

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Livelihoods Specialist

Organisation: Tree Aid

Location: Mali

Type of Contract: Service

Duration of contract:

Livelihood baseline assessment: 4 months

Mid-term review: 2 months

End of project review: 3 months

Title: Livelihoods Specialist

1. Background

Tree Aid works with people in the drylands of Africa to tackle poverty and the effects of the climate crisis by growing trees and restoring and protecting land. Led by local people, our projects make sure trees thrive so they can provide nutritious food and incomes today, and look after the environment for tomorrow. We support people to manage their land and resources in a way that helps slow down the effects of the climate crisis and stops fertile soil being lost. Together, we influence policy and push for change that protects trees, people's livelihoods and our planet.

Livelihoods are activities that allow people to secure the basic necessities of life, such as food, water, shelter and clothing. Engaging in livelihoods activities means acquiring the knowledge, skills, social network, raw materials, and other resources to meet individual or collective needs on a sustainable basis with dignity. Livelihoods activities are usually carried out repeatedly within an income stream such as forestry, agriculture, pastoralism, employment within a market sector, or as an entrepreneur. Ideally, people work within one or multiple streams providing goods and services to a market economy based on cash exchange or barter. Work provides the basis for their food security and self-reliance, adding stability, prosperity and peace to the community at large.

Tree Aid's Global Strategy (2022-2027) sets out specific results that the organization needs to achieve in order to effectively support and protect the livelihoods of people we work with and promote their resilience. To help achieve and measure greater impact in Tree Aid livelihoods programmes across our countries of intervention, Tree Aid Operations has developed procedures and tools to collect baseline data on target populations when planning and designing programmes, in order to set a foundation to demonstrate effectively impact of livelihoods interventions.

2. Country context

Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world with 44.7% of the population living in severe multidimensional poverty. The recent health, security, social and political crises have led to a 5% increase in poverty. Poverty is concentrated in the rural areas of southern Mali (90%), where the population density is highest. 5.9 million people are currently in need of humanitarian assistance, of which 2.2 million need food assistance. Mali's economy is low-income, undiversified and exposed to commodity price fluctuations. It is largely based on agriculture, employing 90% of the rural population, and is therefore particularly vulnerable to climate change which is leading to higher temperatures, reduced rainfall, flooding and increased desertification. Mali's forest ecosystems are suffering from deforestation and biodiversity loss, which threatens agriculture and food security. Between 1990 and 2015, Mali lost 30% of its forest area and today 500,000 hectares of forest are destroyed every year. Mali's weakened socio-political context alongside security challenges, means the state has limited capacity to implement interventions to combat deforestation. Therefore, rural communities are key stakeholders in conservation of forest resources and consequently, any long-term strategies for sustainable forest management needs direct involvement of rural communities. Decentralised forest management offers an opportunity to reshape how central governments and communities relate to one-another, providing a platform to build new socio-economic and institutional linkages.

3. Geographical locations and target population

The Assessments under these ToR will be conducted in/around the Safienso, Sanekuy and Mio forests in the Segou region of Mali. The Safienso and Sanekuy forests have been degraded through overgrazing, wood exploitation, unsustainable hunting and rapid agricultural expansion. The situation has been further exacerbated by low rainfall, increased bushfires, and resultant soil fertility degradation. Communities here depend heavily on tree resources as a source of food and income. As a result, tree loss has severely intensified the levels of poverty in the area. If no action is taken to ensure sustainable land management, the shrub savannahs, which are growing naturally, could be seriously degraded. The classified forest of Mio is subject to certain threats, the main ones being linked to human activities including rice cultivation, exploitation of wood, soil degradation, disappearance of fauna, and sedentary livestock being kept in the classified forest.

4. Purpose of the consultancy

Tree Aid is in the process of implementing a Local Governance of Forest Resources in Mali project looking to improve biodiversity and income of 2,550 households living around the Mio, Sanekuy and Safienso forests in the Segou region of Mali. This will be achieved by strengthening decentralised forest governance at the regional and national level, and by developing viable sustainable livelihoods interventions. As a result, 26,700ha of forest are expected to be placed under sustainable management. 10,000ha of forest, agricultural and pastoral land will benefit from restoration activities and income sources will be increased for 2,550 households through the development of entrepreneurship activities.

