

Food for Progress FY2024 Notice of Funding Opportunity

Questions and Answers

Questions received to PPDED@usda.gov through May 23, 2024

1 Q. Page 17, Section 5. Content Guidance, subsection d. Organizational Capacity and Staffing, Subrecipient Letters of Commitment states, “Letters of support from entities that are not subrecipients must not be included with the application.”

• Given that this is a deviation from previous years’ guidance, would USDA please confirm that letters of support from non-subrecipients are not to be included with the application?

A. Correct, “Letters of support from entities that are not subrecipients must not be included with the application.”

2 Q. Would USDA please confirm that the letters of support from non-subrecipients, if included, will not contribute in any way to the TEC scoring of applications to ensure that offerors’ responses are evaluated evenly?

A. Correct, “Letters of support from entities that are not subrecipients must not be included with the application.” All applications will be evaluated equally without letters of support from non-subrecipients,

Question for **Madagascar:**

3 Q. NOFO, page 55, Section Appendix B – Country Guidance (for Madagascar) states, “For Fort Dauphin, this includes the region of Anosy, with focus on the district of Fort Dauphin and communes along the RN12A, RN13, and the provincial road of 119.” It seems that provincial road 119 is not available on any map, however there is provincial road 118 in the area. Would USDA please provide more guidance on the location?

A. This is RIP 118 which is the road that goes up to around Ranomafana Sud.

4 Q. Would USDA please clarify that all communes along RN9 in Atsimo Andrefana should be covered by the project?

A: The applicant should determine in their analysis which communes should be covered by the target along RN9

5 Q. NOFO, page 55, Section Appendix B – Country Guidance (for Madagascar) paragraph 4 states, “The selection of value chains must consider market availability, understanding market dynamics and the local political economy including cultural as well as dietary behaviors preferences, ensuring each proposed crop is based community acceptance and end-market opportunities.”

Would USDA please clarify if it wishes applicants to prioritize value chains with high levels of existing market availability or if it wishes applicants to prioritize value chains with high community acceptance and end-market opportunities that are currently less available on the market?

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A. Applicants should consider in their strategic approach the priorities set forth in the country guidance when determining how to prioritize and select value chains. As mentioned in the country guidance, value chains selected should enhance food security, as well as have provide beneficiaries opportunities for income generation. Applicants should provide the most compelling data driven approach when selecting the chosen value chain which should consider the three points mentioned in the questions: existing market availability, community acceptance and end-market opportunities. For instance, applicants should investigate market availability but also need to consider if the lack of community acceptance could deter end market opportunities.

6 Q. NOFO, page 57, Section Appendix B – Country Guidance (for Madagascar) paragraph 1 states, “Producer organizations should also be trained in reducing predatory behavior of purchases, strengthen contract negotiation and enforcement.” (Emphasis added.)

Would USDA please clarify if the applicant should train producer organizations in reducing predatory behavior of purchasers, not purchases?

A. Yes, this would be of purchasers, not purchases.

7 Q. NOFO, page 57, Section Appendix B – Country Guidance (for Madagascar) paragraph 4 states, “Activities should support local opportunities for value addition including working with local millers, processors and traders that provide supply chain services or marketing services, and private sector input suppliers such as nurseries, seed, and other input providers.”

Would USDA consider support to value-adding enterprises outside of the target geographies, when those investments will have a positive impact on beneficiaries in the targeted areas?

A: The applicant should support market linkages, with priorities to producers and value-adding enterprises inside the target geographies. However, USDA could consider support to value-adding enterprises outside the target geographies if the strategic analysis provides data driven justification that includes sustainable market linkages and income resilience for project beneficiaries in those targeted areas.

Questions Received during the Public Meeting Q&A

Answered during the public meeting:

8 Q: I would like to bring to FAS’s attention that the detailed budget template has not yet been posted to grants.gov. Could USDA please provide this at the earliest opportunity?

A: The detailed budget template will be uploaded this week

9 Q: In-house M&E team budget can be used to make the 3% threshold, correct?

A: No, the salaries or travel costs for in-house M&E staff do not count towards the 3% minimum required investment. From p. 21 of the NOFO, “The three percent minimum excludes salaries and travel of monitoring and evaluation staff.” Please see pages 21-22 of the NOFO for more M&E budget guidance.

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Unanswered during the public meeting:

10 Q: In the Performance Indicators Table, is it necessary to include all the multiple disaggregations (even if they are applicable) given that the page limit for this section is 5 pages?

A: No, it is not necessary to include disaggregates in the Performance Indicators Table in the proposal. You are correct that including disaggregates here for some standard indicators would risk the table going beyond the 5-page limit. Disaggregates will be discussed with awardees.

11 Q: Does USDA consider M&E costs to be purely administrative in Nature? Or may we allocate some portion to activities?

A: While USDA typically considers most M&E costs to be administrative costs, Applicants are not prevented from allocating some portion of M&E costs to activities with a justification. In terms of M&E costs, the more important issue for USDA is that Applicants meet or exceed the required minimum 3% investment in M&E (across all categories).

12 Q: Can there be more than once awardee per country?

A: Please review **Part B. Federal Award Information** page 10, “**Additional Awards or No Awards** “USDA/FAS reserves the right to make additional awards under this solicitation, consistent with Agency policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made. USDA/FAS reserves the right to make no awards under this solicitation.”

13 Q: Can the lead organization be from the US if we apply as part of a consortium?

A: Yes, please see **Part C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION** in the NOFO and refer to the linked references, as copied below.

