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## *Executive Summary*

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Solidaridad Southern Africa is implementing the "Hooves for Sustainability (H4S)" project in the Mazabuka, Monze, and Namwala districts of the Southern Province - Zambia. The project aims to promote sustainable livestock management practices, build the capacity of smallholder livestock farmers, develop livestock infrastructure, enhance institutional capacities, generate evidence, and create an enabling policy environment. Therefore, a baseline study was required to establish the foundation for measuring project impact and progress through mid-term, endline and impact evaluation assessments. It also provides the basis for sound monitoring and evaluation of the project. The baseline indicators are useful in tracking implementation progress towards project targets and goals.

According to the Terms of Reference (ToR), the main purpose of the baseline study was to gather comprehensive data and information on the status quo of smallholder livestock farmers, livestock management practices, infrastructure, institutions, and policies in the project areas. The study serves as a benchmark from which changes can be measured, as well as, assessing the project's impact over time. The specific objectives included the following:

- To assess the socio-economic characteristics of smallholder livestock farmers, including gender-specific roles, responsibilities, and access to resources.
- To evaluate the current livestock management practices and knowledge levels among smallholder livestock farmers, considering any gender-specific barriers or opportunities.
- To assess the existing livestock infrastructure and services available in the project areas, and their accessibility to different social groups, including women and marginalized communities.
- To evaluate the institutional capacities of key stakeholders involved in sustainable livestock management, considering gender representation and inclusion in decision-making processes.
- To assess the policy environment related to livestock management practices in the target districts, including their gender-responsiveness and implementation.

The target districts for the baseline study were Mazabuka, Monze, and Namwala in Southern Province. To accomplish the objectives of the study, the following key tasks were carried out:

- **Desk review:** A thorough review of relevant literature, reports, and available data related to livestock management, agriculture, and rural development in the target districts, including gender and social inclusion aspects.
- **Data collection:** A detailed data collection plan and tools (questionnaires, interview guides, etc.) to collect primary data from smallholder livestock farmers, relevant institutions, and key stakeholders, ensuring representation from different social groups.
- **Fieldwork:** Field visits to the target districts were done to conduct KII interviews, and focus group discussions with smallholder livestock farmers, livestock service providers, government officials, community representatives, and other relevant stakeholders, integrating gender and social inclusion considerations.

- **Data analysis:** Analysis the collected data was done, ensuring a gender-responsive qualitative and quantitative analysis approach. Present the findings in a clear and concise manner, also highlighting key gender and social inclusion trends, patterns, and insights.
- **Report writing:** A comprehensive baseline study report was prepared, including an executive summary, methodology, findings with a consideration of gender and social inclusion, conclusions, and recommendations. The report was well-structured, logically organized, and supported by appropriate tables, graphs, and visual representations.

**Please Note:**

**THE FULL REPORT IS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**