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UNIFIED MEL FRAMEWORK FOR DIGITAL AND AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

PROGRESS TOWARD NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

CREATED BY

EUSL AB

Care to Change the World

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Unified MEL Framework for Digital and Agricultural Transformation

Between:

The Government of the Republic of South Sudan

And

The European Social Label (EUSL)

Preamble

This MEL Framework Agreement is adopted pursuant to the Strategic Engagement Agreement, the Agenda for Social Equity 2074 Integration Circular, and Annex I of the Digital Transformation Roadmap. It establishes a unified system for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) to ensure that all digital and agricultural transformation initiatives are implemented with transparency, accountability, and measurable impact.

The Framework aligns with Agenda 2074 principles, the African Union's Agenda 2063, and global best practices in results-based management. It provides a standardized approach for tracking progress, assessing outcomes, and generating evidence to inform policy decisions and continuous improvement.

Section 1 – Purpose and Scope

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Framework is to establish a unified system for **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)** across all digital and agricultural transformation initiatives implemented under the Strategic Engagement Agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Sudan and the European Social Label (EUSL).

This Framework ensures that:

- (a) Progress toward national development objectives and **Agenda for Social Equity 2074** targets is systematically tracked;
- (b) Evidence-based decision-making is embedded in program design and implementation;
- (c) Lessons learned are captured and applied to improve future interventions; and
- (d) Reporting obligations to national authorities, development partners, and stakeholders are harmonized and transparent.

1.2 Scope

This Framework applies to:

- (a) All projects and programs financed or co-financed under the Digital Transformation and Agricultural Development portfolio;
- (b) All ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) responsible for implementing these programs;
- (c) All donor-supported and private sector-led initiatives aligned with Agenda 2074 principles.

Section 2 – MEL Principles and Alignment with Agenda 2074

2.1 Core MEL Principles

The MEL system shall be guided by the following principles:

- (a) **Results-Based Management:** Focus on measurable outputs, outcomes, and impacts rather than inputs and activities.
- (b) **Transparency and Accountability:** Ensure open reporting and public disclosure of progress and performance data.
- (c) **Inclusivity:** Engage stakeholders, including communities and beneficiaries, in monitoring and evaluation processes.
- (d) **Learning Orientation:** Use findings to inform adaptive management and continuous improvement.
- (e) **Digital Integration:** Leverage technology for real-time data collection, analysis, and visualization.

2.2 Alignment with Agenda 2074

- (a) All MEL indicators shall be mapped to the **17 Social Global Goals** under Agenda 2074, ensuring coherence with national and regional priorities.
- (b) MEL processes shall incorporate **cross-cutting themes** such as gender equality, digital inclusion, and governance integrity.
- (c) Reporting formats shall be harmonized with Agenda 2074 compliance requirements and linked to the **Agenda 2074 Integration Circular** to ensure consistency across all agreements.

Section 3 – Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

3.1 Purpose

This section defines the structure and methodology for selecting and applying Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure progress toward the objectives of the Digital and Agricultural Transformation Program and Agenda 2074 integration.

3.2 KPI Framework

(a) Levels of Indicators:

- **Output Indicators:** Measure immediate deliverables (e.g., number of digital service centers established, hectares under improved irrigation).
- **Outcome Indicators:** Assess medium-term effects (e.g., percentage increase in rural internet penetration, reduction in post-harvest losses).
- **Impact Indicators:** Capture long-term changes (e.g., improvement in social equity index, GDP contribution from digital economy).

(b) Alignment:

All KPIs shall be mapped to the **17 Social Global Goals** under Agenda 2074 and harmonized with national development targets and donor reporting requirements.

3.3 Sample KPIs

- **Digital Transformation:**
 - Internet penetration rate (% of population).
 - Number of government services digitized.



- Percentage of schools connected to broadband.
- **Agricultural Transformation:**
 - Yield increase per hectare for staple crops.
 - Number of farmers trained in digital agriculture solutions.
 - Reduction in post-harvest losses (%).
- **Social Equity and Governance:**
 - Gender parity in digital skills training (% female participants).
 - Number of grievances resolved within 30 days.
 - Compliance rate with ESG safeguards (%).

Section 4 – Data Collection and Verification Protocols

4.1 Purpose

To ensure that MEL data is accurate, timely, and verifiable, this section establishes standardized protocols for data collection, validation, and storage.

4.2 Data Collection

(a) Primary Sources:

Administrative records, digital platforms, field surveys, and remote sensing technologies.

(b) Frequency:

- Output data: Monthly or quarterly.
- Outcome data: Semi-annual.
- Impact data: Annual or biennial.

(c) Digital Integration:

All data shall be captured through a centralized MEL platform with geo-tagging and time-stamping features.

4.3 Verification Protocols

(a) Internal Verification:

Implementing agencies shall conduct first-level verification of data accuracy before submission.

(b) Independent Audits:

Third-party verification shall be conducted annually for high-risk or high-value projects.