To support the design and targeting, help in project implementation and lessons learning and assess impact at the end of project activities, Tree Aid is looking for a Livelihoods Specialist. The livelihoods specialist, with the support of a national consultant, will be expected to carry out three main tasks:

- i. Livelihoods baseline assessment - this will provide information on the existing socio-economic situation of communities who will benefit from Tree Aid livelihoods programming. The primary purpose of the assessment is to help Tree Aid refine the formulation of the theory of change, the design, targeting¹ and planning of the livelihoods programme in Mali and determining indicators to measure short, medium, and long-term outcomes of the project with a focus on livelihoods and economic support services activities. The assessment will also serve as the reference point for assessing future changes and impacts resulting from livelihoods interventions;
- ii. Conduct a mid-term review - this will provide key learnings for adaptive management, including through updating of logframe;
- iii. Conduct end of project review - this will help develop learning and knowledge materials for project and for the wider conservation community.

5. Scope of work - Livelihoods Baseline Assessment

Through a participatory consultative and field-based process, the livelihoods specialist, with the support of a national consultant, who will be recruited by the livelihood specialist, will conduct the livelihood baseline assessment, using a well-established methodology. The livelihoods specialist, if possible, will look into including a control group in the baseline assessment. High quality data to guide programme strategies obtained through the baseline assessment is needed to identify:

1. Wealth (income, expenditures basket);
2. Source of incomes (employment, auto-employment, remittances);
3. Type of employment (formal / informal markets);
4. Access to services (finance, health, education);
5. Drivers and key mediating factors of poverty and household coping strategies;
6. Mapping of institutions and programmes that can support livelihood development and create economic opportunities;
7. Match programme interventions with corresponding levels of livelihood capacity and needs identified in the population Capital Assets.

Part 1: Preparation for the Livelihood Baseline Assessment

1. Conduct a thorough desk review of available secondary data, including from Tree Aid and other development actors, national and local institutions. The desk review should:

- a. Focus on the dimensions relevant to the theory of change and the livelihoods programme proposal in Mali, and will be used to inform indicator selection as well as survey methodologies for the Livelihood Baseline Assessment.
- b. Include a thorough analysis of Tree Aid existing methods and tools to develop a full economic picture of the target community households, gathered through both quantitative and qualitative data on assets, income level, education, work and capacities.

¹ Targeting is the processes of identifying the intended beneficiaries of a programme, and then ensuring that, as far as possible, the benefits actually reach those people and not others. Targeting for livelihoods programming is defined by the programme objectives and focuses on those who both require support and have the potential to succeed. From Sharp "An overview of targeting approaches for food-assisted programming", Care USA, 2001.

- c. The assessment should survey a representative number of both households divided into socio-economic groups (typically, four wealth groups ranging from the "extremely poor" to "better off").

2. Develop a set of appropriate and high-quality indicators to accurately and efficiently capture baseline data and measure performance and impact of activities, including short and medium-term outcomes.

- a. The livelihoods specialist will review the current Tree Aid Indicator Guide used to monitor the impact of livelihoods programming developed by Tree Aid Operations and as much as possible use impact indicators recommended by Tree Aid staff per programmatic area.
- b. The assignment will likely consider adding some related socio-economic indicators relevant for programme targeting which could include:
 - Demographic profile (including dependency ratios and family size);
 - Food security;
- c. All indicators will be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and trackable.
- d. Using the results of the baseline analysis and the revised ToC, the livelihoods specialist will identify indicators through which to measure project outputs and outcomes (including both intermediate and ultimate outcomes).
- e. Using these indicators, set targets that the project could realistically achieve and develop methodology capable of isolating "attributable impact".

3. Develop a Monitoring Plan

- a. The Monitoring Plan, to monitor progress on agreed key indicators, will be consistent with Tree Aid Monitoring Template.
- b. The livelihoods specialist in consultation with Tree Aid will develop any necessary guidance and monitoring tools and define the process and timeframe of the monitoring work, the main milestones and criteria for re-adjustments.
- c. The livelihoods specialist will allocate time to train the relevant staff on the monitoring tools.

