U.S. Department of Agriculture
Foreign Agricultural Service
Office of Capacity Building and Development
Food Assistance Division
Food for Progress

Funding Opportunity Announcement

CFDA Number: 10.606
Issue Date: September 30, 2014
Revised Application Due Date: January 15, 2015 at 5:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time

SECTION I: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. AUTHORITY: The Food for Progress (FFPr) program is authorized by the Food for Progress Act of 1985, as amended.

B. PURPOSE: The Food for Progress program provides for the donation of U.S. agricultural commodities to developing countries and emerging democracies that are committed to introducing or expanding free enterprise in their agricultural economies. Donated commodities are "monetized" (or sold on the local market), and the proceeds are used to fund agricultural development activities.

C. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES: For this announcement, the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) is concentrating FFPr resources toward developing the "Agricultural Value Chain". To support the achievement of this goal, FAS has identified two high-level strategic objectives: (1) increase agricultural productivity and (2) expand the trade of agricultural products domestically, regionally, and internationally. Applications that do not contribute to at least one of these two high-level objectives will not be funded. Proposals may address both high-level objectives if necessary. FFPr's high-level objectives are supported by two results frameworks that identify results that contribute to these objectives and should be targeted under FFPr programs. Applications must provide a target for each result indicator and a detailed explanation of how the target will be reached. (For more information on these frameworks and how to incorporate them into applications, please see Annex 1 of the Proposal Guidance on the FAS Website at the following address: http://www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/FoodAid/FFP/ApplyForProgram.asp.)

The achievement of both intermediate and highest level results in the program's two results framework are measured by indicators, as laid out in Annex II: Standard and Illustrative Indicators and Definitions. For each proposed activity, applicants must link the activity to the achievement of a result from the results framework. Consistent with the results oriented management approach, applications must identify an appropriate indicator to be used to measure whether the results are being achieved, provide a target for the indicator, and an explanation of how the target will be reached. Applicants may reference Annex IV: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy for further guidance on the use of indicators to measure progress in achieving results.

In addition, FAS considers the participation of the private sector important and will therefore give priority consideration to proposed projects that (1) expand domestic, regional, or international markets and trade through private sector participation and (2) leverage public or private sector resources in order to achieve lasting impact. Lastly, FAS will give priority to applications that offer climate smart agricultural solutions in their activities.

D. PROGRAM PRIORITIES: FAS will give priority consideration to otherwise acceptable applications that align with its established FFPr priority countries, regions, and sectors. Please note that it is not necessary to work in all priority sectors, and if opting to work in more than one sector, applicants should provide a detailed explanation that gives sufficient justification. Similarly, it is not necessary to work in

all priority regions. Although all regions are equally prioritized, applicants must sufficiently justify the regions they propose to work in, particularly if it is not a Feed the Future (FtF) region.

Country	Prioritized Value Chain	Focus of Intervention	Region Within Country
Benin	Pineapple Sector	Processing for Export	The Atlantique/Littoral
		International Market linkages (including food and safety standards)	
	Cashew Sector	Production	Tchaourou, Savalou, Djidja, Djougou, Bassila, N'Dali, and Parakou.
		Localized Processing	
Ghana	Poultry	Integrated layer production while supporting the "Ghana Broiler Revitalization Project" (GHABROP).	Ashanti, Brong-Ahfo and the Coastal regions
		Feed production (with linkages to local sourcing from the Northern Region)	
Dominican Republic	High Value Agricultural Commodities (Horticulture and Vegetables, dairy and Meat)	Food distribution systems aimed for Export	All Regions
		Business Enabling Environment for Export (to support the CAFTA DR)	

For more information on the priority country for this funding opportunity, applicants may reference Annex VI: Country Specific Guidance.

SECTION II: AWARD INFORMATION

A. TYPE OF AWARD: All awards will be made in the form of competitive cooperative agreements. In a cooperative agreement, FAS will be substantially involved in the project. The nature of the substantial involvement will be clearly specified in a special award condition entitled "Statement of Substantial Involvement" at the time of the award. Substantial involvement may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- FAS specifies the manner, method, performance, or timing of the work in an approved work plan;
- FAS review and approval of one stage of work before a subsequent stage may begin during the performance period;
- FAS review and approval of an evaluation plan and a performance monitoring plan;
- FAS review and approval of monetization plan, if applicable;
- FAS review and approval of proposed subgrants and contracts, prior to award;
- FAS participation in the selection and approval of the individuals or organizations that will conduct all required evaluations;
- FAS participation in data collection and analysis for required evaluations and other performance reports;
- FAS approval of an organizational chart identifying the names, roles and responsibilities of all of the Participant's key personnel and any subsequent changes or absences; and
- FAS provides specific direction or redirection of the work during the period of performance.

