

Country Specific Information: Madagascar
U. S. Agency for International Development
Office of Food for Peace

Fiscal Year 2019: Food for Peace Request for Applications (RFA) #72DFFP19RFA00002
Title II Development Food Security Assistance (DFSA) Activity

I. Introduction

The U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Office of Food for Peace (FFP) intends to award two cooperative agreements to sustainably improve food and nutrition security and resilience among extremely poor and chronically vulnerable households and communities in southern and southeastern Madagascar. The cooperative agreements will follow the Refine and Implement (R&I) approach. Please refer to the RFA for additional information on the expectations and requirements related to the R&I approach for this application process.

Subject to the availability of funds and commodities, applicants must request in-kind Title II commodities for direct distribution in Madagascar. Applicants may propose varying levels of in-kind Title II commodities over the life of the activity and may request funding to support local and/or regional procurement of food commodities, cash transfers, and food vouchers. Monetization is not authorized. All resource requests must be appropriately justified.

Southeastern DFSA

FFP intends to award one cooperative agreement of approximately \$45 million, in Title II resources, for a five-year period to reduce the **chronic food insecurity** of the most vulnerable people, households, and communities in the geographic areas of:

- Atsimo Atsinanana region
- Vatovavy Fitovinany region

Southern DFSA

FFP intends to award one cooperative agreement of approximately \$45 million for a five-year period, in Title II resources, which reduces the **acute food insecurity** of the most vulnerable people, households, and communities in the geographic areas of:

- Atsimo Andrefana region (Ampanihy, Betioky, and Tulear II districts only)
- Androy region

Applicants may apply for one award or both awards; a separate application is required for each Activity Area.

The DFSAs are not intended to be stand-alone activities. Applicants must ensure that applications reflect the ways in which DFSAs will contribute to the achievement of the relevant Government of Madagascar (GoM) national and regional development strategies, USAID's FFP Strategy¹, and the U.S. Government Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS)².

¹ [USAID Food for Peace Strategy 2016–2025 Food Assistance and Food Security Strategy](#)

Particularly relevant national strategies for development include: [Plan National de Développement 2015-2019](#) (may be updated in early 2019), Plan National d'Action pour la Nutrition (PNAN III 2017-2021)³, Plan d'Investissement pour la Nutrition à Madagascar, and the Stratégie Nationale de Gestion des Risques et des Catastrophes 2016-2030.⁴ Other key food security related-priorities include:

- The continued land tenure reform and the expansion of the system of 'guichet foncier' to formally register land
- Ongoing efforts to improve prediction of and response to natural disasters
- Addressing fall armyworm
- Promoting the sustainable production and consumption of crop varieties suited to climate change effects
- Aligning to regional and international trade standards and norms to facilitate access to regional markets (e.g., South African Development Community, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa), as well as improving the quality (and quantity) of export crops to meet these norms and standards

As part of the National Nutrition Action Plan, the percentage of the national budget dedicated to nutrition is planned to increase from 0.28 percent in 2015 to 5 percent by 2019.⁵ While applicants should have an understanding of national strategies and priorities, they should also recognize and address the challenges related to lack of operationalization and implementation of plans at the regional level. Applicants may also refer to the [USAID Madagascar: Nutrition Profile](#)⁶ for further relevant national-level background and references.

DFSAs will work in coordination with other investments by: the U.S. Government (USG), the World Food Program (WFP), the World Bank, the host country government and other donors to collectively benefit highly vulnerable populations in the targeted areas. Applicants should indicate how they will coordinate and integrate other activities, understanding that this will be detailed during the refinement period of the R&I process. Please refer to the end of the CSI for a list of some key relevant donor interventions for possible coordination and collaboration.

As part of the monitoring, evaluation, and learning process, USAID will separately fund a third party to conduct an impact evaluation, possibly using an experimental method, to assess the impact of each activity in comparison to a control group. By submitting an application for this RFA, applicants agree to partner with and assist a research institution of USAID's choice in the implementation of the impact evaluation, including potentially randomizing implementation villages.

The following section provides cross-cutting country level considerations that are relevant in both Activity Areas, followed by sections with specific sub-national considerations.

² [US Government Global Food Security Strategy: FY2017-FY2021](#).

³ Republic of Madagascar. 2017. [Plan National d'Action pour la Nutrition \(PNAN III 2017-2021\)](#).

⁴ Republic of Madagascar. 2016. [Stratégie Nationale de Gestion des Risques et des Catastrophes 2016-2030](#).

⁵ UNICEF. 2018. Annual Results Report 2017 Nutrition.

⁶ USAID. March 2018. [Madagascar Nutrition Profile](#).

II. Country Context

Despite a long history of emergency and development food security assistance to Madagascar, chronic and acute food insecurity remain significant challenges in many parts of the island. Food insecurity is often linked to poverty, and Madagascar is one of the few “non-conflict” countries in the world where per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has actually declined significantly since 1970.⁷ As of this writing, general elections are planned for November 2018. The island’s history of recurrent crises linked to contested political transitions underscores the significant governance challenges in the national context. The results of the 2018 elections and the relevant campaign promises and policies of the new government should be referenced and integrated into the DFSA applications. Current governance challenges that will likely remain an issue for the implementation period include: lack of decentralization of services and accountability to regional-, district-, and commune-level governments; a highly centralized budget process and lack of funding at local government levels; lack of formal security enforcement and justice for criminal activities (largely theft); and lack of investment in sectors that can stimulate livelihood opportunities for vulnerable people such as spice farming and fisheries. In considering the fisheries sector, for example, resolving disputes among competing stakeholders where power asymmetry is present may require building the institutional and political resources of regional fisheries directorates to intervene.⁸ Based on formative research, the sustainability and equity of other important livelihood sectors may be strengthened through improved governance.