4. Develop a survey to collect data on the agreed indicators

- a. Tree Aid Operation and partners will have a role in the development of the survey to ensure it is context-appropriate, localised and feasible. Tree Aid Technical Unit in UK and Regional Technical Officers based in Ouagadougou can also be consulted.
- b. The survey will be as simple and replicable as possible. The survey will be used to gather data on livelihoods programme participants pre-intervention through the assessment as well as post-intervention (for mid-term review as well as end of project review) to measure the impact of livelihoods interventions. The survey should include relevant *household identifiers* or *beneficiary id number* to ensure the programme participants non-participants can be easily re-identified for follow-up assessments.

5. Develop a sound assessment methodology and sampling strategy

- a. The assessment will combine quantitative and qualitative data. It may consist of individual or household surveys and/or focus groups, depending on the context. Focus groups and/or individual interviews with key informants will also be used to provide context. The assessment should incorporate participatory methods whenever possible.

- b. Wealth should be measured based on good practice and indicators tested locally to ensure appropriateness with the local context. This frequently involves the triangulation of income data with expenditures, assets, and other socio-economic factors relevant to the context.
- c. The assessment will gather data on the representative sample of the target population, the sample should be driven by the necessary sample size needed to detect a change for the core indicators measured for the project.
- d. Sufficient buffer should be included in the sample to consider dropout.
- e. Notwithstanding the sampling method used, host communities included in the survey should always been identifiable and traceable to ensure proper monitoring throughout the years.
- f. If possible, a control group will be defined, including host community members or others who are not receiving the benefits of the livelihoods programme/projects. The two groups need to have similar characteristics and live in the same geographical areas.

6. Conduct a validation workshop

- a. A workshop will be conducted prior to data collection, where the consultant(s) present the proposed methodology and research tools to Tree Aid and key stakeholders for validation.

Part 2: Livelihood Baseline Assessment

1. Pilot the Livelihood Baseline Assessment survey in the field

- a. Enumerators will be trained adequately to test the survey for multiple days within the community, requiring at least a week for field testing of survey tools.
- b. The agreed indicators and survey questions will be adjusted as necessary after being field tested by the targeted population.

2. Conduct the Livelihood Baseline Assessment

- a. Whenever possible, Tree Aid recommends the use of mobile data collection via smart phones or tablets. Many platforms exist that allow users to cache forms on a phone/tablet that do not require connectivity.

Part 3: Presentation of Findings

1. Hold a second validation workshop to present key findings to Tree Aid and key stakeholders

2. Draft a clear, coherent report to be shared with the Tree Aid Operation and key stakeholders

- a. The report (target a maximum 20 pages, excluding annexes) will describe the methodology and sampling, the process of selection of indicators to measure socio-economic impact, descriptive statistics, and the main results of impact indicators.
- b. The Appendix should include the final assessment surveys, site maps, monitoring tools and guidance, and a justification of the chosen subset of core indicators.
- c. The livelihoods specialist will also submit:
 - Electronic copies of the original cleaned dataset in at least Excel (preferably in software package such as R, SPSS...) with any associated files or code;
 - All quantitative and qualitative data (completed questionnaires, recorded interviews, focus groups, etc.);

- Any other documents that will be used or collected in the course of the consultancy.

3. Input data into the Monitoring Plan to ensure the continued monitoring of key indicators from the Baseline Assessment and track any changes in socio-economic well-being.

6. Scope of work mid-term and end of project review

Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience (Kolb, 1984)². Hence, documenting the learning and knowledge is a vital work to contribute for future advancement of biodiversity, conservation and development activities. The overall objective of conducting a mid-term and end of project review is to produce valuable documents on livelihoods interventions supported by the project with strong ownership by the partners and stakeholders. The process of knowledge and learning documentation involves framing the outline of the documentation need, review of the existing documentations made in livelihoods interventions supported by the project, data collection from the field for results level information; analysis, reflection and synthesis; and, documentation.

Framing the outline of documentation need: The knowledge and learning documentation process begins with the identification of the areas that we want to document on livelihoods. The livelihoods specialist is expected to prepare a matrix explaining information that exists in the currently available documentation and that needs to be explored. This may entail rework on the information collection modality and volume of information to be collected from the field.

