

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Foreign Agricultural Service
Office of Capacity Building and Development
Food Assistance Division
McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program**

**Opportunity Announcement
CFDA Number: 10.608
Issue Date: 05/04/2012
Application Due Date: 08/03/2012 at 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time**

SECTION I: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. AUTHORITY: The McGovern-Dole program is authorized by the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, as amended.

B. PURPOSE: The McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program (McGovern-Dole) provides for the donation of agricultural commodities and the provision of financial and technical assistance to improve the education, food security and health of school-age children, especially girls, in developing countries. Commodities are made available for donation through agreements with Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), cooperatives, intergovernmental organizations, and foreign governments.

C. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES: For this announcement, the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) is concentrating McGovern-Dole program resources toward improving the education and health of school aged children. To support the achievement of these goals, FAS has developed two results frameworks for the McGovern-Dole program. Applicants must contribute to the Literacy Results Framework with the highest-level result: “Improved Literacy of School-aged Children.” Proposals that do not contribute to this highest-level result will not be funded in FY 2013. The Good Health and Dietary Practices Results Framework shows “Increased Use of Good Health and Dietary Practices” as its highest result. This result contributes to one of the lower-level results in the Literacy Results Framework. Applications may also, but are not required to contribute to this framework.

However, FAS considers sustaining the benefits made to literacy, attendance, and enrollment of equal importance. Therefore all applications must include a plan to graduate project activities to the host country or other organization that consists of specific activities linked to specific results in the framework and timelines for achieving them. A matrix of illustrative activities that support sustainability is available on the FAS Web site. (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.)

D. PROGRAM PRIORITIES:

1. PRIORITY COUNTRIES AND REGIONS: FAS will give priority consideration to otherwise acceptable applications that align with its established McGovern-Dole priority countries and regions as listed below.

Country	Region(s)
Benin	All regions
Cambodia	Pursat, Battambang, Kampong Thom and Siem Reap Provinces
Cote d’Ivoire	All regions
Guatemala	Western Highlands (Departments of Totonicapán, Sololá, Quiche and Huehuetenango)

Liberia	All regions
Malawi	Central and Southern Regions
Nicaragua	All regions

2. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: FAS will also give priority to requests to continue existing McGovern-Dole projects in non-priority countries and non-priority regions. Applications to continue existing projects must meet all of the criteria described in this notice and in other proposal guidance published by FAS. For a list of existing McGovern-Dole projects please visit: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/FoodAid/FFE/FFEprograms.asp>

SECTION II: AWARD INFORMATION

- A. TYPE OF AWARD:** All awards will be made in the form of competitive grants.
- B. ESTIMATED FUNDING:** FAS expects to award approximately \$184 million in FY 2013. This number may change based on the annual appropriation that FAS receives.
- C. AWARD SIZE:** Grants provided under the McGovern-Dole program normally range from \$9-\$30 million.
- D. EXPECTED NUMBER OF AWARDS:** FAS typically awards 7-10 new McGovern-Dole program grants annually.
- E. ANTICIPATED START DATE:** Funded programs are anticipated to start in September 2013.
- F. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:** Project implementation should range from 3 to 5 years.

SECTION III: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Applicants must meet eligibility requirements stated in the McGovern-Dole Program Regulations (7 CFR 1599.3) 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 1599;
 - (2) Experience working in the proposed targeted country;
 - (3) An adequate financial framework to implement the activities the entity proposes to carry out under the McGovern-Dole program. In order to determine whether the entity is financially responsible, FAS may require it to submit corporate policies and 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; and
 - (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 a McGovern-Dole program agreement would be administered without such an account.

- (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 this part and part 1599 of this title. FAS may consider matters such as whether the entity corrected deficiencies in the implementation of an agreement in a timely manner and whether the entity has timely and accurately filed 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 their proposal submissions, as per 7 CFR 1599.4(d)(7).

C. CENTRAL CONTRACTOR REGISTRATION: Each applicant must be registered in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) prior to submitting an application. The applicant must maintain an active CCR 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 provide its DUNS number in each application it submits.

SECTION IV: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. APPLICATION CONTENT: Applications for funding under the McGovern-Dole program must submit the information specified in 7 CFR 1599.4, which includes a completed form SF-424, an introduction, a plan of operation, and a proposed budget. Additionally, applications must include a strategic analysis, project-level framework(s), a performance monitoring plan, and an evaluation plan. Guidance on preparing the required proposal components can be found on the FAS Food Aid website at the following address: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/foodaid/2013Solicitation/ProposalGuidance.pdf>

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 Appendix V of the Proposal Guidance.

C. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: All applications must be submitted to USDA in the FAIS system by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Friday, August 3, 2012. Applications received after this date will not be considered. FAS advises applicants to begin the entering application early, to allow time to address any technical difficulties that may arise. There will be no exceptions to this application deadline.