In accordance with the Food for Progress authorizing legislation, 7 U.S.C. 1736o-1, the following entities are eligible Applicants:

- the government of an emerging agricultural country
- an intergovernmental organization
- a private voluntary organization
- a nonprofit agricultural organization or cooperative
- a nongovernmental organization
- a college or university (as such terms are defined in section 7 S.S.C.3103(16) of this title); and
- any other private entity

14 Q: If I don't have an institution, can I apply for opportunity?

A: Yes, please see **Part C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION** in the NOFO and refer to the linked references, as copied below.

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15 Q: Will USDA please advise when the FFPr application will be added to the FAIS system?

A. Please find supporting documents and instructions posted in Grant.Gov here:

<https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/353809>

16 Q: For the budget submission, are applicants required to submit a detailed budget tab for subrecipients? Or should these costs be summarized within the “Professional Services/Contractual budget category?”

A. No, they can be summarized.

17 Q: Does USDA have a preference on the exclusivity of partnerships? Are smaller, subcontracting organizations encouraged or discouraged to establish exclusive relationships with prime contracting organizations?

A. No, please see **Part C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION** in the NOFO and refer to the linked references, as copied below.

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Question for **Sri Lanka**

18 Q: For Sri Lanka, the slide states “Preference will be given to proposals that include wholistic approaches in both sectors.” Would the grant application be considered less competitive is only one sector of the two sectors are targeted?

A. Thank you for your question. All applications will be reviewed and considered against the criteria stated in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Question for **Cambodia**

19 Q. Would it be correct understanding that the focus for Cambodia is on domestic markets for the tourism sector and not for exports?

A. Please see the Component 4 of the Cambodia Country Guidance. One of the focuses in Cambodia is to increase food safety and compliance in the tourism industry. Proposed interventions and activities must include ensuring safe food supply through compliance of the food safety standards and food safety law (2022) for all Cambodians and visitors. Applicants are expected to perform a data collection survey on food hygiene and food safety on locally produced horticultural products.

20 Q. P. 51, Appendix B Country Guidance, Cambodia, Component 2. This section states that the component should focus on, “Enhanced Laboratory Technical Capacity in Testing, Inspection, and Certification.” Could USDA please elaborate on how inspection should be incorporated into project activities?

A. Please see the 5c. Plan of Operation under Content Guidance (on page 15). This section must build off the Strategic Analysis and expand on **how** the Applicant will implement the chosen interventions to meet the needs identified in the Strategic Analysis. Applicants should convincingly articulate how proposed activities will accomplish the goal presented in the country guidance.

21 Q. P. 52, Appendix B Country Guidance, Cambodia, Component 2. This section states that ... “laboratory must hold accreditation in order to be deemed competent, and essential food safety parameters such as pesticide or veterinary drug residues and mycotoxins are not well monitored.” Could USDA please clarify whether this project is meant to incorporate activities on animal health and veterinary drug residues?

A. As stated in the Cambodia Country Guidance, the goal of the project is to strengthen Cambodia’s food safety standards and increase its horticultural productivity through the adoption of climate smart practices and technologies, and as stated under the Priorities section, “Cambodia faces significant challenges in ensuring the availability, quality, and safety of its horticultural consumption.”

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22 Q. P. 49, Appendix B Country Guidance, Cambodia. This section states the USDA is soliciting proposals that, "...will deliver sustainable contribution to its highest-level strategic objective of Expanded Trade of Agricultural Products – as outlined in the FFPr's results framework." Could USDA please confirm that all project activities should relate to Results Framework 2, and not also Results Framework 1?

A. Proposed interventions by the Applicant are not limited to only Results Framework 2 and applicants should also consider working towards relevant desired results in Results Framework 1. Per the Appendix B Cambodia Country Guidance, the goal of the project is to strengthen Cambodia's food safety standards and increase its horticultural productivity through the adoption of climate smart practices and technologies.

23 Q. The NOFO states that total federal funding is \$220 million. However, in looking at the Appendix B and Country Guidance, the total of the project awards amounts to \$215.47 million. Is the difference due to sequestration? Or some other reductions? If not, why the difference of \$4.53 million?

A. The Applicant is encouraged to review Appendix **B Country Guidance** (starting page 45) for each priority country which states, "Project Award Value: Up to \$XX, XXX, XXX." In addition, the Applicant is encouraged to review **part B. Federal Award Information**, page 10 which states "USDA/FAS reserves the right to make no awards under this solicitation."

24 Q. I am writing regarding the FY2024 Food for Progress Grant (CFDA 10.606). I live in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, a territory of the United States. We are not an emerging country; however, we would like to establish food security in our region. Would the CNMI, through its central and/or municipal governments, be eligible to apply?

A. No, please see **Part C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION** in the NOFO and refer to the linked references, as copied below.

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25 Q. Are the page limit of the Organizational Chart and Key Personnel (1-page limit) and the Curriculum Vitae (CV) for Chief of Party (4-page limit) included in the Organizational Capacity and Staffing (4 pages)?

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A. No, the Organizational Chart and CV for the Chief of Party are submitted as a separate attachment to, and excluded from the page count of, the Organizational Capacity and Staffing section. Though they do have individual page limits that should be adhered to.

26 Q. The NOFO mentions that applicants should identify references for at least one and no more than three grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts implemented by the organization within the previous five years. Does this requirement pertain solely to projects completed within the last five years, or does it also include active projects? Additionally, does the answer also apply to a subrecipient's past performance review (requested if they receive 20% or more of the proposed operating budget)?

A. Active awards may be used as Past Performance Reviews by Applicants and subrecipient(s) receiving 20% or more of the budget.