B. ESTIMATED FUNDING: FAS expects to award approximately $250 million under the FFPr program in FY 2015. This number may change based on estimated freight and commodity costs.

C. AWARD SIZE: Cooperative agreements provided under the FFPr program typically average $10-$15 million. FAS is encouraging proposals for 5 year implementation which are expected to range from $20-$30 million.

D. EXPECTED NUMBER OF AWARDS: FAS typically awards 6 to 8 FFPr grants annually.

E. ANTICPATED START DATE: Funded projects are anticipated to start in September 2015.

F. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: For new programming, FAS seeks proposals for implementation over a 5 year period.

SECTION III: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements stated in the FFPr Regulations (7 C.F.R. 1499.3), as follows:

(a) An entity will be eligible to become a participant only after FAS determines that the entity has:

(1) Organizational experience in implementing and managing awards, and the capability and personnel to develop, implement, monitor, report on, and provide accountability for activities in accordance with 7 CFR 1499;

(2) Experience working in the proposed targeted country;

(3) An adequate financial framework to implement the activities the entity proposes to carry out under FFPr. In order to determine whether the entity is financially responsible, FAS requires that it submit its most recent audited financial statement to include the A-133 supplemental (if applicable). FAS may also require it to submit corporate policies and other financial materials that have been audited or otherwise reviewed by a third party;

(4) A person or agent located in the United States with respect to which service of judicial process may be obtained by FAS on behalf of the entity;

(5) An operating financial account in the proposed targeted country, or a satisfactory explanation for not having such an account and a description of how an FFPr agreement would be administered without such an account; and

(6) FAS may conduct an assessment of the applicant's administrative and financial capabilities before an agreement can be signed. The results of the assessment may result in special terms and conditions being written into the agreement and may delay the signing of the agreement.

(b) In determining whether an entity will be eligible to be a participant, FAS may consider the entity's previous compliance or noncompliance with the provisions of 7 CFR 1499. FAS may consider past performance history, including agreement violations and audit and compliance review findings. FAS may also consider whether the entity corrected deficiencies identified during the implementation of an agreement in a timely and satisfactory manner as well as whether the entity has filed timely and accurate reports and other submissions that are required to be filed with FAS and other agencies of the United States.

B. COST SHARING: Cost sharing is not required but is encouraged. Applicants must document any cost sharing in the detailed budget section of their proposal submissions, as per 7 CFR 1499.4(d)(7).

C. SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT: Each applicant must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) prior to submitting an application. The applicant must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration by an agency. The applicant must also provide its Data and Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number in each application it submits.

SECTION IV: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. APPLICATION CONTENT: Applications for funding under Food for Progress must submit the information specified in 7 CFR 1499.4, which includes the completion of the SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B, an introduction that includes a strategic analysis, a plan of operation, and a proposed budget. For monetization, applications must also include a discussion on the potential costs and benefits to the local economy of sales of donated commodities within the recipient country. Additionally, applications must include a completed form AD-3030, no more than four past performance records from sources outside of FAS's Food Assistance Division, CV for Chief of Party or Country Director, project-level framework(s), a performance monitoring plan, and an evaluation plan. Also, if applicable, proposals must include the applicant's most recent audited financial statement and NICRA determination (if indirect costs are included in the proposed budget). All attachments must be submitted in PDF format.

B. METHOD OF SUBMISSION: The entire application package must be submitted electronically through the proposal entry module of FAS's Food Aid Information System (FAIS), located at: http://www.fas.usda.gov/fais/public. For guidance on entering proposals in FAIS, please see **Annex V** (FAIS Entry) and visit this page: http://www.fas.usda.gov/programs/applying-fas-food-assistance-programs .

C. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: All applications must be submitted to USDA in the FAIS system by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, January 15, 2015 (Note this is a revised application deadline). Applications received after this date will not be considered. FAS advises applicants to begin entering applications early to allow time to address any technical difficulties that may arise. There will be no exceptions to this application deadline.

D. PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION: USDA held a public information session to answer questions related to program opportunities on November 5, 2014 at the USDA Building on Independence Avenue in Washington DC from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Presentation and discussion summary are available online: http://www.fas.usda.gov/newsroom/public-meeting-fas-food-assistance-programs .

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SECTION V: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. CRITERIA: FAS will use the following criteria when reviewing proposals.

