

McGovern-Dole FY2022 Notice of Funding Opportunity

Questions and Answers

Week of March 28, 2022

1. Q: Do all applicants have to describe graduation successes in other projects or only those applicants "proposing to continue an existing project?"

A: Yes, all applicants should describe graduation successes in other projects, this is referenced on page 25 and 30 of the NOFO under the Sustainability and Lasting Impact Section where it states, "that the applicant should demonstrate any prior successes regarding graduation of food assistance, education, or nutrition projects, especially those funded by USG agencies."

2. Q: Can USDA provide illustrative examples of "additional complementary components" that are acceptable?

A: On p. 30 of the NOFO, in the M&E section, Applicants are reminded that if their project design includes providing additional complementary components to feed children beyond the commodities provided, the Applicant should track those additions using custom indicators. The examples include any locally or regionally procured foods, foods added through school gardens (typically fruits or vegetables), or additions to the meal procured through partnerships with another entity. These are not required and are only examples; it is up to the Applicant to determine within the project design and context whether any additional items will be added to school meals and how to track them.

3. Q: Can USDA provide a list of countries that commodities can be imported from?

A: There is no set list of countries from which commodities can be imported. Each project is required to utilize U.S. commodities under the traditional McGovern-Dole program and must utilize locally or regionally procured (LRP) commodities to supplement this. Applicants should aim to have 10% of the project budget devoted to LRP, as noted in the Notice of Funding Opportunity. The locally and regionally procured commodities can be procured within the target country or within the region of the target country. FAS notes that as a goal of the LRP commodities is to promote sustainability and support local producers and supply chains, it usually makes the most sense to utilize commodities available within the target country or from countries immediately bordering that country. FAS strongly discourages applicants from proposing commodities shipped from outside the target country's region under the LRP component of the program.

4. Q: What is USDA's recommendation for food safety standards under LRP for countries that do not have labs in country to test the quality of local produce and where there is no legal policy/framework on standards for food quality?

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A: As stated in the NOFO on page 36, “Locally and regionally procured commodities, processed and unprocessed, must satisfy relevant nutritional, quality, labeling, and food safety standards of the target country, as determined by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. If the Secretary has determined that the target country does not have nutritional, quality, labeling, and food safety standards for a commodity that will be procured locally in that country or regionally and shipped to that country for distribution, an award recipient must ensure that, when it procures such commodity, the commodity complies with the Codex Alimentarius Recommended International Code of Practice: General Principles of Food Hygiene CAC/RCP 1-1969 Rev 4-2003, including Annex *Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System and Guidelines*. Applicants must demonstrate that they have considered how to meet the standards and have plans or protocols in place to meet them during project implementation.” Additionally, USDA encourages all applicants to review the McGovern-Doel Regulations 7 CFR 1599 and pay specific attention to sub section .6 Local and regional procurement of commodities.

5. Q: Is it mandatory to test for aflatoxin for local purchase of rice and peanuts?

A: Yes, it is mandatory to test for aflatoxin for local purchase of rice and peanuts, as stated in the McGovern-Dole regulations under 7 CFR Section 1599.6(b)(7), “If the recipient procures qualified commodities that are cereals, groundnuts, or tree nuts, or food products derived from or containing cereals, groundnuts, or tree nuts, the commodities must be tested for aflatoxin and have their moisture content certified. The maximum acceptable total aflatoxin level is 20 parts per billion, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration action level for aflatoxin in human foods.”

6. Q: Does USDA have any quality standards for vegetable and fruit procurement?

A: USDA does not have quality standards for vegetable and fruit procurement, however as stated under 7 CFR Section 1599.6(b)(7), “If the recipient procures qualified commodities through a competitive tender, the recipient must specify the minimally acceptable commodity specifications and food safety and quality assurance standards in the tender. Purchases that are made from commercial wholesalers in a local or regional market must meet the food safety and quality assurance standards specified in [paragraphs \(b\)\(2\), \(3\), and \(4\)](#) of this section.”

7. Q: Is 10% of LRP budget inclusive of ITSH cost or is the cost to purchase these commodities?

A: As per the example found in the Appendix E: Budget Narrative Example of the NOFO, the portions of costs that relate directly to LRP such as ITSH, Administration, Warehouse and Commodity Procurement may contribute to the required local and regional procurement portion of the award (a recommended target of 10% of the total federal award). Capacity building costs

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(i.e. Activity costs) and cost share are not allowable as part of the local and regional procurement budget.

8. Q: The NOFO mentions that “For evaluation plans which include conducting impact evaluations, FAS expects costs to range between five to ten percent (5% - 10%) of the operating budget (Grand Total Costs).” Are the evaluation costs for impact evaluations exclusive of staff costs? The 3% minimum allocation for M&E excludes staff costs, so is 5-10% also ok?

