

# McGovern-Dole FY2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity Q&A

## Week of 03/20/2023

- 1) **Q:** What does USDA define as Key Personnel? Is this only Chief of Party and Deputy Chief of Party or is it up to the implementer to decide?

**A:** See Section 4di, Staffing Plan in the McGovern-Dole NOFO for guidance on selecting key personnel. FAS asks that Applicants refer to their organizations' internal administrative policy when determining key personnel. The NOFO provides examples of what positions should be included. Text is copied below:

*“Applicants must also identify key personnel positions in the staffing plan. The Applicant’s key personnel should be managers with general responsibilities for implementation of the agreement, such as the country director, finance director, and chief of party, as well as critical technical staff for specific activities under the agreement, and other relevant positions according to the organization’s internal policies. Applicants should refer to their organization’s internal administrative policies for determining key personnel. If appropriate for project implementation, Applicants may designate staff of proposed subrecipients as key personnel”*

- 2) **Q:** Do implementers (new and/or continuing) must wait for the baseline survey before starting key program activities such as provisions of meals?

**A:** As stated in the [Monitoring and Evaluation Policy](#), which is linked in the McGovern-Dole NOFO, *“The baseline information for indicators must be measured and established prior to the start of project activities... Having a valid baseline is critical as a foundation for quality monitoring and evaluation throughout a project’s life cycle, but project participants may work with USDA to identify potential opportunities to begin project activities with a continuing population in a project, or with a population outside the baseline sample, on a case-by-case basis.”*

As mentioned, implementers typically must wait to start activities for a new and continuing project until after completing the baseline. Award recipients may work with FAS to discuss possible exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

- 3) **Q:** Is it expected that we cover all schools in school meal provision?

**A:** Please see Section 4a, Introduction and Strategic Analysis in the McGovern-Dole NOFO for more guidance on how to outline your justification targeting regions and subgroups. On page 19 the NOFO asks Applicants to explain their method of choosing beneficiaries: *“Applicants should describe why some target areas or participant groups in the country will receive resources (funds or agricultural products) while others may not... Why did they select the geographic area(s) and participant group(s) and what methodology did they use?”*

However, please note that “providing school meals must be a central part of all McGovern-Dole projects” as cited under Strategic Objective 2 (page 21) of the NOFO.

- 4) How important is it for Applicants to work in other regions in addition to those included in the NOFO country guidance when Applicants have identified other regions with of need through stakeholder consultations?

**A:** Please Refer to Week March 13 of the NOFO Q&A. “The NOFO country guidance may highlight priority regions within countries, but FAS does not require Applicants to target specific regions. Strong Applications will provide a clear justification of the Applicant’s method for selecting beneficiaries and geographic areas, as stated in Section 4 (a) (ii) Country Overview and Context.”

- 5) **Q:** Is USDA looking to ensuring sustainability of all activities such as literacy, PLW and CU2 nutrition, infrastructure, WASH, etc. in all targeted regions?

**A:** See Section 4c, Sustainability and Lasting Impact. This section describes how sustainability pertains to all activities included in the project. The NOFO states, “*Applicants must explain:*

- *How the benefits of school feeding, education, enrollment, and attendance of children in schools in the targeted communities will be sustained when assistance under McGovern-Dole terminates; and*
- *The estimated period of time required until the target country or the Applicant would be able to sustain the program without additional assistance under McGovern-Dole.*”

- 6) **Q:** Can USDA describe how specifically the budget will be evaluated? For example, is the total amount an evaluation factor, and if so, are lower totals more favorably evaluated?

**A:** See section E1 of the NOFO for the Application Review Criteria. The content requirements for each content area in Table 2 are described in Part D Section 4 Content Guidance.

- 7) **Q:** It is unclear from the NOFO instructions how to calculate the percentage of the selected M&E costs. In this percentage calculation, should the numerator, i.e., those selected M&E costs (exclusive of staff salaries, staff travel, and the annual market study) include indirect costs associated with the direct M&E Costs? Likewise, should the denominator (the total operating budget) include indirect costs, or only direct costs?

**A:** Please calculate the 3% minimum this way: the numerator should not contain indirect costs or cost share. The denominator should be the operating budget, also known as the grand total costs, and does therefore include indirect costs. To review what counts as an M&E cost, please review Section 4e of the NOFO under Monitoring and Evaluation. The M&E costs exclude staff travel, salaries and the annual market study as stated below:

*“The three percent minimum excludes monitoring and evaluation staff salaries and staff travel and the required annual market study. Examples of items that count towards the three percent minimum investment are costs of designing a monitoring database, database licenses, infrastructure for data collection such as tablets, and external contracts for evaluations and special studies. For evaluation plans that include conducting impact evaluations, FAS expects costs to range between five and ten percent of the operating budget (Grand Total Costs). Applicants should include a short table showing the monitoring and evaluation budget broken down into key line items, including separate lines for the baseline, midterm and final evaluation costs. Applicants should also include a summary of the monitoring and evaluation budget in the General Explanatory Comments section of the Budget Narrative (See Appendix E).”*

8) **Q:** What does an organization need to do to make sure it has been registered?

**A:** For FAIS related questions please send screen shots of the issue to the [PPDED@usda.gov](mailto:PPDED@usda.gov) email address.

9) **Q:** What does an organization do if the FAIS site is not saving the submitted information?

**A:** For FAIS related questions please send screen shots of the issue to the [PPDED@usda.gov](mailto:PPDED@usda.gov) email address.

10) **Q:** How does an organization request support with FAIS?