1. INITIAL REVIEW CRITERIA: Prior to a comprehensive merit evaluation, FAS will perform an initial review to determine that:

a) The applicant is eligible for an award;
b) All information required by the announcement has been submitted; and
c) The proposed project addresses the program priorities stated in this announcement.

2. MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA: FAS will evaluate proposals using the following criteria. It will also take into account negative factors that can reduce an application's total score.

a) <u>Introduction/Strategic Analysis (35%)</u>

<u>Detailed Explanation of Need and Proposed Response</u>

i. Does the project design incorporate the solicitation's priority countries, geographic regions, and sectors?
ii. Does the application explain the need for the proposed activities and justify why the proposed activities are the most appropriate response?
iii. Did the organization work with the recipient government to develop the proposed activities? Does the project have support from the recipient government?
iv. Does the application describe what other stakeholders (host government, USG, other donors, private sector, etc.) are already doing to address agricultural development, and explain how the proposed program will complement and not duplicate these activities?
v. Does the application explicitly describe its coordination with published USG strategies when applicable?
vi. Does the application explain how activities link to specific results within the Project-Level Framework?
vii. Does the application explain the need for specific results and the reasoning for including or excluding other results in the Food for Progress program-level frameworks, including a justification if new results were added?
viii. For the monetization that is proposed, does the application include a discussion on the potential costs and benefits to the local economy of the sale of donated commodities within the recipient country?

<u>Lasting Impact</u>

i. Does the organization work with public and/or private partners to ensure long-lasting, sustainable results?
ii. Does the proposed project have established partnerships with and buy-in from beneficiary groups/communities?
iii. Does the applicant provide a concrete plan with measurable targets for continuation of projects beyond Food for Progress support?

Organizational Experience

i. Does the applicant establish project management capability, including its ability to implement, supervise, and support proposed project activities?
ii. Is applicant registered in country or does it offer a plan to become registered?
iii. Does the organization have experience in the country of the proposed program?
iv. If the applicant has had projects with USDA or other USG agencies, does the proposal show evidence of sustainable activities and indicators of positive impact?

Program Administration

i. Does the application include appropriate positions and management structure for the program and an appropriate CV for Chief of Party?

b) Commodity Management (10%)

i. Does the application demonstrate that the commodity type and tonnage are appropriate for the market and will not disrupt commercial sales or disincentivize local production?
ii. Does the applicant have a clear plan to monetize the commodity?
iii. Does participant have monetization experience or plans to hire an experienced agent?
iv. Does the application address specific country concerns, including customs exemptions, import barriers, tariffs, etc.?
v. Does the application include port, warehouse, and handling capacity in country as it relates to the commodity, tonnage, and packaging?

c) Results and Activities (35%)

Results

i. Are the proposed results, indicators, and targets attainable, realistic, and meaningful?
ii. Does the application incorporate results and the corresponding standard and illustrative indicators from the Food for Progress results frameworks?
iii. Does the application include results targets for each result indicator listed?
iv. Does the project-level results framework follow the application guidance and effectively illustrate the relationship among activities, results, and strategic objectives?
v. Does the application include a performance monitoring plan (PMP) that follows the application guidance and will allow the applicant to effectively measure results?
vi. Does the application present a comprehensive and realistic plan to evaluate the proposed program and its impact, in accordance with FAS's evaluation policy?

Activities

i. Do the activity descriptions clearly define how each activity will be implemented?
ii. Are the activities' output indicators and targets attainable, realistic, and meaningful?
iii. Do activities' output indicators accurately capture each activity's scope, beneficiaries reached, and deliverables?

iv. Does the application provide a full explanation of the target beneficiary population and a sufficient rationale for why they were chosen?

v. Does the application describe the capacity of all subrecipients and their role in project implementation?

d) <u>Budget (10%)</u>

i. Does the application contain a budget narrative for the detailed budget that justifies the overall cost of the project and explains how each administrative expense type and activity line item was calculated?

ii. Is the project cost-effective relative to the proposed activities, beneficiaries, and results?

e) <u>Overall Quality (10%)</u>

i. Are all sections of the application consistent?

ii. Is the application clearly and concisely written?

f) <u>The following negative factors will reduce the application's total score</u>:

i. FAS has terminated an agreement with the organization within the past 3 years as a result of a violation of the agreement by the organization.

ii. The organization has failed to pay a single substantial debt, or a number of outstanding debts (not including sums owed the Federal Government under the Internal Revenue Code) owed to any Federal agency or instrumentality, provided the debt is uncontested by the organization or, if contested, provided that the organization's legal and administrative remedies have been exhausted.

