



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**Subject: *Amendments and Q&A on Request for Application
(RFA) Number M-OAA-EGAT-605, John Ogonowski Farmer-to-Farmer
Program (FTF) Leader with Associates (LWA) Cooperative Agreements***

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Regarding the above-referenced RFA, please find below related amendments and Q&A.

Sincerely,

Martin Fischer
Agreement Officer

Amendments

1. **Page 8:** Table 2, delete “Congo” from East Africa. [*Please note that Congo remains in the West Africa section.*]
2. **Page 12:** Delete the following sentence: “Applications in response to this RFA shall include detailed proposals for at least one Country FTF Project and shall provide further details of a plan for developing additional Country FTF Projects.”
3. **Page 33:** Under “Annexes and Other” point (5), add “(except for Tables 2 and 8)” after “Indicator Tables.”
4. **Page 38:** Past Performance References, add the following statement: “Past Performance References are required only for subcontractors that are to receive 25 percent or more of the estimated award cost.”
5. **Page 61:** Table 4, delete footnote 2 in its entirety and renumber subsequent footnotes accordingly.

Q&A

1. Page 1 of the RFA states that USAID expects to compete and award 6 to 8 awards. Starting on page 29, Section II – Award Information explains that there will be 4 awards in the Caribbean/African Regions and 2 awards in the Non-Caribbean/African

Regions for a total of 6. Does this mean there will only be 6 awards as opposed to 8 – and not one for each region?

Response: See Section II.1. (pages 29-30). USAID *expects* to make six awards, but may make additional awards at a later date up to one year after the deadline for Applications, if funding and program considerations permit.

2. If there are only 6 awards, does this mean that two of the regions will not have a Farmer to Farmer program? Or will funding for a Farmer-to-Farmer program in those regions occur at a later date? If funding is to be made available at a later date, would an awardee still be selected at this time?

Response: Some regions will not have awards at this time. There may or may not be awards at a later date. Applications will be evaluated at this time, but discussions may be left open with some Applicants pending clarifications on funding and programs.

3. Can you please confirm that each region, regardless of cost structure, will have a budget of \$7.5 million?

Response: See Section II.1. (pages 29-30). The budget level estimate for all Agreements is \$7.5 million. Actual budgets will depend on applications and discussions.

4. The first bullet on page 35 says that the Results Planning section should include: “Potential for substantive and sustainable developmental impacts within the context of the FTF program, including projection of estimated life-of-project targets for the Recipient FTF Program for all Standard FTF Performance and Impact Indicators (See Section I).” Obviously, Tables 2 and 8 are only relevant to reporting during implementation. Please clarify if EGAT is requesting estimated LOP targets for Standard FTF Table 2 (Cumulative Number of Volunteers by State or Origin) and Table 8 (Name of Volunteers, etc). Can we drop these from the application, though we understand we will be expected to report on all tables during actual implementation?

Response: Estimated LOP targets should be included. These are obviously estimates and will be revised as appropriate as Country Projects are defined in Work Plans. The observation regarding Tables 2 and 8 is well taken. These Standard FTF Indicator Tables 2 and 8 may be omitted from the application.

5. Is it acceptable to place Key Personnel References at the end of each CV? May the requisite references for Key Personnel be included in the CVs for these personnel?

Response: Yes. Yes.

6. Should the FTF Standard Indicators be included twice – once for life-of-project for all countries and once by year for the detailed Country FTF Project?

Response: Yes.

7. Is it possible that USAID may decide to issue multiple awards for a single competitive grouping? If USAID determined to issue multiple awards under a single competitive grouping, would this result in fewer or no awards in other competitive groupings? If there were multiple awardees in a single competitive grouping, would USAID provide funding of \$7.5 million per awardee, or would it be that the two awards would equal \$7.5 million?

Response: See Section II.1. (pages 29-30). USAID *expects* to make two awards in “Non-Caribbean/African regions”. Level of each award will depend on the Application and discussions, but USAID estimates each at approximately \$7.5 million. USAID may or may not make additional awards at a later date.

8. Please confirm that applicants can submit multiple applications in Competitive Group 5 (Page 30) of the RFA.

Response: Yes. Confirmed.

9. Can applicants submit multiple applications for any of the other competitive groups (page 29-30)?

Response: Yes, but there seems no reason to do so.