A: Yes, the exclusions in calculating the M&E budget apply in all cases, regardless of the design of the evaluation or the total proportion allocated. Staff salaries and staff travel costs should be excluded from determining the percentage of the M&E budget in all cases.

9. Q: Literacy and teacher training are not mentioned in the country-specific guidance for Angola, although typically included in any McGovern-Dole program. Should applicants for Angola include activities to improve literacy and teacher training in Angola, as referenced elsewhere in the NOFO? If yes, what type of activities should be prioritized, as we understand the Angola program is mostly focused on the various levels of school-feeding related activities described in the country guidance.

A: While USAID does not have a dedicated education office in Angola it does fund some educational capacity building activities and seeks to expand its literacy portfolio in coming fiscal years. Also, UNICEF funds other in-country pre-primary and primary education projects that any Applicant should seek to coordinate with if feasible. Yes, Applicants should include activities to improve literacy and teacher training in Angola as referenced in the NOFO. All McGovern-Dole projects need to proposed literacy activities, in support of McGovern-Dole Strategic Objective 1, that must adhere to evidence-based approaches and best practices that sustainably improve reading and literacy outcomes for all learners. Activities should be designed to improve basic reading and literacy skills should be part of a holistic approach to the challenge of ensuring that disadvantaged children are physically, nutritionally, and cognitively fit to succeed in school.

10. Q: Can USDA confirm that the PMP must include at least one indicator for each result included in the results framework?

A: Yes. To clarify, the PMP (performance monitoring plan) is not part of the application package; rather, Applicants submit a Performance Indicator Table, as described on pgs. 29-31 of the NOFO. Each result the proposed project is working towards should have one or more corresponding indicators in the indicator table.

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11. Q: When a standard indicator is not available for a result, we understand that a custom indicator must be included in the PMP to measure that result. We had a couple of questions about the custom indicators that can be used in those cases:

- a. Can proposals include custom indicators that will only be measured at baseline, midline, and endline? For example, measuring health and hygiene knowledge of beneficiaries using standard surveys.**
- b. Is it possible to use qualitative data instead of quantitative indicators to comment on some of the results? For example, using qualitative data from focus groups to measure MGD 1.3.5 "Increased community understanding of benefits of education" instead of collecting quantitative data to measure this result.**

A: Yes, proposals can include custom indicators that will only be measured at baseline, midline and endline. In response to part b, the indicators submitted in the indicator table should be readily recognizable by reviewers as indicators and should logically reflect the desired result. Whether an Applicant ultimately collects data on a result using quantitative, qualitative, or a combination of methods may vary, but submitting a description of a data collection method, for example, instead of an indicator in the indicator table is not advised.

12. Q: What types of organizations can submit a proposal in response to the FY22 McGovern-Dole NOFO?

A: Please see the section C, Eligibility Information, in the Notice of Funding Opportunity. In accordance with the McGovern-Dole authorizing legislation, [7 U.S.C. 1736o-1](#), the following entities are eligible Applicants:

- Private Voluntary Organizations (See [7 CFR Section 1599.2](#) for the definition of a private voluntary organization);
- Cooperatives;
- Intergovernmental Organizations;
- Governments of developing countries and their agencies; and
- Other organizations

13. Q: How are applications for non-priority countries processed?

A: Please see Section E: Application Review Information. Applications for non-priority countries are processed in a similar manner to applications for priority countries. If a review shows they are eligible and responsive, a panel committee reviews and scores the application and makes a recommendation on funding. The FAS Administrator makes a funding decision based

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on the recommendation of the panel committee and the IFAD Senior Director. The FAS Administrator may also consider the following factors in making the award selections:

- a. Agency priorities, such as achieving greater geographical dispersion, program balance, or diversity;
- b. Agency's alignment within USG's whole of government approaches to international education, nutrition, and school-feeding, determined by USDA.

As the McGovern-Dole team takes these factors into consideration when recommending countries for prioritization, any application for a non-priority country should present a strong project plan that merits its inclusion based on factors like McGovern-Dole strategic goals, agency priorities, or alignment within USG whole of government approaches.

14. Q: Are soy flour and texturized soy protein allowed commodities in the McGovern-Dole FY2022 NOFO?

A: No. Please review Appendix H – Available Commodities for FY 2022 Food Aid Solicitations in the NOFO for the complete list of commodities available for donation by the United States. Applicants may propose commodities not included on this list for the LRP component of their project, but all U.S.-donated commodities must be from this list.