Key National Actors in the Food and Nutrition Security Sphere

- The Office National de Nutrition (ONN) is responsible for coordination, research, monitoring and evaluation of the nutrition sector. At the regional level, the Offices Regionales de Nutrition (ORN) are designated to promote a multi-sectoral and multi-actor approach to addressing food and nutrition security in order to end hunger and alleviate poverty.
- The Bureau National de Gestion des Risques et Catastrophes (BNGRC) is the operational arm of the Conseil National de Gestion des Risques et Catastrophes (CNGRC). The BNGRC is the responsible authority for the management, coordination and monitoring of all activities related to disaster risk reduction and management. The BNGRC is under the Ministry of the Interior and Decentralization. Early warning systems are currently focused primarily on cyclones and related flooding, but the BNGRC is interested in building its capacity to administer an early warning system for a more diverse set of risks such as drought, bush fires, earthquakes and pest infestations.
- Particularly relevant government ministries with regional responsibilities include: Ministère de l’Agriculture et de l’Elevage, Ministère de la Santé Publique, Ministère

⁷ World Bank. [Shifting Fortunes and Enduring Poverty in Madagascar](#). Poverty Global Practice, Africa Region, pp. 1-166, June 2016.

⁸ USAID. [Marine Biodiversity and Fisheries in Madagascar: A Biodiversity and Extractives Political Economy Assessment](#). September 2016.

de l'Eau de l'Assainissement et de l'Hygiène, Ministère des Ressources Halieutique et de la Pêche, Ministère de l'Aménagement du Territoire et des Services Fonciers, Ministère de la Population, Protection Sociale et de la Promotion de la Femme (<http://www.primature.gov.mg/les-ministeres/>).

- Important international actors with programming in targeted regions include, but are not limited to, the World Bank, African Development Bank, International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), WFP, the European Union (EU), BMZ and GIZ (Germany), Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD).

II.A. Factors Affecting Food and Nutrition Security at the National Level

- **Lack of adequate infrastructure:** The lack of water management, roads, ports, electrification, and communications infrastructure hampers the implementation of development activities in both the South and Southeast. There are important planned investments in road and port infrastructure that may be implemented throughout the life of awards and could have positive impacts on livelihoods programming. Access to electricity is extremely limited, dipping as low as 4 percent in rural areas, despite potential to generate over 100 percent of electric power from hydro-sources.⁹ The lack of electricity affects everything from mobile phone usage and internet coverage to cold storage and processing of agricultural goods. One national study finds that electrification is a more important predictor of welfare than any other available indicator of spatial advantage.¹⁰ Other studies find that remoteness of communities is a determinant of food security status,¹¹ and high transportation costs lead to food prices that are often determined by highly localized supply and demand conditions.¹²
- **Economic trends:** While the links between economic growth, poverty, and food and nutrition security are complex, the overall economic context can affect household- and community-level food security. The Economist Intelligence Unit predicts GDP growth will be around 4.6 percent in 2018, bouncing back from a slightly negative growth rate in 2017 when agricultural production was constrained by extreme weather events, including drought in southern Madagascar and a severe cyclone (the worst in 13 years) in the northeast. There are plans to create a joint special economic zone in southern Madagascar with Mauritius, which may spur new investment.¹³ The informal economic sector is of primary importance to FFP-targeted communities and households (and the Malagasy in general, of which 93 percent are estimated to work in the informal sector).¹⁴ Currently, informal market linkages and associations are not particularly strong, although producer

⁹ USAID. September 2016. [Power Africa in Madagascar](#).

¹⁰ McBride, Linden and Theresa Osborne. [Flexible Poverty Profiling and Welfare Prediction in Madagascar](#). World Bank. June 2017.

¹¹ Minten, Bart and Christopher Barrett. [Agriculture Technology, Productivity, and Poverty in Madagascar](#). World Development, Vol. 36, No. 5, pp. 797-822.

¹² Moser, Christine and Barrett, Christopher B. and Minten, Bart, [Missed Opportunities and Missing Markets: Spatio-Temporal Arbitrage of Rice in Madagascar](#) (January 2005).

¹³ Economist Intelligence Unit. December 2017. [Madagascar Profile](#).

¹⁴ World Bank. 2017. FY17-FY21 Country Partnership Framework for Republic of Madagascar.

organizations are becoming more common and have links to national producer associations. As a country economically dependent on primary and secondary agriculture and mining, economic growth is largely dependent on local agricultural production conditions and international market fluctuations. Lack of access to rural finance often forces farmers who cultivate cash crops to make decisions based on immediate needs.

- **Natural shocks and hazards:** Food security in Madagascar is negatively affected by cyclones, flooding, drought and agricultural pests that regularly trigger a humanitarian response. For example, in the last two years, three cyclones hit the island, and in October 2017, the U.S. Ambassador declared a disaster in Madagascar for the fourth consecutive year due to the effects of drought in southern regions of the country. Climate change will exacerbate these natural hazards, increasing the vulnerability of the agriculture sector. Changing precipitation patterns and rising temperatures are expected to decrease water availability and reduce soil fertility.¹⁵ Rainfall patterns are projected to shift as well with increases in precipitation in the south in January and April and decreases in July and September.¹⁶ Although the frequency of cyclones is expected to decrease, their intensity is predicted to increase, and coastal erosion is anticipated as a result of sea level rise. Water shortages are increasingly common in both the southeastern and southern regions, and climate change will exacerbate the shortages and thereby increase the demand for irrigation. Crop disease incidence, such as cassava mosaic disease, and crop destruction linked with pests such as fall armyworm and locusts are also likely to increase.¹⁷
- **Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH):** Data from the World Health Organization and UNICEF Joint Management Program for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (2013) for the rural, poorest quintile of the population demonstrate very poor WASH practices in Madagascar nationwide with approximately 20 percent of the population having access to a basic water service and 1 percent having access to a basic sanitation facility. With these numbers, Madagascar is behind on meeting the 2030 JMP Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets. Regular outbreak of the plague (both bubonic and pneumonic) in Madagascar exemplifies inadequate to hygiene. The most recent outbreak of 2,417 cases in August-November 2017 resulted in 209 deaths.¹⁸ There are certain cultural taboos that affect hygiene and the willingness to use latrines and overall rates of open defecation in the country. Much of the population practices poor hygiene behaviors with low rates of handwashing and a low prevalence of soap/ash usage. Overall, the WASH situation is worse in the southern part of the country (the four southern regions), with extremely poor WASH indicator performance and with open-defecation rates between 85 and 95 percent.¹⁹
- **Youth:** Skill development and youth capacity building and education are major challenges in the two Activity Areas. Youth under 18 represent approximately 50

¹⁵ World Bank. 2011. [Climate Risk and Adaptation Country Profile: Vulnerability, Risk Reduction, and Adaptation to Climate Change Madagascar](#).