(c) Community Validation:

Participatory monitoring mechanisms shall be used to validate service delivery and beneficiary feedback.

4.4 Data Security and Privacy

All data collection and storage shall comply with national data protection laws and international best practices, ensuring confidentiality and integrity of personal and sensitive information.

Section 5 – Reporting Schedule and Formats

5.1 Purpose

This section defines the reporting obligations and standardized formats for MEL data submission to ensure consistency, transparency, and alignment with Agenda 2074 compliance requirements.

5.2 Reporting Schedule

- (a) **Monthly Reports:** Operational data on outputs (e.g., number of services digitized, hectares cultivated) submitted by implementing agencies to the MEL Unit.
- (b) **Quarterly Reports:** Consolidated progress reports covering outputs and outcomes, including financial performance and risk updates.
- (c) **Annual Reports:** Comprehensive performance reports integrating impact indicators, lessons learned, and Agenda 2074 alignment status.
- (d) **Ad Hoc Reports:** Prepared upon request by the Steering Committee or development partners for specific evaluations or audits.

5.3 Reporting Formats

- (a) **Standard Templates:** All reports shall use templates provided in Annex II, ensuring uniformity across sectors and projects.
- (b) **Digital Submission:** Reports shall be uploaded to the centralized MEL platform with automated validation checks for completeness and accuracy.
- (c) **Public Disclosure:** Summary reports shall be published annually to promote transparency and stakeholder engagement.

Section 6 – Independent Evaluation and Learning Loops

6.1 Purpose

To ensure objectivity and continuous improvement, this section establishes protocols for independent evaluations and structured learning processes.

6.2 Independent Evaluations

- (a) **Mid-Term Evaluation:** Conducted at the midpoint of major programs to assess progress, identify systemic challenges, and recommend corrective actions.
- (b) **End-Term Evaluation:** Performed upon program completion to evaluate overall effectiveness, sustainability, and impact.
- (c) **Frequency:** Independent evaluations shall occur at least once every three (3) years for long-term programs.

6.3 Learning Loops

- (a) **Knowledge Capture:** Evaluation findings shall be documented in a centralized knowledge repository accessible to all stakeholders.
- (b) **Feedback Mechanisms:** Regular learning workshops shall be organized to disseminate lessons and integrate them into future planning cycles.
- (c) **Policy Adaptation:** Recommendations from evaluations shall inform updates to the MEL Framework, Agenda 2074 integration strategies, and sectoral policies.

Section 7 – Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Digital Transformation Steering Committee (DTSC)

- (a) **Oversight:** Provide strategic direction and oversight for MEL implementation across all digital and agricultural transformation initiatives.
- (b) **Approval Authority:** Approve MEL plans, indicator frameworks, and evaluation schedules submitted by implementing agencies.
- (c) **Reporting:** Review consolidated MEL reports and ensure alignment with Agenda 2074 compliance requirements.

7.2 Technical Coordination Unit (TCU)

- (a) **Operational Management:** Coordinate day-to-day MEL activities, including data collection, validation, and reporting across all sectors.
- (b) **Capacity Building:** Develop and deliver training programs for ministry focal points and implementing partners on MEL tools and methodologies.
- (c) **Technology Integration:** Maintain and upgrade the centralized MEL platform to ensure real-time data capture and analytics.

7.3 Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs)

- (a) **Data Collection and Reporting:** Collect and submit accurate, timely data in accordance with the reporting schedule and formats specified in Section 5.
- (b) **Compliance:** Ensure that MEL indicators are integrated into sectoral plans and budgets, consistent with Agenda 2074 principles.
- (c) **Learning Contribution:** Participate in evaluation reviews and incorporate lessons learned into future planning cycles.

7.4 European Social Label (EUSL)

- (a) **Technical Support:** Provide expertise, tools, and resources for MEL system design, implementation, and continuous improvement.
- (b) **Independent Verification:** Commission third-party evaluations and audits to ensure objectivity and credibility of MEL findings.
- (c) **Donor Engagement:** Prepare consolidated MEL performance reports for submission to development partners and financing institutions.



Signatures and Annexes

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned representatives, duly authorized by their respective governments and institutions, have signed this Unified MEL Framework for Digital and Agricultural Transformation Agreement in two original copies, each in the English language, both texts being equally authentic.

Signed in Juba, Republic of South Sudan, on [Date].

For the Government of the Republic of South Sudan

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

For the European Social Label (EUSL)

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Annexes for MEL Framework

- **Annex I – Indicator Matrix:**

Defines KPIs by sector, mapped to Agenda 2074 goals, with baseline values, targets, and data sources.

- **Annex II – Reporting Templates:**

Standardized formats for monthly, quarterly, and annual reports, including digital submission guidelines.

- **Annex III – Evaluation Calendar:**

Specifies timelines for mid-term and end-term evaluations, independent audits, and learning workshops.