Responses to FY2020 Food for Progress NOFO Questions

Questions Received June 4 – 10, 2020

1. In the Synopsis for the program, the Cashew Sector is described as applicable to 'West Africa Regional'. However, in the Public Meeting PowerPoint presentation (see Slide #20), Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria are defined as Priority Countries (although all with much further developed economies than Sierra Leone).
   Can you kindly clarify for me if a Project Proposal from Sierra Leone would qualify for consideration?

   A: The Country Guidance for Cashew beginning on page 57 of the NOFO describes the type of project USDA seeks, focusing on the priority countries: Cotê D'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria. Sierra Leone was not included for this year. All proposals will be evaluated based on the content areas outlined in Part E of the NOFO.

2. The Offeror requests confirmation that applications should include in the budget the costs of carrying out a Post Monetization Assessment.
   A: USDA confirms that the Post Monetization Assessment will be a requirement of the agreement, thus costs should be included in the budget of proposal.

3. The Offeror requests confirmation that commodity management and organizational capacity should be submitted under the "generic" file type from the pulldown menu.
   A: Correct.

4. The Offeror requests clarification as to which file type from the pull-down menu the Plan of Operations and Activities should be uploaded.
   A: The "generic" file type can be selected from the dropdown menu.

5. In addition to the list of activities included in the FAIS pull down menu, is there a document which includes a list of USDA activities and their definitions which can be provided to Offerors?
   A: General information can be found on the USDA FAS website, including a list of awarded projects from recent fiscal years. Select project document may be found in the USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse, which USDA is working to update year round. All other requirements can be found on the FAIS frontpage.

6. **Page 14. Application Format, Bullet #5 states:** "All submitted applications must…. Be submitted in pdf."
   Question: The Offeror requests confirmation that a cover page can be included in the PDF file and is not counted toward the page limit restrictions.

A: Correct. A cover page will not count toward the page limit restrictions, but it should not include details of the proposed project. Any information substantive to the proposal that is contained in a cover page will not factor into USDA's objective review.

7. **Page 21, Section D-Application & Submission information, c.iii states:** "Each result the proposed project is working towards should have one or more corresponding indicators in the indicator table."
   Question: The offeror requests confirmation that an indicator can be assigned to more than one result in the results framework.
   A: Correct, but the applicant must ensure that this is clearly explained in the proposal.

8. **Page 49 Appendix B- Country Specific Guidance, Colombia, metrics states:** "Beyond the use of standard Food for Progress indicators, the proposal will include and pilot the evaluation of broader improved landscape management and living income goals throughout its implementation. This should be done in partnership with international knowledge leadership partners/subcontractors on the topic that will stay engaged throughout the project's duration."
   Question: The offeror requests clarification if this narrative is meant to ensure the implementor commits to a pre-agreement with a local or international organization for collecting/leading the collection of living income and/or landscape management data, instead of the implementor conducting direct data collection themselves.
   A: Applicants should follow data collection and evaluation guidelines found in the IFAD monitoring and Evaluation policy. USDA leaves it open to the applicant to propose an effective strategy to evaluate improved landscape management and living income. USDA encourages applicants to include experienced partners in their project strategy to meet this requirement, but we will also accept proposed plans to subcontract through a competitive process, given that this process is detailed in the proposal.

9. **Page 60, West Africa Cashews, Component 2: Farmer Investment Fund states:** "The proposal should provide a detailed plan to establish a farmer investment fund that provides supplier cashew farmers ownership stake in the processing businesses established by this project." Earlier in the solicitation, **page 59, West Africa Cashews, Component 1: Capital Investment Fund states:** "The proposal should provide a detailed plan to raise seed funding from the private and public sector, as well as through other channels such as impact investors, to establish an investment fund of $45 million with USDA's financial assistance."

   Question: The Offeror requests confirmation that the farmer investment fund is included in the $45M capital investment fund noted in Component 1.
   A: Correct, the farm investment fund is part of the $45 million.

10. On page 27 in the Monetization section it lists three subsections: "Impact on Other Sales," "Private Sector Participation in Sales of Commodity" and "Assuring Receipt Procedures." In

FAIS, there are two additional fields “Sales Proceed Usage Activity Implementation” and “Expected Interest Earned”. From the FAIS Proposal Submittal Instructions it notes that the fields are required. Should these two additional fields be included in the 3-page commodity management narrative or are they optional?
A: “Sales Proceed Usage Activity Implementation” is the proceeds expected from the sale of the proposed agricultural commodities that will be monetized for the proposed project. “Expected Interest Earned” is the interested expected from the interest-bearing account that is required in the NOFO. These should be included in the Budget Narrative, an example of which begins on page 62 of the NOFO.

11. If the metrics component is part of the monitoring and evaluation?
A: Yes, they are part of the M&E section. USDA encourages applicants to propose innovative custom indicators.

12. If the monitoring and evaluation component can be executed by one of the consortium partners? Or does it need to be executed by an external party?
A: The NOFO requires the submission of a staffing plan, which should include the staff needed to conduct the project monitoring activities. In addition, the IFAD Monitoring and Evaluation Policy states that the Mid-term and Final evaluations are required to be conducted by an independent third party.

13. For the Food for Progress project on SPS in the Dominican Republic, which value chains will the project work on for SPS training, cold chain services and other support?
A: USDA expects project activities to impact a variety of value chains and does not limit applicants to any one value chain in this project. The applicant should provide clear justification based on the requirements of the Country Guidance when focusing on specific value chains.

14. We have been approached by multiple organizations to participate in proposals for the FFPr program. I would like to check with you if we are allowed to participate as subaward on multiple proposals?
A: Yes, an organization may participate as a subawardee under multiple proposals. There is no limit on the number of applications which an Applicant may submit and no limit on the number of proposals a potential subawardee may participate on.

15. We are writing an innovative on cashews for Tanzania and would like to know if our proposal on cashews will be reviewed alongside the ones for the prioritized West Africa
A: Yes, but USDA strongly encourages applicants to propose projects that meet the requirements of the Country Guidance and NOFO. We will accept proposed alterations or additions to our Guidance, but USDA expects a compelling justification for these changes to be included in proposal.

16. When can we expect the project reports from the existing Dominican Republic FFPr projects be posted to the DEC (as mentioned in previous question and answer response)?
A: USDA expects to upload any available and cleared evaluation reports for projects in the Dominican Republic within 2 weeks. Please check the DEC regularly.

17. On page 19 in the Past Performance Records (PPRs) section, it notes that applicants are required to select references affiliated with each PPR. If a past performance includes an analyst who is no longer at USDA, can the reference be sent to the analyst that was responsible for the project?
*A: Yes. When requesting a PPR, applicants may seek references from former USDA analysts. The modification to the NOFO issued on June 12th clarifies that PPR responses cannot be completed by any **current** FFPr or McGovern Dole staff.*

18. Could you provide the estimated prices for "all Beef Packer Tallow" and "Salmon, Pink (Canned)"?
A:The canned salmon averages $4,500 to $5,000 per metric ton. All Beef Packer Tallow is an average of $700 per MT. The tallow is a bulk product not used for human consumption.