Responses to FY2020 Food for Progress NOFO Questions

Questions Received June 11 – 17, 2020

1. Does USDA have a preferred citation style (footnotes vs endnotes, MLA vs APA)?
   A: USDA has no preference. In Part D section 3 A of the NOFO, no preferred citation style is provided.

2. Do citations count against page limits, particularly in the strategic analysis?
   A: If an application exceeds the page limit for any section, the application will be reviewed, but the review will be restricted to the section's page limit.

3. Are subrecipient budget narratives required?
   A: No. Separate budget narratives for subrecipients are not required. Applicants must follow the budget narrative example provided in Appendix D of the NOFO. Subrecipient expenses must be provided within the relevant descriptions for the "Professional Services/Contractual" line item(s) of the budget narrative.

4. Will letters of support from relevant stakeholders be considered? If yes, where should these be uploaded?
   A: If subrecipients are proposed, project–specific commitment letters from anticipated subrecipients are required. Letters from other relevant stakeholders are not required and may be uploaded these as "generic" attachments in FAIS. However, for applicants that are proposing substantial cooperation and/or collaboration with entities as part of the Strategic Analysis and the proposed activities, USDA encourages applicants to obtain letters of commitment from these cooperating entities.

5. The purpose of USDA's support in the Dominican Republic, as stated on Page 50 of the NOFO, is to "implement international and risked-based SPS measures that will facilitate local, regional, and international trade". Given this purpose, the activities should be developed to address FFPr Strategic Objective 2 Expanded Trade of Agricultural Products. To clarify, are applicants required to address SO1 Increased agricultural productivity on the Dominican Republic SPS project?
   A: No. Applicants should address the strategic objectives that they deem appropriate to the country guidance. However, USDA does encourage applicants to submit innovative solutions that could meet both Food for Progress strategic goals, while recognizing the primary focus is on SPS.

6. On page 24, under *Mapping* in Section 6 of the document "*Instructions for Submitting Proposals in the Food Aid Information System",* applicants are instructed to "select the Activity that was produced in the preceding Activities section [and] select the Result that was generated from the Results tab". If the applicant plans to "simply input one activity with a reference to where the complete information can be found" (page 22, *Activities*,

Section 6), how would USDA propose this information be carried over to the activities and results tabs under the *Mapping* section?
A: Whenever possible, applicants may choose to indicate which attachment uploaded to FAIS information can be found in rather than doing data entry in FAIS. For example, in the Activity tab in FAIS, the applicant may opt to simply input one custom activity from the dropdown menu and in the textbox reference where the complete information can be found (e.g. See Attachment X). When taking this option, no information will be a carried over to the activities and results tabs under the Mapping section since none was input. Therefore, the applicant will also need to indicate in the results section where the complete information can be found (e.g. See Attachment Y).

7. I have a question with respect to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) - USDA-FAS-10.606-0700-20-(681). Is the award for a single entity, or will USDA seek to award to multiple applicants?
   A: All proposals will be evaluated based on the content areas outlined in Part E of the NOFO. The merits of each application will be reviewed only against other applications received for the same NOFO Number. FAS will choose to award one entity who applied for funding under NOFO # USDA-FAS-10.606-0700-20-(681) based on the merit of the applications submitted and additional factors as outlined in Part E section 2 B of the NOFO.

8. NOFO page 20 states: "Vague activity titles, such as 'training' or 'capacity building,' that do not add to the reader's understanding of how the proposed project's specific work will contribute to each result should be avoided." However, when creating an Activity in the FAIS application portal, the system requires applicants to select from a list of standard activity titles. Does USDA expect applicants to use these activity titles for the Plan of Operations?
   A: This statement on p. 20 refers specifically to the results framework graphic that the applicant is required to build and submit as an attachment (see Appendix A, Application Content Checklist, where the project-level results framework is listed as an attachment). While it's not required that the activity titles in the results framework are identical to the activity titles used in other sections of the proposal, specifically in cases where the FAIS-provided titles may be considered vague or broad, the reviewer must be able to identify by its description which activities the proposer is referring to in the results framework graphic. However, USDA encourages applicants to use the activity titles as listed in FAIS as a first option in the Plan of Operation.

9. **Page 18, Curriculum Vitae, Organizational Capacity and Staffing states:** "Curriculum Vitae (CV) for proposed project lead (submitted as a separate attachment, 4-page limit)."

   Question: Please confirm (4) four pages are allowed per curriculum vitae presentation, should the applicant identify additional key personnel positions/candidates, beyond the Chief of Party/Country Director role?