Review existing documentation work: As the project will have been already running for a number of years, wealth of information will already exist in different forms including concepts, approaches, studies, result chain, strategies, case studies, database etc. These may be in Tree Aid programme documents including annual work plans, semi/annual progress reports, MEL plan and other documents with focus on livelihoods. The available information will guide on the additional information required and the volume of fieldwork needed. The consultant shall review the results chain of livelihoods component and assess the status based on the outputs and outcomes delivered by the livelihood interventions to date.

Assessing requirement of additional data: Based on the volume of available information, the consultant needs to assess the type of additional data required to understand Tree Aid learning objectives. Interactive workshops engaging stakeholders, Tree Aid key staff and beneficiaries is important for common understanding and contribution in the overall process.

Interactive workshops to generate knowledge among relevant staff and beneficiaries (content generation, validation of existing knowledge and cross sharing). Participants will vary depending upon the topic for documentation.

Data analysis, reflection and synthesis: Once the data are gathered from the field and existing reports, it should be analysed and synthesised. Knowledge generation is one of the key tasks in this step.

Documentation and publication: After the analysis, the information is well documented. The document should be concise, coherent, logical, reader friendly and contributing to existing knowledge gap.

² David A Kolb (1984): Experiential Learning: Experience as The Source of Learning and Development

7. Expected tasks

The Livelihood Baseline Assessment tasks are as follows:

- LBATask 1: Desk review
- LBATask 2: Inception workshop with Tree Aid staff and selected partners.
- LBATask 3: Field data collection
- LBATask 4: Validation workshop with Tree Aid staff and selected partners
- LBATask 5: Submission of first draft
- LBATask 6: Finalization of the report

For the mid-term and end of project review assignment, the tasks are as follows:

- Task 1: Review of Tree Aid programme documents, including annual work plans, semi/annual progress reports, monitoring reports/ plans and other documents with focus on livelihoods progress reports
- Task 2: Workshop with Tree Aid staff and selected partners.
- Task 3: Field data collection
- Task 4: Validation workshop with Tree Aid staff and selected partners
- Task 5: Submission of first draft
- Task 6: Finalization of the report providing key learnings for adaptive management (including through updating of logframe in the mid-term review process)

8. Supervision/Reporting line and Duty Stations

The contractor will report directly to the Tree Aid Mali Country Director, supported by Tree Aid Operations (Technical Unit in UK and Regional Technical Officers based in Ouagadougou) Please see Appendix for Tree Aid Mali organogram.

9. Consultancy Deliverables

The deliverables of the Livelihood baseline assessment consultancy (to be submitted to Tree Aid by the livelihoods specialist) will be:

1. Theory of change with agreed indicators;
2. Monitoring Plan;
3. Baseline Assessment survey (with the support of a national consultant);
4. Baseline Assessment report (with the support of a national consultant);
5. Baseline Assessment data (with the support of a national consultant);
6. Validation workshops (with the support of a national consultant).

10. Proposed Timeframe

Livelihood baseline assessment: 4 months

Mid-term review: 2 months

End of project review: 3 months

11. Payment milestones

The payment methods for livelihoods baseline assessment are as follows

- 25% at the agreement signature.
- 25% at Baseline Assessment Survey concluded.
- 25% at Baseline clean datasets and report presented.
- 25% at Validation workshops reports presented.

Work conducted at midline: To be confirmed

Work conducted at endline: To be confirmed

12. Qualifications

Academic: advanced university degree in economics, socio-economic development, development planning, financial management or other related fields.