10. Page 12 of the RFA, states that applications “shall include detailed applications for at least one Country FTF Project and shall provide further details of a plan for developing additional Country FTF Projects.” Can you clarify if you intend for applicants to develop a detailed application for at least one Country FTF Project for a single Core Country, or for each Core Country, in addition to providing further details of a plan for developing additional Country FTF Projects in each Core Country?

Response: See Section IV.4 (page33). Applications should include a complete application for one Country FTF Project, not one for each Core Country. The quoted language on page 12 is deleted per amendment (above).

11. Page 33 of the RFA states that Past Performance References are part of the Annexes. Please confirm, will Past Performance References be evaluated if they are in an Annex or should they be included as part of the 35-page body of the technical application?

Response: Past performance references and contact information should be provided and will be evaluated in annexes.

12. Are Past Performance References required for subcontractors?

Response: Yes, but only for subcontractors proposed to receive 25 percent or more of the estimated award cost. See amendment (above).

13. Please confirm whether it is envisioned that each country will have approximately two or three Country FTF Projects, and each of the Country FTF Projects will be linked to a single FTF objective.

Response: Core countries may have one or more Country FTF projects. Funding constraints make it unlikely that there would be more than three or four, but there is no defined limit. Different FTF Country Projects may have different objectives.

14. Page 9 of the RFA states that "USAID expects to establish a separate mechanism for funding smaller specialized FTF Programs targeting special topics, minority-serving institutions (MSIs), individual country programs, or new program areas and sources of volunteers." Can you provide information on this "separate mechanism" as to: when it will be announced; the submission date for applications; the format, page requirement, page limit and eligible countries; funding limit; and requirement for USAID Mission support or coordination? Please clarify the anticipated timing for the separate mechanism and, if possible, the scope for the smaller specialized FTF Programs (page 9). Is it expected that these institutions should submit applications in this round of bidding or wait for the separate mechanism to be announced? Will there be an MSI RFA this year?

Response: No information is available on this separate mechanism. It may or may not be funded. It is noted in the RFA merely to indicate that Recipients of awards under the RFA may be required to coordinate their programs with other activities. Applications for funding under that mechanism can not be submitted under this RFA.

15. Does the Leader With Associates Cooperative Agreement award require that applications include a consortium of sub-awardees that would be eligible to implement Associate award agreements?

Response: No. The leader-with-associates mechanism refers to awards – a Leader Award with provision for additional Associate Awards. It does not require a leader organization as prime awardee with sub-contracted associates. Participation of sub-contractors and sub-grantees can be included in applications, as appropriate, where this strengthens implementation capacity without adding to administrative costs and complexity. Information on the Leader With Associates (LWA) mechanism can be found at: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf>.

16. The RFA lists annexes to be included in the application, including page limits, but states on pages 33 and 35 that "Annexes.....shall be relevant and supportive of the program description." Is it therefore acceptable to include annexes other than those

listed, if they are highly relevant and supportive of our approach? If so, what is the page limit for additional annexes?

Response: Yes. Other annexes can be included, as appropriate and useful to present the applicant's proposed response to the RFA. All annexes must fit within the page limit for annexes.

17. Should applicants include letters of commitment from proposed key personnel as an annex to the application?

Response: Letters of commitment need not be included as annexes at this time, but applications should confirm the commitment of the proposed key personnel to accept the proposed position.

18. Page 33 of the RFA lists in detail the allowed annexes (and associated page limits) for this solicitation. However, there is not a reference to Letters of Commitment and other supporting documentation. Are these also to be included and, if so, is there a page limitation on such materials?

Response: Letters of commitment need not be included as annexes at this time, unless the applicant considers them critically important to presentation of the program application. Applications should confirm the commitment of the proposed key personnel or sub-awardees to the project. These and any other supporting documentation must fit within the overall page limitations.

19. Is it acceptable to provide letters of association/commitment from sub-grantees or partners as an annex to the application? If so, will this be counted within the page limits the RFA outlines for Annexes?

Response: Yes. Yes.

20. The form provided for Past Performance References on page 125 does not include a place to insert a description of the work or services provided. Is it acceptable to add a line in the form where we can insert this information? Alternatively, can this type of information be provided as an attachment to the form? If so, will this attachment be counted within the page limits the RFA outlines for Annexes?

Response: Yes. Yes. Yes.

