

# McGovern-Dole FY2022 Notice of Funding Opportunity

## Questions and Answers

*Week of March 7, 2022, through March 24 Public Meeting*

- 1. Q: The McGovern-Dole Notice of Funding Opportunity on page 36 reads that cash-based transfers are not allowable procurement methods. Is it permissible for implementers to provide funds to their sub-recipient partner, who provide them to schools that in turn locally procure commodities from suppliers through a competitive tender, in line with the national program?**

A: Per the 7 CFR Part 1599.2 Definitions section, local procurement “means the procurement of qualified commodities by a recipient, directly or through a subrecipient, in the target country to assist beneficiaries within that same country.” The regulations do not allow for the procurement by an entity other than the prime recipient or subrecipient. Schools are not considered to be the award recipient or subrecipient, so McGovern-Dole funding for local procurement should not take place by schools who receive the funds from the subrecipient.

- 2. Q: Is primary school defined by a certain age limit? If a country has a third cycle of schooling (ages 11 to 14) before children go to secondary school, can those students be included in the project design?**

A: USDA does not have an age requirement under the McGovern-Dole program. However, the focus is on pre and primary school age children as stated in the McGovern-Dole authorizing legislation; “carry out (1) preschool and school food for education programs in foreign countries to improve food security, reduce the incidence of hunger, and improve literacy and primary education, particularly with respect to girls.” USDA recommends deferring to the host country’s definitions of pre and primary education to determine the project design.

- 3. Q: In previous years, it was recommended that applicants allocate a minimum of ten percent of the budget to literacy-focused activities. Is this applicable to the 2022 McGovern-Dole proposals?**

A: USDA does not require a certain percent of funding to be spent on literacy activities. However, USDA does encourage a comprehensive literacy package in support of McGovern-Dole Strategic Objective 1. Literacy activities must adhere to evidence-based approaches and best practices that sustainably improve reading and literacy outcomes for all learners. Activities 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. Please refer to the plan of operations for further guidance on literacy

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activities. Applicants are also encouraged to coordinate and seek partnership opportunities where possible with other active donors and projects focused on primary education and improving literacy.

**4. Q: In the staffing plan narrative, the NOFO requires that the Applicant “describe staff positions related to project implementation.” Does this also refer to sub-recipient staff positions that will be partially or fully funded by McGovern-Dole?**

A: Yes. As noted under page 26 of the NOFO, the staffing plan should describe staff positions related to project implementation. Subrecipient staff positions should also be included here, especially if they demonstrate a solid understanding of key technical and organizational requirements and an appropriate mix of skills, while avoiding excessive staffing. Further, if appropriate for project implementation, an Applicant may designate staff of proposed subrecipients as key personnel.

**5. Q: Should the primary implementer and sub-recipient positions be included in a single organizational chart? Or should two separate organizational charts be submitted?**

A: As noted on page 27, Applicants must include a 1 page organizational chart that identifies all proposed positions, including subrecipients. This should be a single organizational chart.

**6. Q: Does MGD expect the applicant to propose literacy interventions at the pre-primary level?**

A: USDA expects the applicant to propose literacy activities, that are in support of McGovern-Dole Strategic Objective 1, and that adhere to an evidence-based approach and best practices that sustainably improve reading and literacy outcomes for all learners. Activities should be designed to improve basic reading and literacy skills, align and coordinate, where applicable, with USAID’s basic education interventions, and 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.

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**7. Q: Is the applicant expected to measure pre-primary level educational outcomes?**

A: USDA expects the applicant to measure each result the proposed project is working towards. When a standard indicator is not available, the Applicant should include a custom indicator for that result. Both the results the project is designed to achieve, and the indicators selected to measure those results, should be relevant and realistic for the participants in the activity(ies) linked to those results and indicators.

**8. Q: The Angolan Government has high restrictions on food imports. Will steps be put in place to ensure that the implementors will be able to import food items without being taxed?**

A: USDA is aware of concerns that the Government of Angola may only allow for a limited number of U.S. donated commodity types, focusing on nutritional supplement products. In light of a potential McGovern-Dole agreement, USDA is seeking further clarification from the Government of Angola on the commodities allowed and update the response to this question soon via Grants.gov, providing further guidance as necessary.

As noted under page 38 of the NOFO, Applicant must indicate under the Commodity Management Plan that USDA-funded commodities for direct distribution will be imported and distributed free from all customs, duties, tolls, and taxes. FAS will not pay for any customs, duties, tolls or taxes on USDA-funded commodities.

**9. Q: Are applicants allowed to provide school feeding support to private sector schools (including pre-schools), or are they required to target public schools only?**

A: The McGovern-Dole legislation or regulations does not prohibit the program from working in private or community schools and/or pre-schools, if there is need. In keeping with the legislation, Applicants are encouraged to “target low-income areas where children's enrollment and attendance in school is low or girls' enrollment and participation in preschool or school is low”. Applicants should also work with and take into account the preferences and/or requirements of host-country governments when choosing types of schools and/or pre-schools.

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**10. Q: In countries where this FY 2022 funding overlaps with programs from previous funding years, can the implementor continue programming in the regions under FY 2022 funding after the current funding ends or is it expected to be out of the current regions?**

A: For countries where there is current active McGovern-Dole programming still in process – such as Madagascar and Mauritania – Applicants should review the country-specific guidance carefully. While USDA expects close coordination between projects and implementers when there is more than one active project in a country, any potential new FY 2022 agreement will be distinct from any current projects.