¹⁶ Lee, Hanna et. al. 2008. [Climate change adaptation for conservation in Madagascar](#). *Biology Letters* 4, 590–594.

¹⁷ USAID. June 2016. [Climate Change Risk Profile: Madagascar](#).

¹⁸ World Health Organization. 4 December 2017. [External Situation Report 14](#).

¹⁹ UNICEF. 2016. [Madagascar WASH Sector Key Results Framework \(2016-2019\)](#).

percent of the national population and represent a largely untapped driver of development.

- **Education and functional literacy/numeracy:** In rural areas, communities often do not prioritize schooling in part because the economic benefit of education is not apparent. Consequently, literacy and numeracy rates are low. Data from 2011 indicated that 26 percent of Malagasy between 15-45 were illiterate, while the prevalence of illiteracy stood at 36 percent for those over the age of 45 (Ministry of National Education, 2017).²⁰ Lack of basic literacy and numeracy skills limits people's ability to bargain effectively in the market, form agricultural and other cooperatives, engage in financial planning at the household and community level, and seek/engage in off-farm livelihoods. In addition, low levels of education correlate with malnutrition; 40 percent of children whose mothers have secondary education or higher are stunted, and the rate rises to 52 percent among children whose mothers had received a primary school education only.²¹
- **Gender and social inclusion:** Men, women, children, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups are not all vulnerable to shocks and stresses in the same way and often mobilize different capacities for building resilience. To foster social inclusion and strengthen the resilience of all groups, applicants must understand how different groups experience shocks and stresses.²² For example, rice seed sowing may be a men's activity and fish sales may be women's domain, in specific communities, which has consequences in terms of youth development and education.²³

Women's role as mothers begins at an increasingly younger age: 62.4 percent of adolescent girls had begun childbearing in 2012–2013, an increase from 57.3 percent in 2008–2009.²⁴ National trends indicate declining fertility rates (6.2 births per woman in 1990 to 4.2 in 2016), but this still represents a population growing at 2.6 percent annually.²⁵ Adolescent girls are more likely to be malnourished and have a low birth weight child who in turn is more likely to become malnourished, and be at increased risk of illness and death, compared to babies born to older mothers.

In some cases, extreme poverty - often aggravated by climate change effects like lengthy droughts or intense cyclones and flooding - is associated with higher levels of transactional sex as a form of negative individual or household coping strategy in the South; this practice may also be occurring in the Southeast.

Learning from communities about forms of social and economic empowerment can help applicants/awardees gain an understanding of how gender dynamics play out in each of the regions, including rates and types of exposure to gender-based violence and the context in which young people engage in sexual activity.

²⁰ Ministère de l'éducation nationale (2017). Plan Sectoriel de l'Éducation (2018-2022). May 2017.

²¹ Institut National de la Statistique (INSTAT). 2013. Enquête Nationale sur le Suivi des Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement à Madagascar: Objectif: 01.

²² Le Masson, V. et al. (2015). [Gender and resilience](#). BRACED Working Paper.

²³ Moreira, Catarina Nascimento et al. 2017. [Boys go fishing, girls work at home: gender roles, poverty and unequal school access among semi-nomadic fishing communities in South Western Madagascar](#), Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education, 47:4, 499-511

²⁴ See USAID Madagascar's [Nutrition Profile](#) (March 2018) for references.

²⁵ World Bank Group. 2018. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/>

- **Local customs and traditions:** In a country rich with cultural and ethnic diversity, local kings and elder councils enjoy relative autonomy when it comes to everyday governance of their *fokontany* (communities). However, the dominion of these leaders is extremely limited beyond the *fokontany* and they have little leverage to secure physical or financial resources. Although regional political administrators generally work collaboratively with traditional leaders, even regional administrators typically operate with skeletal budgets and limited political influence. The existing Malagasy traditional, non-state actors and associated customs will play a strong role in the success of any food security programming.

While some customs and traditions vary regionally, the traditional practice of cattle rustling by young men (*dahalo*) is often practiced wherever cattle (known locally as zebu) are present. In some areas this practice is more widespread and has become increasingly violent and profit-oriented. *Dina Be*, the traditional community-based security groups authorized by the state and collaborating with the state security forces, have also played an important role in Malagasy communities by protecting villages from criminal activity, especially cattle rustling, as well as enforcing local customs. However, the *Dina Be* may be less effective when attempting to address more organized criminal activity, particularly groups from outside the local communities. Traditional systems of land use, management and inheritance are also important as they tend to exclude women, and because population pressures are leading to ever-decreasing per household farm plot sizes. Among the poor and very poor, some do not own any land and commonly work as paid laborers on land owned by others. Applicants should consider how these groups can be supported to become self-reliant.

For a summary of macro and micro-level trends related to food security nationally and within the targeted Activity Areas, applicants should also refer to the [FEWS NET Madagascar Enhanced Market \(EMA\) Analysis, September 2018](#). This includes environmental, social, infrastructure, market and modality considerations for program design. The following sections are meant to provide some highlighted key Activity Area specific information. This is not an exhaustive list of opportunities or constraints, but a summary of key considerations drawn from existing literature, project reports, and field visits. Applicants are expected to conduct context specific analysis to justify proposed activities.