**A:** For FAIS related questions please send screen shots of the issue to the [PPDED@usda.gov](mailto:PPDED@usda.gov) email address.

11) **Q:** Is locally resourced and produced RUTF allowed as a LRP commodity?

**A:** Per Content Guidance section 4.a.2, *“To improve nutrition and dietary diversity, FAS encourages Applicants to complement U.S. donated commodities with locally procured fruits, vegetables, animal-source foods, biofortified crops, and fortified products.”* As McGovern-Dole is not an emergency assistance program, our implementers do not typically utilize Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF). We discourage the use of RUTF, particularly their use over local commodities that contribute to a diverse, nutritious school meal. However, we do encourage the use of fortified foods made locally and/or regionally following the food safety guidance outlined in the NOFO. As McGovern-Dole focuses on long-term nutrition and sustainability, Applicants should consider commodities that contribute to children’s nutrition in the long-term, and which can be sustainably procured by the community post-graduation.

12) **Q:** To ensure innovation, is USDA prioritizing new partners as primes or subs similar to the USAID's New Partnership Initiative?

**A:** McGovern-Dole welcome new applicants; however, we do not have a specific program to prioritize new organizations. All applications are scored against the criteria detailed in the NOFO and applicants may request feedback from USDA on their application by the end of the Fiscal Year by sending a request to the PPDED inbox, [ppded@usda.gov](mailto:ppded@usda.gov).

13) **Q:** Is the FAIS portal open for applicants to begin setting up this year's submissions?

**A:** A: FAIS is open for applications. New organizations can request registration information by contacting [PPDED@usda.gov](mailto:PPDED@usda.gov).

IFAD staff are working through the inbox to get information to new applicants as quickly as possible.

14) **Q:** Are NOFOs open to foreign entities? The registration for non-USA entities seeking to apply has tended to be either too complicated or simply prohibitive

**A:** Yes, please see Section C (1) of the NOFO for the organizations that are eligible to apply for McGovern-Dole funding. Section F (2) of the McGovern-Dole for information on registering as a foreign entity.

15) **Q:** As grants.gov has been down the last days, is there any other way to download the full NOFO?

**A:** Grants.gov recognizes that some users are experiencing intermittent difficulty accessing Grants.gov. They are working to resolve the issue as quickly as possible. Applicants can request a hard copy of the NOFO by emailing [PPDED@usda.gov](mailto:PPDED@usda.gov), by calling (202) 713-8673 between 9:00AM – 5:00PM EDT or by writing FAS at:

McGovern-Dole Branch Director  
1400 Independence Ave. SW, Room 6970  
Washington, DC 20250

16) **Q:** FAIS does not have results for LRP. Are applicants required to create custom results and corresponding activities for the component?

**A:** Please note that Applicants should submit their results framework, performance indicator table and evaluation plan as attachments (see Appendix A on p. 54, Application Content Checklist). Applicants should not build their indicator table in FAIS at this time, so the availability of results built into the FAIS system should not limit the identification of LRP activities, their desired results, and the indicators used to track those results. The NOFO includes these instructions in Section I “Results Framework”: “Applicants should use the LRP Program’s Program-Level RF (Appendix F) as a starting point to identify the specific desired result of proposed local and regional procurement activities and should add custom results as needed.” P 29 of the NOFO says, “Each result included in the proposed project

should have one or more corresponding indicators in the indicator table.” Please see the NOFO for other LRP-specific M&E guidance.

17) **Q:** Is it possible to do a McGovern Dole award that includes secondary school to support the transition of girls to secondary education? What about pre-school to incentivize school entry?

**A:** The principal objectives of the McGovern-Dole Program are to 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; and 2) maternal, infant, and child nutrition programs for pregnant women, nursing mothers, infants, and children who are five years of age or younger.

Applicants should ensure, first and foremost, that their proposed project addresses McGovern-Dole strategic objectives and program requirements outlined in the NOFO. Implementers generally target pre-school and primary school age children to meet these objectives.

Applicants may propose activities which support the transition of girls to secondary education if the intervention is appropriate for the country context and if it meets the principal objectives and strategic objectives of the McGovern-Dole Program.

Applicants are encouraged to submit, at minimum, a gender sensitive application, as requested in Content Guidance.

18) **Q:** Is there a new priority country list?

**A:** Each fiscal year, McGovern-Dole publishes a list of priority countries. The FY23 priority country list can be found on the [McGovern-Dole website](#), FAIS, and in the FY23 McGovern-Dole NOFO in the Executive Summary on page 2.

19) **Q:** Any specifications about Haiti?

**A:** Please refer to Appendix B: Country Guidance of the McGovern-Dole NOFO for application guidance specific to Haiti.

20) **Q:** Is packaged shelf stable milk considered an agricultural commodity according to McGovern-Dole? Is there interest in providing milk in the school program specifically?

**A:** See Appendix H of the McGovern-Dole NOFO for the list of available US-donated commodities for FY23 Food Aid Solicitations, which includes Nonfat, Non-fortified dried milk. In Section 4a (page 23) on local and regional procurement, the NOFO states “To improve nutrition and dietary diversity, FAS encourages Applicants to complement U.S. donated commodities with locally procured fruits, vegetables, **animal-source foods**, biofortified crops, and fortified products.”

See Section 4f, Commodity Management in the NOFO and [7 CFR section 1599.6](#) for food safety requirements for providing locally and regionally procured foods. Note the language on page 36 of the NOFO:

*“Processed and unprocessed locally and regionally procured commodities must satisfy the target country’s 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 the project will procure locally in that country or procure regionally and shipped to the country for distribution, the 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 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.”*