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) In-country Coordination (10%)

- i. Does the organization have a working relationship with and support from the recipient government?
- ii. Did the organization work with the recipient government to develop the proposed activities?
- iii. Does the application explicitly describe its coordination with published USG and host government development strategies?
- iv. Does the application describe what other stakeholders (host government, USG, other donors, private sector, etc.) are already doing to promote primary education and literacy and reduce the incidence of hunger through school feeding? Does the application explain how the proposed project will complement, and not duplicate these activities?
- v. Does the proposed project have established partnerships with and buy-in from beneficiary groups/communities or the private sector?

b) Organizational Capability and Experience (15%)

- i. Does the application establish the organization's project management capability, including its ability to implement, supervise, and support projects?
- ii. Does the applicant have sufficient financial management capability to implement the proposed project?
- iii. Does the applicant have past experience in the project objectives and/or activities proposed?
- iv. If the applicant has had projects with USDA or any other US Government agency, was this a productive collaboration with positive outcomes?
- v. Is applicant registered in country or does it offer a plan to become registered?
- vi. Does the organization have experience working in the country of the proposed project?

c) Sustainability and Graduation (15%)

- i. Does the applicant provide a satisfactory plan to sustain the benefits to the education, enrollment, and school attendance of children within the target communities beyond USDA support?

- ii. Does the organization plan to work with public, private and/or local partners to graduate program activities or sustain the benefits to education, enrollment and school attendance?
- iii. For an organization with previous projects in school feeding or literacy, does the proposal show evidence of sustaining activities launched under earlier agreements?
- iv. Does the application include activities supporting foundational results in their project level framework that would contribute to the graduation of activities after USDA funding ends?

d) Activities and Project Design (20%)

- i. Does the project design incorporate the solicitation's priority countries and geographic regions?
- ii. Does the application explain the need for the proposed activities?
- iii. Are objectives and activities clearly defined and achievable?
- iv. Does the application clearly explain how the applicant will implement the project?
- v. Is the number of beneficiaries realistic for the proposed activities?
- vi. Does the application provide a full explanation of the target beneficiary population and a sufficient rationale for why they were chosen?
- vii. Is the plan of operation cost-effective with regard to the proposed activities, beneficiaries, and results?

e) Results, Indicators and Impact (20%)

- i. Are the proposed results achievable, realistic, and meaningful?
- ii. Does the application provide a project-level results framework(s) that addresses the application guidance, demonstrates the project design, and explains critical assumptions?
- iii. Does the application incorporate results and corresponding indicators from the McGovern-Dole results frameworks?
- iv. Does the application explain the need for specific results and the reasoning for including or excluding other results in the McGovern-Dole program-level frameworks?
- v. Does the application explain how the proposed activities directly contribute to the selected results from the McGovern-Dole results frameworks?
- vi. Does the application include a performance monitoring plan (PMP) that follows the application guidance and will allow the applicant to effectively measure results?
- vii. Does the application present a comprehensive and realistic plan to evaluate the proposed program and its impact in accordance with FAS' evaluation policy?

f) Commodity and Funds Appropriateness and Management (10%)

- i. Does the application explain how the requested commodities and ration size meet the nutritional needs and deficiencies of the intended beneficiaries?
- ii. Does the application clearly describe the type and tonnage for each commodity requested?
- iii. Does the application address specific country concerns, including customs exemptions, import barriers, tariffs, etc.?

- iv. Does the application include port, warehouse, and handling capacity in country as it relates to the commodity, tonnage, and packaging?
- v. Does the application contain a clear description of how the funds provided by FAS will be used and how they will complement the commodities?

g) Overall Application Quality (10%)

- i. Does the application contain all of the components and information required by 7 CFR part 1599 and FAS's published guidance?
- ii. Are all sections of the applications consistent?
- iii. Is the application clearly and concisely written?

h) The following negative factors will reduce the application's total score:

- 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 (unless, prior to the due date for a report, the organization obtained written permission from FAS to submit the report after such date).
- 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 an FAS deadline for documents required to close out an agreement.

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 are a continuation of an ongoing project 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 responsive 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 about which applications to fund.

2. DISCUSSIONS AND AWARD: Prior to signing the grant 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. 1599;
- 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 selected for award around January 2013 and making awards by September 1, 2013.

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 grant agreement. The agreement will incorporate the details of the project as approved by FAS and in accordance with the McGovern-Dole regulations, 7 C.F.R. part 1599.

B. REPORTING: An organization receiving funding under the McGovern-Dole program will be required to provide quarterly financial reports, semi-annual performance reports, a baseline study, a mid-term evaluation, and a final evaluation report, as provided in the grant 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 1599.13(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 interim and final evaluations of the implementation of the agreement. Unless otherwise provided in the agreement, the evaluations shall be submitted at the mid-point and end-point of the implementation period in accordance with 7 CFR 1599.13(e). The participant shall provide to FAS additional information or reports relating to the agreement if requested by FAS.

SECTION VII: AGENCY CONTACT

Debra Pfaff, Chief
School Feeding and Humanitarian Branch
Food Assistance Division
Office of Capacity Building and Development
Foreign Agricultural Service
U.S Department of Agriculture

Address:

1400 Independence Ave, SW, STOP 1034
Washington, DC 20250

Phone: (202) 720-4221

Fax: (202) 690-0251

Email at: ppded@fas.usda.gov