21. Footnote 2 on page 61 of the RFA states: "Resources mobilized are resources that FTF volunteers assist their hosts in accessing, such as various sources of credit, state assistance, PL 480 local currency, other donor assistance, etc." Does EGAT intend that the resources mobilized indicator will remain in Table 1 and the reference to resources mobilized in footnote 2 under Table 4 should be deleted?

Response: Yes. See amendment (above).

22. Please consider changing the Source, Origin and Nationality Geographic Code from 000 to 935.

Response: The Source, Origin and Nationality Geographic Code is 000.

23. Can Past Performance Report forms, charts, and/or tables, use a font size/font other than New Times Roman 12 pt.?

Response: Yes, as long as these are “easily readable”.

24. Please clarify if USAID only wants CVs for Key Personnel.

Response: CVs are required only for Key personnel positions. Applicants may include CVs for additional project staff, if this is considered useful to presenting the applicants program application, subject to page limitations.

25. Page 17 of the RFA states, “the total number of Key Personnel, up to that maximum of five individuals, will therefore depend on the number of core countries in which the Recipient proposes to implement Country FTF Projects.” Does this indicate bidders may include a maximum of 4 core countries in the FTF Program?

Response: USAID policy generally limits the number of key personnel positions under an agreement to five. This is what drives the limitation on number of proposed key personnel to be proposed. There is no limitation on number of core countries, except that of funding, which may limit the number of countries in which an applicant can effectively manage a technically-sound program.

26. Please clarify the contents of the charts, results, indicators, and other tables to be included in the Annexes and Other to the Technical Application, which is listed as point “(5)” in the outline under Section IV., a. Page Limits on page 33 of the RFA.

Response: This would include Tables presenting life-of-project indicator targets for Standard FTF indicators and any other attachments that the applicant determines is important in presenting the proposed program, subject to page limitations.

27. Annex D (pages 57-64) of the RFA presents the Standard FTF Reporting Tables 1-8 for recording Indicators. Are these Tables expected to be included in the Annexes and/or application?

Response: Standard FTF Reporting Tables 1-8 may be included in either the application or the Annexes, but it was thought likely that applicants would choose to include these in annexes. Tables 2 and 8 need not be included, in the technical application.

28. On page 35, for Results Planning – first and third item, the RFA says "including all FTF Program Standard Indicators and all Country FTF Project-specific performance and impact indicators." a) Do we need to include ALL Standard FTF Performance and Impact Indicators (page 16 - Table 5) even though some are not relevant to the proposed Country FTF project design", if so, how about targets? b) Should this table include other non-Standard FTF or non-country project specific Indicators identified (i.e. USAID's, IEHA's, FAF's indicators)?

Response: (a) For clarity and consistency, please include all FTF Standard Indicator tables (except 2 and 8) in the application, even though it is understood that a table might not apply to a application. (If a application does not anticipate impacts on financial sector or environmental indicators, table 6 would not apply; or if a application does not anticipate impacts on economic or organizational capacity indicators, table 5 would not apply.)

(b) Additional tables should be included in the application or annexes to present any non-standard FTF indicators. Such indicators may be specific to country projects, program approaches, or other program-specific objectives.

29. Please confirm that USAID requires a results logical framework for just the one fully developed Country FTF project design, and not for the FTF program as a whole.

Response: Confirmed.

30. In the current FtF Program, a volunteer is counted only when they have made an international trip, which makes doing "piggy-back" assignments in one country undesirable. Will this be the case in the next round of FtF?

Response: Definitions for indicators in the FTF programs will likely continue to be the same or similar to those used in the past, but these will be confirmed in a post-award workshop on indicators and reporting. We do not understand the basis for considering piggy-back assignments to be undesirable. This would be the case if the objective were to inflate numbers of assignments. A more desirable objective of increasing developmental impact and cost-efficiency would likely make these desirable.

31. Regarding electronic submission, please clarify whether applicants may submit their technical application and non-budget portions of the cost application in PDF format.

Response: See Section IV.7.

32. Regarding RfA Annex D (FTF Standard Performance and Impact Indicator Reporting Tables), it is our understanding that implementing parties will be expected to report on all tables during actual implementation. Please confirm that these tables need not be completed for application submission.

Response: Tables must be submitted presenting targets for implementation and impact indicators. These may be revised as specifics of Country FTF Projects are further defined during work plan preparation and implementation.