iii. The organization has failed to submit to FAS, or has submitted more than 5 business days after the due date, at least two required reports within the past 3 years. Required documentation includes logmon/semi-annual performance reports, financial reports, evaluation plans, baseline data, interim and final evaluations, A-133 audits, subrecipient agreements and all other documentation required in the organization's agreement.

iv. The organization has, on at least two occasions within the past 3 years, failed to respond, or responded more than 5 business days late, to a FAS deadline for documents required during a compliance review or during the close-out of an agreement.

v. The organization has been designated high-risk by FAS, another Federal Government Agency or external auditor within the past three years and/or the organization's most recent A-133 identifies material weaknesses.

vi. The organization has experienced a significant commodity loss valued at $20,000 or greater for which it was responsible during the past three years and/or the organization failed to notify FAS within 15 days of any commodity loss valued over $1,000 during the past 3 years.

3. OTHER SELECTION FACTORS

The selection official will consider the following program policy factors in the selection process:

a) It may be desirable to select projects for award that build upon existing program activities to reach the benefits of graduation and sustainability.
b) It may be desirable to select projects that collectively represent diverse countries, types of projects, and sizes of applicant organizations.
c) It may be desirable to select projects for award based on the applicant's past federal award performance with respect to achieving program results.

While these factors are not indicators of the application's merit, they may be essential to the process of selecting the application(s) that, individually or collectively, are most likely to achieve the program objectives. Such factors may be beyond the control of the applicant. Applicants should recognize that very good applications may not receive an award because they do not fit within a mix of projects which maximizes the probability of achieving FAS's overall food assistance objectives.

B. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

1. REVIEW PROCESS: FAS will review all complete applications that are submitted by the deadline in FAIS. FAS will invite comments from other U.S. governmental agencies on its award recommendations, but FAS will make the final determination regarding which applications to fund.

2. DISCUSSIONS AND AWARD: Prior to signing the cooperative agreement, FAS will enter into negotiations with all selected applicants. These negotiations may include but are not limited to:

a) The budget is not appropriate or reasonable for the proposed project;
b) Only a portion of the application is selected for award;
c) FAS needs additional information to determine that the recipient is capable of complying with the requirements in 7 C.F.R. 1499; and/or
d) Special terms and conditions are required.

Failure to resolve satisfactorily the issues identified by FAS will preclude award to applicant.

C. ANTICIPATED NOTICE OF SELECTION AND AWARD DATES: FAS anticipates notifying applicants that have been selected for awards around March 2015, and making awards by July 1, 2015.

SECTION VI: AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. AWARD NOTICES: FAS will notify each applicant in writing of the final disposition of its application through FAIS. Once the approved applicant accepts that award, FAS will begin negotiations with the applicant to develop a cooperative agreement. The agreement will incorporate the details of the project as approved by FAS and in accordance with the FFPr regulations, 7 C.F.R. part 1499.

B. REPORTING: An organization receiving funding under the FFPr program will be required to provide semi-annual financial reports, semi-annual performance reports, an evaluation plan, a performance monitoring plan, a baseline study, a mid-term evaluation, a final evaluation, a work plan highlighting the feeding schedule, an annual travel plan, organizational chart identifying the names, roles and responsibilities of all of the Participant's key personnel and any subsequent changes or absences, and subrecipient and subcontractor agreements as provided in the cooperative agreement. All reports must be submitted using the FAIS. All organizations receiving funding will be required to report against the indicators in the agreement at each reporting cycle. Changes in the original project timelines and adjustments within project budgets must be approved by FAS prior to their implementation.

C. MONITORING AND EVALUATION: A program participant shall submit to FAS, in the manner specified in the agreement, an annual financial audit in accordance with 7 CFR 1499.13(d). If FAS requires an annual financial audit with respect to a particular agreement, and FAS provides funds for this purpose, the participant shall arrange for such audit and submit it to FAS, in the manner specified in the agreement. Additionally, a participant shall, as provided in the agreement, submit to FAS an evaluation plan, a baseline study, and an interim and a final evaluation of the agreement implementation. Unless otherwise provided in the agreement, the evaluation plan shall be submitted within 90 days of award date, the baseline study shall be submitted within 6 months of award date, and the results from the evaluations shall be submitted at the mid-point and end-point of the implementation period in accordance with 7 CFR 1499.13(e). The participant shall provide to FAS additional information or reports relating to the agreement if requested by FAS.

SECTION VII: AGENCY CONTACT

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