affiliation, etc.)?
 - o What do households typically purchase at markets?
 - What are the specific varieties of grains, legumes and edible oil that are consumed most widely as staple foods in selected geographic areas?

- What is the range of preferences for different food staples, and how does that vary by livelihood zone and/or wealth group to extent known?
- How do purchase patterns vary seasonally?
- How do populations access markets?
 - Who typically purchases commodities for the household?
 - How do people travel to the market (modes of transport)?
 - How far do they typically travel and what average costs do they typically incur?
 - How do people of different socioeconomic groups generally use cash, credit or barter to purchase goods and any relevant services (e.g., milling) at food markets?
 - What are the physical, social, economic and other barriers to accessing markets?
 - How do households in different socioeconomic groups in the geographic areas of interest tend to spend additional disposable income (e.g., education, health, agricultural inputs including investments in livestock/re-stocking)?
 - If present, how does violent conflict affect food access?
 - If present, how does migration affect food access?
- What is the structure and characteristics of informal and formal mechanisms of social protection? To what extent are there differences in how people access social protection based on level of wealth, vulnerability and other social characteristics (sex, age, ethnicity, etc.)?
- How do people cope if they have inadequate access to food? To what extent are there differences in how people access food based on level of sex, age, socio-economic status, and other social characteristics?

4. Food Utilization and Nutrition:

- What are the current, recent and projected trends related to malnutrition, dietary diversity, child feeding, family planning, infectious disease (i.e. upper respiratory disease, COVID-19, malaria), diarrhea, and water, sanitation and hygiene behavior knowledge, and status?
 - To what extent are there differences in these trends, based on socio-economic status, vulnerability, level of education, and other social characteristics (sex, age, ethnicity, political affiliation, etc.)?
 - How do social dynamics influence the aforementioned practices? What stakeholders are the most influential in the adoption of nutrition related practices?
 - What other characteristics, risks, and factors that are associated or contribute to poor nutrition related outcomes?
 - How do the aforementioned practices and status change as a result of a shock?
- What is the structure and characteristics of systems that provide nutrition, family planning, water, sanitation, and hygiene related resources and services, especially related to the surveillance, prevention, and treatment of malnutrition?
 - How does access to nutrition related resources and services differ between communities, ethnic groups, older and younger men and women, by age and life-stage and how does this affect nutrition related outcomes?
 - What is the current level of capacity of private sector, government, and non-government stakeholders to provide nutrition related services, especially during shocks or emergencies?

5. Key Stakeholders

- Who are the various actors involved in resilience and food and nutrition security in the focus geographic area?
- What are the mandates, missions, and objectives of each stakeholder?
- What alliances and relationships exist between stakeholders?

- What are the strengths, challenges, risks and opportunities for collaboration or coordination associated with working with each stakeholder?
- What are the key resilience and food and nutrition security policies, strategies, and plans that exist or are planned?
- What programs and projects exist or are currently planned in the existing focus geographies?
 - Where are programs geographically and programmatically?
 - What are the objectives of the program and who are the intended beneficiaries?
 - What type and level of resources do the programs and projects provide?
 - What is the timing and duration of the program of the programs and projects?
- What activities have been most successful and least successful in improving the resilience of the most vulnerable? What factors contributed most significantly to high and poor performance?

Deliverables and Schedule:

Deliverable	Due
Deliverable 1: Work Plan	Within four weeks of the approval of the work assignment proposal
Deliverable 2: Report, Briefing, and Mapping Deliverable Plan	Within six weeks of the approval of the work assignment proposal
Deliverable 3: Annotated Bibliography	Within eight weeks of the approval of the work assignment proposal
Deliverable 4: Mapping Products Presentation and Materials – As agreed upon by LASER and USAID in Deliverable 2.	Within eight weeks of the approval of the work assignment proposal
Deliverable 5: Briefing for USAID (actual presentation and PowerPoint)	Within 12 weeks of the approval of the work assignment proposal
Deliverable 6: DRMS Report	Within 16 weeks of the approval of the work assignment proposal
Deliverable 7: DRMS Report Briefing	Within 2 weeks of the approval of the DRMS Report Deliverable.
Deliverable 8: Ad Hoc Briefing or Presentation Requests	Within 2 weeks of the USAID request.
Deliverables (All):	.