II.B. Activity Areas

Southeastern: Vatovavy Fitovinany and Atsimo Atsinanana

Context

The two Southeastern target regions of Vatovavy Fitovinany and Atsimo Atsinanana present many similarities in terms of agro-climatic and livelihood zones, governance, crime and security, infrastructure, and vulnerability to shocks, most notably cyclones and associated flooding, although some areas experienced drought in 2017. The majority of households earn their livelihoods from agricultural activities, and both regions produce rice, breadfruit, cassava, maize and sweet potato, along with a variety of beans and vegetable crops in smaller amounts. The median farm size for in Atsimo Atsinanana is 2.7 hectares, while Vatovavy Fitovinany has a median farm size of 1.1 hectares and is the region with the

second-highest percentage (78.4 percent) of smallholders.²⁶ The most vulnerable households have even smaller land plots, one-half hectare or less. Over 80 percent of households in the two regions cultivate rice, and over 70 percent of production is for own-consumption. The key alternative crops are cassava and potato for both regions, which are generally farmed by more vulnerable households due to smaller land size requirements and to hedge climatic and financial risks.²⁷ Among coastal communities, households generally participate in fishing as well as some rice and vegetable farming. Both regions (particularly Vatovavy Fitovinany) have increasingly developed markets around cash crops, in particular for spices including vanilla, cloves, cinnamon, turmeric and wild and cultivated black pepper. Coffee (mainly the *robusta* variety) is also an important cash crop in the area, although many of the coffee plants are more than 50 years old and are characterized by low yield and quality. Most households also keep livestock on a small scale, including chickens, ducks, swine and zebu. Although fisheries-related livelihoods are not widespread, they are particularly vulnerable to the effects of cyclones in both regions. Overexploitation of marine resources is an increasing challenge aggravated by uncontrolled commercial overfishing practiced by foreign-owned companies, heightening the need to improve sustainability of marine resource exploitation.

Despite a wide diversity of agro-climatic zones as well as potential food crop, cash crop, and marine fisheries production opportunities, both regions remain extremely poor, food insecure and isolated. Some of the main inhibiting factors for economic development include inadequate preparation and response capacity for risks associated with frequent natural disasters, very poor road and water management infrastructure, insecurity leading to theft of crops and zebu, poor governance and management of natural resources, as well as low levels of government and private sector investment. Many communities are extremely isolated and difficult to access, particularly during the rainy season when roads are flooded.

Both regions are affected regularly by cyclones and most communities are not prepared and have little capacity to respond, thus triggering emergency assistance from USAID and other donors on a recurring basis. USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and FFP both provided emergency relief to communities affected by cyclone Enawo and the ongoing drought in 2016, 2017, and 2018.²⁸ German-funded activities have worked to strengthen local committees linked to the BNGRC on disaster-preparedness, but a common concern is that most of this work is around physical security and there is little capacity for communities to rebound in terms of livelihoods. Floods also damage staple crop fields and vulnerable households do not have adequate reserve seed to replant. Communities suffer regularly from deteriorated health as a result of flooding and lack of safe drinking water, which aggravates the effects of already poor food diversity and undernutrition.

There are several poverty and nutritional differences between the two regions in the Southeast. For example, 64 percent of the population of Atsimo Atsinanana is experiencing

²⁶ Smallholders defined as less than 1.5 hectares. l'Institut National de la Statistique (Instat). 2013. L'Enquête Nationale sur le Suivi des indicateurs des Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement (ENSOMD): Objectif 1, Éliminer l'extrême pauvreté et la faim.

²⁷ P 60-65, Ibid.

²⁸ USAID. 2018. [Southern Africa - Disaster Response](#).

food insecurity, the highest of all 22 regions of Madagascar.²⁹ Atsimo Atsinanana is the second poorest region in Madagascar, with 83 percent of the population living below the poverty line of 535,603 Ariary (~\$240) annually per person in 2012. WFP implements emergency food assistance activities, with funding from FFP, in Atsimo Atsinanana. Vatovavy Fitovinany is marginally better off, ranking fifth from the bottom nationally in both stunting (57 percent stunted) and food consumption score, with 57 percent experiencing food insecurity. Vatovavy Fitovinany is also somewhat better connected to the capital and markets outside the region for the sale of cash crops such as vanilla.

Key Food Security Challenges and Considerations for the Southeast:

The challenges to reducing food insecurity in the Southeast region are numerous and highly correlated. While the challenges all have an impact on food insecurity, applicants should prioritize and focus interventions around practical, evidence-based approaches.

- **Disaster Risk Reduction and Infrastructure**
 - Infrastructure in the Southeast is poorly equipped to handle the nearly annual occurrence of cyclones and associated challenges around storm damage and floods. Poor infrastructure has a particularly negative effect on vulnerable people's access to services, markets, and safe drinking water, as they rely more heavily on public support and have less savings and fewer assets to offset poor quality public resources.
 - The EU, IFAD, and the local Fond de Développement Agricole (FDA) all have recent or planned small- and large-scale infrastructure (irrigation, roads, water) activities in the Southeast.
 - Disaster risk reduction training has been provided at many district levels and in some communes, with committees established around disaster risk reduction through a German-funded activity with the BNGRC. However, much of this activity was focused on response to shocks (particularly cyclones/flooding), but not on mitigation or livelihood resilience.
- **Local Governance, Land and Marine Tenure, Security and Crime**
 - There appears to be increasing insecurity related to zebu theft in Atsimo Atsinanana. This threatens to prevent community members from considering livestock as a livelihood option.
 - High-value crops such as vanilla and cloves are sometimes stolen from farmers' fields. Thieves also target crop producers themselves, as well as their homes, particularly after the main sales period when small producers may have large cash reserves on hand.
 - Customary land rights and access are based upon community inheritance and governance systems under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders who also make decisions regarding the use of communal land. 'Guichets Fonciers' (land

²⁹ INSTAT and WFP. September 2014. [Analyse Globale de la Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle, et de la Vulnérabilité \(AGSANV\): Madagascar](#). For the purposes of the study, a food insecure household was defined as being poor in quantity and quality, measured by having both less than 300 Kcal/day/adult AND sourcing more than 85 percent of food from cereals and starches.

registration offices) that provide land tenure services are present in only a few districts or communes of the targeted region.³⁰