A: The Applicant must attach, as part of the proposal, the CV for the proposed project lead. Additional CVs are not requested.

10. In DR SPS NOFO, component 3 suggested activity of training farmers in SPS protocol, does this have to do specifically with cold chain as component 3 is titled? Was this mistakenly included in component 3?
    A: The activity was listed under component 3 to highlight that cold chain training activities at the production level can also be considered by applicants.

11. Does USDA expect the Child Labor Analysis to include other value chains and crops or just vanilla?
    A: The Child Labor Analysis should focus on the vanilla value chain as well as any other value chains and crops that are being proposed by the applicant. As explained on pages 10 and 55 of the NOFO, applicants should reference the DOL guidelines on locations and at-risk value chains to determine which value chains need the child-labor analysis.

12. I am organizing a knowledgeable team of Liberian and U.S. emerging market development specialists from local colleges to work with the Ministry of Agriculture in Liberia to apply for the USDA funding opportunities.

    Is the Republic of Liberia eligible to apply for this opportunity?
    A: Please see Part C of the NOFO for information on eligible applicants and eligibility criteria. Please note, one entity, with a distinct SAM.gov registration and DUNS number, should be identified as the Applicant. All other involved entities are proposed as subrecipients.
    Though Liberia is not listed as a priority country in the FFPr NOFO, FAS will review all applications submitted by eligible entities that are complete and submitted by the application deadline. Please note, priority will be given to the priority countries listed in the Food for Progress NOFO.

13. I saw that Uganda is one of the countries that this grant is available for. Can you tell me if a coffee company can be awarded this grant, and if a for profit business is eligible too?
    A: Correct. In Part C section 1 of the FFPr NOFO, "any other private entity" is listed as an eligible applicant to apply for funding. Please note, FFPr awards are cooperative agreements and not grants.

14. Page 19, Section, Past Performance Review paragraph states, *"Applicants are strongly encouraged to include at least one form from a reference with knowledge of the Applicant's performance of a past or active award outside of the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, the USDA Local and Regional Food Aid Procurement Program, or the FFPr Program. These reference forms do not have page limit restrictions."* However, Solicitation Modification No.1 dated June 12, 2020, modified Part D Section 3 c iii Organizational Capacity and Staffing Past

Performance Reviews, Page 19 to add *"Please note that, when requesting a Past Performance Review, these responses cannot be conducted by any current FFPr or McGovern Dole staff."*

a. Would USDA please confirm if a regional USDA Agricultural Attaché can be a reference for an FFPr project past performance?
A: Yes. Agricultural Attaché can be a reference for an FFPr project past performance. Only current FFPr or McGovern-Dole staff are precluded from providing a reference.

b. If not, would USDA please clarify who it is recommended to serve as a reference for the Food for Progress-funded project?
A: N/A.

15. Page 48, Colombia Cacao states, "*Whenever possible, the proposal will support youth and women-led businesses to develop markets for complementary crops."*

a. Would USDA expect applicants to include gender- and youth-focused activities?
A: USDA expects applicants to make the case for strategies that can promote women and youth-led businesses for complementary crops. If this case can be made as part of the applicant's strategy, USDA encourages the inclusion of activities focused on youth and women, as stated in the Country Guidance.

b. Would USDA please also clarify if it is expected that applicants consider segregating the performance indicators targets by gender/youth?
A: Yes. Many standard indicators are required to be disaggregated by gender, and some by age. Applicants should review each indicator in the handbook for required disaggregates. Additional relevant disaggregates may be added to standard indicators, and for custom indicators applicants should propose relevant disaggregates. For targets specifically, applicants are only required to set targets at the aggregate indicator level (i.e. for the indicator as a whole) in the indicator table submitted as part of the proposal. Should an award be made, awardees will later set targets at the disaggregate level.

16. Are United Nations Agencies eligible for Food for Progress awards?
A: Correct. In Part C section 1 of the FFPr NOFO, "any other private entity" is listed as an eligible applicant. UN Agencies, like all FFPr implementers, must sign the terms and conditions of an agreement with USDA.

17. Amidst ongoing COVID-19 travel restrictions and to ensure that proposals to USDA fully reflect host-country input, may Applicants request a 15-day extension of the due date for the FFPr proposals?
A: While FAS appreciates Applicant's intent to fully engage host country stakeholders, no extension to the deadline will be given. The announcement closes at 5:00:00 P.M. EDT on July 14, 2020.