Work Plan

- The workplan will describe the planned strategies, methodologies, activities, timelines, and resources associated with completing the developing the deliverables, including but not limited to sub-contracting or staffing (if applicable), data collection, analysis, and report writing. USAID/BHA will provide any feedback within two weeks of submission.

Report, Briefing, and Mapping Deliverable Plan

- The plan will consist of the following elements:
 - DRMS Report Outline - The DRMS report outline will be drafted by the awardee team and reviewed by the USAID/BHA design team, and finalized based on mutual agreement/feedback received, or later upon mutual agreement of the awardee team and USAID. The exact report outline will reflect the USAID design team's core research questions for a given work assignment. It is anticipated that the DRMS report outlines will include an Executive Summary (maximum of 3 pages, including a table that summarizes key findings in 1 page), a brief report that summarizes the report findings (no more than 60 pages), and a series of annexes that provide detailed information related to the points covered in the brief report.
 - USAID Briefing Outline - The USAID Briefing Outline will be drafted by the awardee team and reviewed by the USAID/BHA design team, and finalized based on mutual agreement/feedback received, or later upon mutual agreement of the awardee team and USAID. The exact report outline will reflect the USAID design team's core research questions for a given work assignment. It is anticipated that the USAID Briefing will be no greater than 2 hours in duration.
 - Mapping Deliverable Plan – A description of the mapping products that provide critical information regarding resilience, food security, and nutrition statistics and/or stakeholders. It is anticipated that products will be Tableau dashboards or ArcGIS produced maps, or accessible and compatible with Tableau or ArcGIS. Further details to be provided in Work Statements. The plan should also outline the proposed timing, structure, content, and requirements associated with the Mapping Product Presentation.

Annotated Bibliography

- The annotated bibliography will provide the secondary sources that the awardee reviewed and considered for the development of the DRMS. Each entry should follow the APA style, include specific web-based links, and provide a summary that is relevant to the context of the DRMS.

Mapping Products Presentation and Materials

- The Mapping Products Presentation and Materials will consist of the mapping products that were approved in Deliverable 2. The briefing will occur via teleconference at a mutually agreeable time and location. USAID reserves the right to record the presentation.

Briefing for USAID

- The briefing will occur at a mutually agreeable time and location, however, if feasible, it is preferred to occur at the USAID/Mission, prior to the departure of staff from the country (if applicable). The briefing must include a slide deck presentation that includes the areas agreed upon in the USAID Briefing Outline.

DRMS Report

- The narrative report must be provided in a Microsoft Word format and based on the approved Report Outline in Deliverable 2. Annexes may be provided in Microsoft Word or Excel, as appropriate. USAID will provide feedback within three weeks of receipt of the first draft of the DRMS Report. Upon approval of the final reports and products for public consumption, the awardee team will process them for accessibility (508 compliance) and submit them to USAID and other platforms as suggested by USAID (LASER website, DEC).

Ad Hoc Briefings or Presentations

- USAID may request up to three ad hoc briefings or presentations on content directly related to DRMS content. The purpose of the briefings or presentations may be to orient staff or explore available research and information on specific content or topical areas relevant to the DRMS. All meetings will provide two weeks' notice, along with a briefing or presentation outline and description of the content requested and slide deck requirements (if applicable). The timing and agenda of the briefing will be mutually agreed upon. It is anticipated that the briefings will be no greater than 2 hours in duration, and use Zoom, Webex, Google Hangouts, or Adobe Connect as platforms.

All Deliverables

- USAID will provide feedback within two weeks of receipt of each deliverable, unless otherwise specified. USAID reserves the right to request a teleconference to review the draft or provide additional context. The revision process for plans, outlines, reports, and materials will continue until approval is provided.
- All reports/deliverables must follow USAID approved branding and marking guidelines.