- Natural Resource Management and Climate Change Adaptation
 - While the east coast of Madagascar is the wettest part of the island with up to 3,700 millimeters of precipitation annually, rainfall patterns are shifting due to climate change. Smallholders struggle to adapt crop cultivation patterns to less predictable weather.
 - Vatovavy Fitovinany and Atsimo Atsinanana lost 16.9 percent and 11.2 percent respectively of their forested land between 2000 and 2016.³¹ Deforestation is driven by population pressure, lack of land access, land degradation, and customary agricultural and cultural practices.³² The agricultural frontier is expanding into less desirable land, including increasingly remote areas, high-altitude land, and steep slopes, thus accelerating deforestation and biodiversity loss. Logging (both illegal and legal) as well as firewood collection also play a role in deforestation.
 - Especially for the poorest people in the Southeast Activity Area, natural resources provide food in terms of hunting, fishing, and foraging, which constitute a major source of protein, calories, and micronutrients, although consumption is still insufficient. Insecure resource rights, including land and marine tenure, threaten food security for these vulnerable populations. Healthy ecosystems are important for diet diversification.³³
 - Current FFP DFSA natural resource management interventions have focused mostly on reforestation, tree nurseries, and Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration through Food for Assets activities and the establishment of natural resource management committees in targeted communities. It is unclear how effective or sustainable these activities will be after the expiration of the DFSAs. Applicants should refer to the Mid-term Evaluations for both of the current DFSAs for a complete list of findings and recommendations (links at the end of CSI document). Dune stabilization activities incorporating food plants in coastal areas have yielded evident benefits in protection of arable lands as well as increasing available food resources, and marine mangrove forest rehabilitation has also been employed to restore breeding waters for shrimp and other key marine food sources.³⁴
- Agriculture, Livestock, Livelihoods, Markets
 - The area receives high rainfall and yet there is generally sub-optimal production. There is potential for agricultural intensification to boost output, particularly for vulnerable households.

³⁰ [Observatoire Foncière - Madagascar](#). 2018.

³¹ [Global Forest Watch](#). 2017.

³² Hume, William Douglas. 2006. [Swidden Agriculture and Conservation in Eastern Madagascar: Stakeholder Perspectives and Cultural Belief Systems](#). Conservation and Society, pp. 287–303 Volume 4, No. 2.

³³ Randrianarison, Narilala. September 2016. [The Role of Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management in Food Security in South Eastern Madagascar](#).

³⁴ World Wildlife Foundation. Madagascar Mangroves. <https://www.worldwildlife.org/ecoregions/at1404>

- The geographic area is characterized by a large array of fruit is grown in the area (e.g., lychee, banana, and mandarin), the sale of which serves as an additional source of income for households. Breadfruit is common and is widely used as an off-season subsistence crop, although there is little commercial development.
 - Current FFP-funded work has engaged the private sector around vanilla and other spices in Vatovavy Fitovinany. There is potential for introducing/supporting production of spices, coffee and other cash crops in Atsimo Atsinanana as well. Most market signals indicate that demand is outstripping supply for many of these cash crops. The poorest and most vulnerable community members are usually not spice farmers.
 - Certain local and international buyers of spices (vanilla, pepper, cinnamon) and coffee take unfair advantage of farmers who have not organized into producer associations and who are vulnerable and often in need of cash. USAID has supported implementing partners who have successfully linked activity participants to the private sector. This has helped to ensure the participants have access to markets and market information, fair prices, training and finance. In return companies improved traceability and sustainability of supply chains.
 - There is very limited access to banking or financial institutions outside the cities of Manakara, Farafangana, and Vangaindrano. In the regional capitals there are banking offices for BNI Madagascar and Microcred Baobab.
 - There is a seafood processing facility located in Vangaindrano to which local fishing communities sell seafood for transport to Antananarivo. Fishing is not an important subsistence livelihood for most inhabitants in the region.³⁵
 - Coffee production is generally conducted on individual plots where farmers are not organized into groups and are harvesting old trees.
 - The historical lean season (periode de soudure) when household stocks of subsistence staple crops are depleted, is generally the same for both regions: from July/August to October/November and again from February to April.
- Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
 - A new USAID-funded activity, Rural Access to New Opportunities in Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (RANO WASH), will be implemented by a CARE-led consortium that includes Catholic Relief Services, WaterAid, BushProof and Sandandrano with activities planned through 2022. Certain communes in Vatovavy Fitovinany will be targeted.
 - In the Southeast, potable water availability is a major challenge with only 5-11 percent of people in the two regions having access to safe drinking water.³⁶ Water quality is also a concern. An overabundance of uncontrolled water during the rainy season often leads to flooding and water hygiene risks, while some parts of the Southeast have also experienced drought and lack of water.

³⁵ INSTAT and WFP. September 2014. [Analyse Globale de la Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle, et de la Vulnérabilité \(AGSANV\): Madagascar](#). (p. 68).

³⁶ [Ministry of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene, Madagascar](#). 2018.

- **Health and Nutrition**
 - There is an ongoing food security monitoring activity funded by Belgium and FAO titled “Système d’information sur la sécurité alimentaire et la vulnérabilité dans la région du sud-est (SISAV).” This activity collects data on key food insecurity data for populations and seeks to strengthen the local capacity to monitor food security, targeting a number of districts in both Atsimo Atsinanana and Vatovavy Fitovinany and releases regular bulletins on food security issues and may be an ongoing source of data.³⁷
 - The World Bank’s “Improving Nutrition Outcomes Using the Multiphase Programmatic Approach” started in 2018 and is planned for an initial five years with a potential five-year extension. This World Bank activity focused on nutrition will complement USAID health activity investments in Vatovavy Fitovinany and may expand to Atsimo Atsinanana.
- **Gender and Youth**
 - Gender and youth dynamics are largely reflective of the national context in the Southeast.
 - Atsimo Atsinanana has an estimated 66 percent of youth out of school, with the worst disparity between males and females of any region (79 percent of girls out of school vs. 52 percent of boys). In Atsimo Atsinanana, 41 percent of children ages 9-12 have never attended school and the average educational attainment is 2.6 years.
 - In Vatovavy Fitovinany 62 percent of youth are out of school (69 percent of girls and 57 percent of boys), with 34 percent of children 9-12 never having attended school and the average person completing 2.2 years of schooling.³⁸

Southern: Androy and Atsimo Andrefana (Ampanihy, Betioky, and Tulear II Districts)

Context

Androy and the districts of Ampanihy, Betioky and Tulear II of Atsimo Andrefana share many similarities in terms of agro-climatic and livelihood zones, governance, infrastructure, and vulnerability to shocks. Per the November 2017 [FEWS NET Livelihood Profiles](#)³⁹, the livelihoods of the majority of households within ten miles of the coast include fishing (generally a blend of lobster, shrimp, tuna, and sardines) and staple crop production of cassava, maize, sweet potato and cowpeas. In Androy, the median farm size is 2 hectares and over 90 percent of farm households grow cassava and around 75 percent grow maize, and 40 percent of farmers cultivate less than 1.5 hectares. In Atsimo Andrefana, 57 percent of farmers grow cassava and 40 percent grow maize, and the median farm size of 1.3 hectares, and 53 percent of households cultivating less than 1.5 hectares.⁴⁰ Very poor and poor households generally cultivate between a half hectare and one hectare of land and

³⁷ [SISAV. Bulletin Speciale n°4 \(Période couverte : Décembre 2017 -Avril 2017\).](#)

³⁸ UNESCO. 2008. Global Education Monitoring Report.