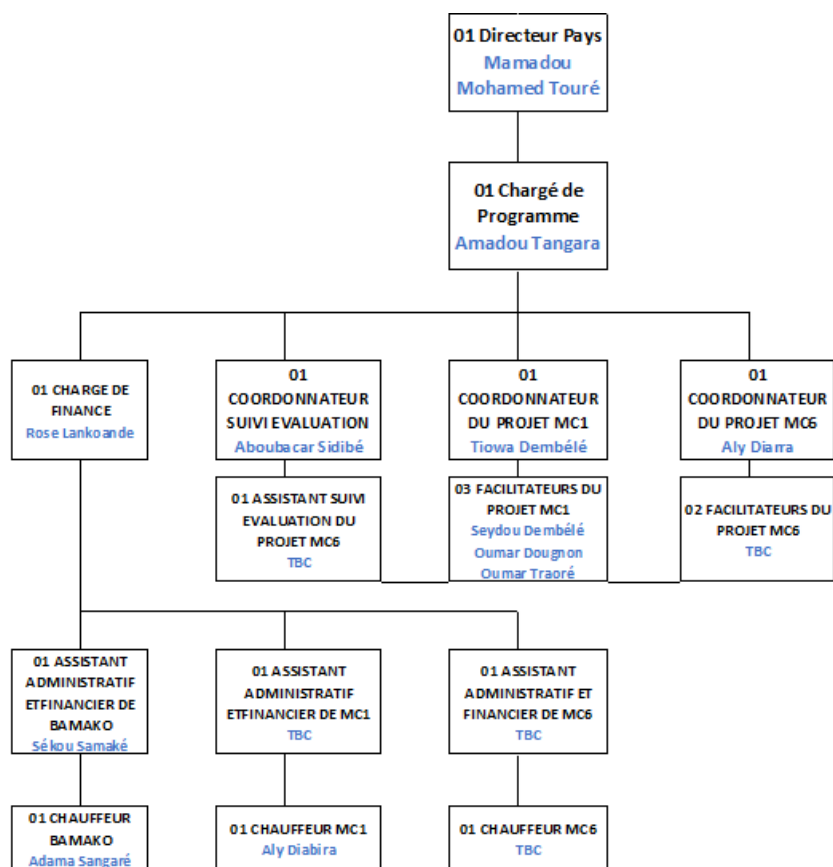
Professional Experience:

- a) Minimum of 5 years of relevant professional job experience (baseline assessments, monitoring and evaluation, impact evaluation, data collection and analysis, etc.);
- b) Proven experience in planning, implementing, and monitoring livelihoods programmes (and managing multiple projects);
- c) Knowledge of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, including statistical sampling;
- d) Experience in working with international and national NGOs and with government authorities at national level;

Language: fluency in French and English. Working language in the field will be French, all reporting will be in English.

Appendix

Tree Aid Mali Organisation Chart



Timeframe of Consultancy Deliverables

Scope of work	Timeframe	
	Livelihoods specialist	National consultant
<u>Livelihoods Baseline Assessment</u>		
<u>Part 1: Preparation for the Livelihood Baseline Assessment</u>		
1. Conduct a thorough desk review of available secondary data	14	
2. Develop a set of appropriate and high-quality indicators		
3. Develop a Monitoring Plan		
4. Develop a survey to collect data on the agreed indicators		
5. Develop a sound assessment methodology and sampling strategy		5
6. Conduct a validation workshop		
<u>Part 2: Livelihood Baseline Assessment</u>		
1. Pilot the Livelihood Baseline Assessment survey in the field	7	21
2. Conduct the Livelihood Baseline Assessment		
<u>Part 3: Presentation of Findings</u>		
1. Hold a second validation workshop to present key findings to Tree Aid and key stakeholders	7	5
2. Draft a clear, coherent report to be shared with the Tree Aid Operation and key stakeholders	14	5
3. Input data into the Monitoring Plan		
<u>Mid-term review assignment</u>		
Task 1: Review of Tree Aid programme documents, including annual work plans, semi/annual progress reports, monitoring reports/ plans and other documents with focus on livelihoods progress reports	7	
Task 2: Workshop with Tree Aid staff and selected partners		17
Task 3: Field data collection		
Task 4: Validation workshop with Tree Aid staff and selected partners	7	5
Task 5: Submission of first draft	14	
Task 6: Finalization of the report providing key learnings for adaptive management (including through updating of logframe in the mid-term review process)		
<u>End of project review assignment</u>		

<i>Task 1: Review of Tree Aid programme documents, including annual work plans, semi/annual progress reports, monitoring reports/ plans and other documents with focus on livelihoods progress reports</i>	14	
<i>Task 2: Workshop with Tree Aid staff and selected partners</i>		17
<i>Task 3: Field data collection</i>		
<i>Task 4: Validation workshop with Tree Aid staff and selected partners</i>	7	5
<i>Task 5: Submission of first draft</i>	14	
<i>Task 6: Finalization of the report providing key learnings for adaptive management (including through updating of logframe in the mid-term review process)</i>		