**11. Q: Does LRP have to include local production? Can procurement be understood as procuring locally/regionally from existing well-established supply chains?**

A: Under the McGovern-Dole regulations, qualified local and regional commodities (agricultural) are defined as “produced in and procured from: (A) A developing country that is a target country; or (B) A developing country in the target region”. This can include from existing well-established supply chains. McGovern-Dole projects do not need to include activities that work directly in local production. Further, local production capacity building activities should not be counted approximately 10 percent of the total federal award value that Applicants are encouraged to allocate for local and regional procurement.

**12. Q: Please confirm that the Organizational Capacity and Staffing section is 8 pages, including 6 pages of text, 1 page for an organizational chart, and 1 page for in-country registration information.**

A: This is correct for McGovern-Dole Proposals. The total page limit for this section is 8 pages and includes an up to 6 page Capacity and Staffing Narrative, a 1 page organizational chart, and a 1 page in-country registration information.

**13. Q: Is there a page limit for past performance reviews?**

A: As referred to on page 16 of the McGovern-Dole NOFO, there is not a page limit on Past Performance Reviews.

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**14. Q: Why is there a “grace period” mentioned?**

A: The grace period was added in FY 2022 to avoid previous situations where FAS has been unable to further review an application because maybe one document or item was missing. The process of how this will work is that if an application from an eligible applicant is received in FAIS by the closing date of this announcement and found incomplete, (for example, missing a list of acronyms), FAS will contact the applicant by email and the applicant will then have up to three business days from the date of contact to ensure the missing content and forms are uploaded to FAIS. Any applications still remaining incomplete after the grace period will be rejected and will NOT be considered for funding. Applicants are still strongly encouraged to ensure that their applications are complete in FAIS by the deadline on May 6 and note that this grace period is a gesture of goodwill and may not be available in future years if abuse is observed.

**15. Q: Proposals should include an analysis demonstrating that the import of the commodities doesn't 'affect the local economy'. This seems very important and potentially hard to prove. How deep does this analysis need to go?**

A: As stated on page 38 of the McGovern-Dole NOFO Applicants must provide a preliminary analysis of the potential impact of proposed procurement(s) on markets in the location of the commodity origin and distributions in the project implementation area. Applicants should also provide a plan for conducting an annual market study of the impacts of procurement of

**16. Q: Is adapted vegetable seed procurement for strong seed supply chains included within agricultural commodity procurement?**

A: For McGovern-Dole, USDA does not consider adapted vegetable seed to be a qualified agricultural commodity for purchase under the local and regional procurement component. USDA considers vegetable seeds to be an agricultural input, not an agricultural commodity that includes crops and livestock that are raised and harvested to be incorporated for direct feeding under McGovern-Dole projects.

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**17. In regards to providing a "basket of commodities" to select from, does that apply solely to Food For Progress/monetization or can we apply that approach to McGovern-Dole as well?**

**A:** The section Dawson Williams presented on during the FAS Public Meeting was specific to the Food for Progress programs monetization section. For Food for Progress, this means that some projects may wish to consider using more than one commodity or a group of commodities as part of their monetization plan. The approach of utilizing "a basket" of commodities for direct distribution is relevant to the McGovern Dole program.

**18. Q: What should be the key components of the 'Commitment to Education' in McGovern Dole?**

**A:** As noted under page 20 of the McGovern-Dole NOFO, applicants must include a statement verifying the commitment of the government, such as through a national action plan, to the goals of the World Declaration for All (Jomtien Declaration) and the follow-up Dakar Framework for Action of the World Education Forum.

**19. Q: Do national and national non-government organization have the same chances in the competition?**

**A:** All eligible Applicants are evaluated equally according to the proposal review criteria laid out in the NOFOs.

**20. Q: In case of any partnership with sub recipient, this one must be notified in the proposal, or it should be recruited after as part of the implementation process?**

**A:** Under the McGovern-Dole NOFO, Applicants must identify under the organizational capacity and staffing narrative any subrecipient that would be involved and provide a description of each subrecipient's responsibilities.

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**21. Q: Does USDA anticipate organizing a webinar/meeting with USAID missions to present on USAID programming in any countries this year (as was the case for a few countries last year for McGovern-Dole)?**

A: McGovern-Dole does not anticipate organizing a webinar/meeting with USAID this year. However, we always look for feedback on our process and greatly welcome your feedback.

**22. Q: Can you please confirm that PPRs for FFPr can be completed by current IFAD staff, but for McGovern-Dole they cannot be completed by current staff?**

A: Correct for McGovern-Dole: Applicants may not request references from current McGovern-Dole branch staff. Past McGovern-Dole branch staff may be contacted to provide a past performance report.

**23. Q: Under the McGovern-Dole NOFO on page 84, it is like some crops are mandatory to be developed (like wheat, oil and rice). Is this true? If Yes, is this means that other crops can't be initiated considering country specific needs?**

A: No. There are no mandatory commodities that McGovern-Dole proposals needs to be include. For U.S. donated commodities, Applicants are only limited by the available commodities for FY 2022 food aid solicitations under Appendix H. Page 84 of the McGovern-Dole NOFO is part of an example budget narrative, and it just so happens that wheat, oil and rice were the examples chosen.