³⁹ FEWS NET (2017). [MADAGASCAR Grand South livelihood zones revision.](#)

⁴⁰ l’Institut National de la Statistique (Instat). 2013. L’Enquête Nationale sur le Suivi des indicateurs des Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement (ENSOMD): Objectif 1, Éliminer l’extrême pauvreté et la faim.

have a limited number of small livestock (usually goats and chickens). Better off households usually cultivate over three hectares of land and possess draft oxen, cattle and small ruminants. As reported by partners who have recently been implementing food security activities in these areas, livestock holding patterns have shifted away from cattle to small ruminants due to security concerns associated with cattle rustling.

Due to recurrent drought and erratic rainfall and the associated impact on agricultural production and food security, the multi-stakeholder Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Process that classifies acute food insecurity and the Famine Early Warning System Network have classified both regions as “Crisis” (IPC Phase 3) or “Emergency” (IPC Phase 4) during the peak lean season over the past three years. During the 2016/17 lean season over 650,000 people (approximately 50 percent of the population) experienced phase 3 or 4 acute food insecurity,⁴¹ and approximately 1,160,000 people are projected to experience phase 3 or 4 acute food insecurity from July to September of 2018.⁴² USAID FFP and OFDA have provided significant levels of humanitarian assistance focusing on agriculture, food transfers, nutrition, and WASH since the 2015/2016 drought associated with El Nino, through awards implemented by ADRA, CARE, CRS, FAO, Land O’Lakes, WFP, UNICEF, and others. In addition to funding provided by USAID, the World Bank and the EU have contributed humanitarian response resources and have substantial agriculture, food security, and nutrition development investments in Androy and Atsimo Andrefana.

In addition to drought, the regions suffer from locust and fall armyworm infestations and cyclones. Fall armyworm is relatively new to the area, and protocols for measuring and mitigating damage to crops have not been established. Locust infestation intensity and frequency vary considerably, but significant events generally occur in the regions at least once every three years. The GoM conducts locust prevention work, consisting of surveillance of gregarization areas and ground treatment of developing threats, in order to keep infestation at manageable levels. Cyclones occur usually at least once in a four- or five-year period, generally in the March/April timeframe. The BNGRC provides regular cyclone warnings through public radio announcements and has provided training on cyclone preparedness. Government early warning and response for non-cyclone related shocks has been limited. Drought, locusts and other natural shocks have been primarily coordinated through the UN system.

Key Food Security Challenges and Considerations for the South:

The challenges to reducing food insecurity in the Southern geographic Activity Area are numerous and highly correlated. While the challenges all have an impact on food insecurity, applicants should prioritize and focus interventions around practical, evidence-based approaches.

- Disaster Risk Reduction and Infrastructure:
 - Poor infrastructure quality negatively impacts people’s access to services, markets, and safe drinking water.

⁴¹ IPC Madagascar (2016): Oct – Dec 2016 / Jan – March 2017. [Madagascar IPC Summary](#).

⁴² IPC Madagascar (2018): [Acute Food Insecurity Situation March-June 2018 and Projection for July-September 2018](#).

- Disaster Risk Reduction training has been provided at the district levels in many districts and in some communes, with committees established around disaster risk reduction through the BNGRC. However, much of this training was focused on response to cyclones, rather than on response to drought and locusts or on mitigation or livelihood resilience.
- Local Governance, Land Tenure, Security, and Crime:
 - Significant levels of insecurity around cattle theft by bandits (dahalo) from external areas, such as the neighboring Ihorombe region for Atsimo Andrefana, have reduced livestock holding and changed livestock management practices. Local actors use the *Dina Be* system, a set of agreements between communities to provide reparations and penalize bandits when they are apprehended. However, the majority of cattle and livestock bandits are not apprehended and are from outside of the existing community structures, albeit many of them use local guides to assist their crimes.
 - Customary land rights and access are based upon community inheritance and governance systems under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders make decisions around communal land. 'Guichet Fonciere' (land registration offices) are present in only a few districts or communes of the targeted region.
 - The regional government of Androy, in coordination with and assistance from the EU, is in the process of developing a Regional Development Plan, which they anticipate releasing in 2018. In addition, the Government of Madagascar and other stakeholders are in the process of finalizing the "Stratégie de développement intégré du Grand Sud de Madagascar." The strategy closely links and integrates the development of the three regions of Anosy, Androy and Atsimo Andrefana and focuses on: 1) Heavy investments in roads, energy and water infrastructures; 2) Diversification and scaling up of livelihood means focused on profitable value chains in agriculture, livestock and mining sectors; 3) Improved governance and security and fostering cultural values favorable to development; 4) Improved education, health and social assistance and protection; and 5) Environmental conservation and enhanced resilience to shocks.
 - Emergency and early recovery activities in southern Madagascar have been criticized for a lack of coordination, both among development partners, and between partners and the local and national government. Systematic information and data sharing, joint planning efforts and close coordination between partners throughout implementation - particularly to avoid duplication of efforts and an equitable approach to development among the southern communes - will be particularly critical to optimizing and sustaining the impact and success of investments in this region, which has been termed a "project graveyard".
- Natural Resource Management and Climate Change Adaptation
 - Rainfall patterns are changing due to climate change, and smallholders' crop cultivation patterns are challenged to adapt to less predictable weather.