33. Both Republic of the Congo and Democratic Republic of Congo are listed in the West Africa FTF Focus Region. However, Congo is listed again in the East Africa FTF Focus Region. Can USAID clarify which region Congo will belong to?

Response: Congo should appear only in West Africa. Please delete “Congo” from the East Africa region listing in Table 2 (page 8).

34. Where may we find the most up-to-date list of country classifications according to the rebuilding, developing, transforming, sustaining and restrictive categories?

Response: Information on country categories can be found at: <http://www.state.gov/f/c23053.htm>. Up-dated listings of country classifications are not available.

35. The submission packet in grants.gov includes lists 424-C and 424-D as part of the mandatory documents. However, these documents are not mentioned in the written RFA as required, just online, and we are not a construction firm. Please clarify.

Response: SF 424-C and SF-424-D are only applicable to construction programs, so there is no need to complete these forms if they are inapplicable. These forms are included in all www.grants.gov applications packages.

36. Please clarify the dates – in the cover letter and elsewhere in the document, it states it is “a five-year period from FY2008 to FY2012”. Page 30 states that “The anticipated start date is October 1, 2008, with a performance period of five years”, which would make it FY2009 to FY2013.

Response: This is correct. Typically, funding is obligated near the end of a fiscal year, essentially funding activities through the following year. Thus, funding obligated FY2008 to FY 2012 will fund activities from October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2013.

37. The RFA does not address a specific number of Core Countries that can be selected per region in Section 1:1-D (Geographic Focus: Countries and Regions). On page 7: The Recipient's Leader Award FTF Program shall be global in scope, but with core country Farmer to Farmer programs in a limited number of selected core countries within a given geographic region. Core countries are those in which the Recipient carries out one or more Country FTF Projects. However, in Section 1:1-H (Key Personnel), it states that one can propose a maximum of five individuals (one Program Coordinator/Director and up to four Country Directors) and that all core countries must have key personnel. Therefore, it appears that we are able to propose a

maximum of four core countries per region and any other countries where Farmer to Farmer would assist would be in the “flexible” category. Please confirm.

Response: Applicants are free to propose the number of core countries in which their program would work. This depends on the applicant’s program strategy and application and is constrained by funding availability, estimates of which are included in the RFA. RFA Box 2 presents an “illustrative” Recipient FTF Program structure. This is for example only. There is no mandated maximum number of core countries, though funding and implementation consideration will dictate a practical limit. Work in other countries would be in the flexible category.

38. Is there a preference for the number of projects each FTF Core Country should have?

Response: No. This will depend on country and sub-sector need and the applicant’s program strategy.

39. In the outline for the Country FTF Project, item #4 asks for “Key feasibility issues: economic/financial, institutional, environmental, social, technical.” Could you please clarify as there are several ways to interpret “feasibility issues.”

Response: Feasibility issues would include factors that would constrain or enhance chances of success in achieving activity objectives.

40. With regard to the preliminary value chain analysis for the application, it seems as if we are expected to provide one or two examples of basic analysis or sector selection to demonstrate our methodology, with more detailed analysis completed during the first part of implementation. Is this correct?

Response: See RFA Section I.1.F; Section I.1.I; and Section IV.4. Content and structure of the application is up to the applicant. One complete application for a Country FTF Project is required, as well as the overall Recipient FTF Program Description with a draft Work Plan for the First Year.

41. Is it possible to submit a application under the current RFA for less than the \$7.5 million?

Response: Yes.

42. One bullet in the Technical Application Format section of the RFA section 2.d notes that the program implementation and management capacity presentation (page 35) might describe "uses of volunteers in non-traditional assignments". Section I.1.I.d (page 20) notes an option for "use of volunteers as program management interns". How would such volunteers used for short term or long term management of volunteers or analysis of sub-sectors for country projects be reflected in the FTF Standard Indicator Table 3?

Response: For reporting on such use of volunteers, additional columns would have to be added to table 3 under "type of assistance" and "commodity chain activities" to reflect program design and management volunteers. Details on reporting on such assignments will be worked out in a post-award workshop on indicator monitoring and reporting.

43. Question: With the recent news on the global food price crisis, could applications in response to this RFA incorporate partnerships or alliances with private sector firms to provide funding and/or staff as volunteers to address world food production and trade issues?

Response: Yes.