- One of the region's preferred staple crops, maize, has proven to be unsuited to thriving in the face of increasingly recurrent droughts. The GoM has prioritized the promotion of drought resistant crops in many parts of the island, and particularly in Southern Madagascar. A key obstacle to achieving this vision is the lack of sustainably produced, affordable and widely distributed seeds for these crop varieties. Another key barrier is the lack of consumer demand for less familiar crops like sorghum, and the perception that cooking such crops requires more effort or resources in terms of processing, cooking charcoal, or water for boiling.
- The average rainfall in the regions ranges between 300 and 800 mm per year, with the rainy season occurring between November/December and February/March. Most of the Southern Activity Area has experienced insufficient or erratic rainfall in at least three of the past five agricultural seasons.
- Overexploitation of marine and forest resources (e.g., charcoal production) has increased, which may compromise the environmental conditions and long-term sustainability of livelihoods associated with those resources.
- Agriculture, Livestock, Livelihoods, Markets
 - Livelihood opportunities are severely constrained by the poor quality of road infrastructure. Transport costs are high, which impacts the availability and cost of quality inputs, creates logistical challenges in the supply chain, and limits agricultural marketing activities.
 - Limited annual rainfall and access to water for irrigation and productive purposes is a significant challenge for crop production and livestock livelihood activities.
 - Opportunities exist to grow cash or non staple food crops in the region (e.g., castor oil, cactus or peas for processing and export)
 - FAO, CTAS (Centre Technique Agro-écologique du Sud), ADRA and CRS are currently promoting or have recently promoted the planting of improved, drought tolerant seeds for sorghum, millet and maize and provided complementary inputs (tools, fertilizer, etc.) in some instances. Management of new and indigenous pests associated with these crops will be key to their successful promotion.
 - Highly vulnerable communities and households generally have smaller plot sizes for agriculture production or no access to land at all.
 - Fall armyworm has been identified and associated with significant crop (especially maize) loss within parts of Androy and Atsimo Andrefana. The GoM developed a task force with support from FAO and other actors, but has limited capacity to provide services and resources for insecticides and other prevention and treatment measures, or to carry out adequate sensitization campaigns needed to change the behavior of local farmers.
 - Extensive offshore fishing by foreign entities and destruction of mangroves (notably in Atsimo Andrefana) are ongoing threats to the productivity and sustainability of marine resources. Weak coastal and marine resource governance remains a key constraint.

- The EU will fund the Afafi Sud, Appuis au Financement de l'Agriculture et aux Filières Inclusives - Région Sud, from the 2018-2024 in Androy and Atsimo Atsinanana, which is a follow-on to the Amélioration de la Sécurité Alimentaire et du Revenu Agricole ([ASARA](#)) activity, which ended in June 2018. The activity will focus on improving livelihoods (agriculture, fishing, livestock) and infrastructure (water/roads/irrigation).
 - The promotion of small ruminants, poultry and other livestock, as well as other off-farm livelihoods and income generating activities, offer a significant viable alternative to subsistence farming in increasingly unfavorable farming conditions. These increasingly arid areas may however lend themselves to the production of non-traditional crops suited to the climate and destined for export.
 - Improved storage and post-harvest processing are limited and even basic improvements to current practices could yield significant improvements to household food stocks and income levels.
- Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
 - In many parts of Androy and Atsimo Andrefana, accessing safe drinking water is a major challenge with only 16-21 percent of the two regions having access to drinking water. Community members commonly travel distances of greater than five km in order to access water and regularly pay for water. Often, the water is of poor quality and untreated, which contributes to a high incidence of diarrhea.
 - People in the Southern Activity Area generally have poor sanitation behaviors and limited access to basic latrines with high rates of open defecation (90-98 percent) and low prevalence of improved latrine access (4-10 percent).⁴³
 - UNICEF and the Government of Japan are in the process of implementing large-scale water projects in Androy.
- Health and Nutrition
 - The Southern geographic focus area has among the highest rates of acute malnutrition in the country, with GAM rates of approximately 13 percent in Androy and 10 percent in Ampanihy District of Atsimo Andrefana, according to SMART surveys conducted in 2018. Wasting is associated with low household food consumption score, low household dietary diversity score, low birth weight, tobacco use by women, birth interval of less than 24 months, morbidity in children (diarrhea, fever or cough during the two weeks prior to data collection), and lack of education of mothers.⁴⁴
 - In most of the Activity Areas, ORN conducts nutritional surveillance for acute malnutrition and coordinates treatment of moderate acute malnutrition with WFP through the distribution of Ready to Use Supplementary Food. Treatment of severe acute malnutrition with Ready to Use Therapeutic Food is carried out at Centres Santé de Bases (CSBs) with the support of UNICEF.

⁴³ [Ministry of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene, Madagascar](#). 2018.

⁴⁴ Scaling Up Nutrition. 2015. Analyse des Déterminants de la Malnutrition à Madagascar: Etude de Données Secondaires.

- In coordination with the GoM's Ministry of Population, the World Bank is implementing the Fiavota social safety net (Filet de Sécurité Sociale, FSS) activity, through 2019, which provides vulnerable households in Androy with cash transfers and treatment for acute malnutrition. The Ministry of Population has signed accords with a range of other Ministries to prioritize GoM development investments in fokontany supported by the FSS program, ranging from well construction to school rehabilitation. The Ministry of Population has a priority to avoid duplication of efforts by partners working in FSS fokontany, and close, early and continual coordination with the Ministry of Population will be essential to a successful collaboration in Southern Madagascar.
- **Vulnerability**
 - The typical lean season (periode de soudure) i.e., when there is a shortage of subsistence staple crops, is generally the same for both regions, from November/December to February/March. During this time, there is a heavy reliance on foraging wild foods (cactus, mango and tubers) and high market prices for staple food commodities.
 - The severity of disasters and related vulnerability are associated with increased levels of transactional sex, the migration of men to find work, and sometimes the husband's/father's permanent abandonment of the household. In addition, households are resorting to migration as a survival strategy. The sale of all their assets before they embark on their journey indicates that they have few resources to set up in their new destinations. Migrants often struggle to find employment and suffer from protection and integration challenges. The marginalization of women and youth in a male-oriented largely gerontocratic society is a critical factor for consideration in programming for the most vulnerable.

III. FFP Goals and Priorities

Southeastern Goal:

Reduce and prevent chronic food insecurity, ensuring that achievements will be sustained and scaled beyond the life of activity.

Desired high-level outcomes:

- Measurable reduction in stunting over life of activity
- Sustainable system(s) in place to ensure continued reductions beyond the life of activity

Southern Goal:

Reduce and prevent acute food insecurity both during and beyond the life of the activity.

Desired high-level outcomes:

- Acute food insecurity classification of no greater than IPC Phase 2 "Stressed" for targeted communities at any point in the year during the life of the activity

- Sustainable system(s) in place with the capacity to manage and mitigate shocks beyond the life of activity

Though the goal and desired high-level outcomes of the two Madagascar Activity Areas differ--as with all FFP DFSAs--awardees must collect all Required FFP Monitoring Indicators and any Required if Applicable Indicators.

IV. Activity Principles

The design and implementation of the activities should be informed by both the following principles, and the programming principles included in the RFA. **Applicants' technical approach should consider how well the proposed interventions align with these combined principles.**

- **Build on previous FFP activity implementation knowledge.** Joint midterm reviews (JMTRs) were conducted for the two ongoing FFP DFSA activities in Madagascar: ASOTRY, which is implemented by Adventist Development and Relief Agency, and Fararano, which is implemented by Catholic Relief Services. The JMTR reports are available on the Development Experience Clearinghouse and can be accessed through these links: ASOTRY - https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00SVTD.pdf, and Fararano - https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00SVQD.pdf. The goals and geographic targeting of these activities do not exactly align with those envisioned in this solicitation. Nevertheless, the reports contain valuable information on which approaches and interventions have been successful and those that have been less successful. Applicants should refer to the JMTR reports for rich and detailed technical and operational findings and recommendations when preparing applications.
- **Targeting.** Poor road infrastructure in Madagascar makes it difficult to access, work within, and conduct regular monitoring in remote communities. Insecurity related to banditry is a concern in some areas. In addition to the targeting principles outlined in the RFA, applicants are encouraged to consider factors such as accessibility and security in determining the communities in which they propose to work and the type of activities that are feasible. Applicants do not necessarily have to propose to work in all districts or communes of the target regions nor do the activity areas have to be contiguous. However, because the impact evaluation for this DFSA may be designed as a randomized control trial, the applicant should be prepared to propose double the number of target villages in order to allow for randomization if that determination is made. Applicants should seek to maximize impact in achieving stated goals and assess potential for cost efficiencies as part of their applications. . For example, agriculture marketing related interventions (e.g., cash crops, livestock) should consider the relative remoteness of communities and how this will affect sustainability of market linkages. Implications on the security of vulnerable populations should also be addressed when seeking to build assets and improve incomes.

- **Plan jointly for activity complementarity, impact, and sustainability.** USAID recently funded a number of awards in the governance, environment, and WASH sectors. There is some geographic overlap between these activities and the Activity Areas targeted under this CSI. Where feasible, it will be essential to link effectively with these activities and those of the government and other donors. Some USAID and other donor funded activities planned or operational in the Activity Areas include, but are not limited to:
 - USAID: Accessible Continuum of Care and Essential Services Sustained (ACCESS) Program, 2018-2023 (**Atsimo Andrefana, Vatovavy Fitovinany, Atsinanana**)
 - USAID: Rural Access to New Opportunities in Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (RANO-WASH), 2018-2023 (**Vatovavy Fitovinany** Analamanga, Alaotra Mangoro, Vakinankaratra, Amoron'Imania, Haute Matsiatra)
 - USAID: PEER program National Parks, 2018 - 2020 (Vatovavy Fitovinany)
 - USAID: Cooperative Development Program (CDP) - support to the Ministry of Industry and Private Sector Development (MIDSP) to revise the cooperative law and support cooperative sector growth in Madagascar.
 - EU: Appuis au Financement de l'Agriculture et aux Filières Inclusives -Région Sud, 2018-2024 (**Androy, Atsimo Atsinanana, Anosy**)
 - France - AFD: Projet d'Amélioration de la Productivité Agricole à Madagascar (PAPAM), 2016-2020 (**Atsimo Atsinanana (north only)**), Vakinankaratra, Alaotra-Mangoro)
 - GIZ: Projet Adaptation des chaînes de valeur agricoles au changement climatique (PrAda), 2017-2020 (**Androy, Atsimo Atsinanana, Anosy**)
 - IFAD: Programme de développement de filières agricoles inclusives (DEFIS), 2018-2028 (**Androy, Vatovavy Fitovinany, Atsimo Atsinanana, Atsimo Andrefana, Anosy, Ihorombe, Haute Matsiatra, Amoron'i Mania**)
 - IFAD: Programme de Formation Professionnelle et d'Amélioration de la Production Agricole, 2013-2023 (**Androy, Vatovavy Fitovinany, Amoron'i Mania, Analamanga, Analanjirofo, Anosy, Atsinanana, Ihorombe, Itasy, Matsiatra Ambony, Melaky, Menabe, Sofia**)
 - IFAD: Programme de Soutien aux Pôles de Micro-entreprises Rurales et aux Economies Régionales de Madagascar, 2008-2022 (**Vatovavy Fitovinany, Analamanga, Haute Matsiatra, Itasy, Bongolava, Sofia, Boeny, Atsinanana, Analanjirofo**)
 - World Bank: Improving Nutrition Outcomes Using the Multiphase Programmatic Approach Project for Madagascar, 2017-2023 (**Vatovavy Fitovinany, Alaotra-Mangoro, Amoron'i Mania, Analamanga, Bongolava, Haute Matsiatra, Itasy, Vakinankaratra**)
 - World Bank: Safety Net program , 2016-2019 (Atsinanana, **Atsimo Andrefana, Haute Matsiatra, Vatovavy Fitovinany, Vakinankaratra; And Extension of the component #3 FSS in Androy**)
 - Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA): Five-years Food Security Program, 2019-2024 (Imoron'Imania, Vakinankaratra, Itasy)

- Maison des Paysans, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, USDA: Promotion of drought-resistant crops and short-cycle farming, 2016-2019 (**Atsimo Andrefana**)