

General Questions

1. Is there a word limit for the Attachments? (e.g., the Introduction, Strategic Analysis and Budget Narrative)

There is no official word limit. We would suggest that applicants provide explanations and justifications thoroughly but in a concise style.

2. Page 19 of the RFA states: According to 7 CFR Part 1599.13, all Program Participants must, as provided in the agreement, submit to FAS an interim and final evaluation of the implementation of the agreement. Applicants must also submit baseline data information for performance monitoring indicators and an evaluation baseline report. All evaluations must be conducted by an independent third party. How many of the evaluations (baseline, midline, endline) have to be done by external evaluators?

The midterm and final evaluations have to be conducted by independent external evaluators.

3. Page 94 of the RFA is a list of the attachments required to upload in the proposal. This list includes the Budget Summary and the Detailed Budget, but not the Budget Narrative. Is the Detailed Budget an optional attachment?

Yes. A Budget Summary and Budget Narrative must be included as an attachment to the proposal, but a *Detailed Budget* is optional.

4. Because of time limitations, proposals with a 2 year project period could foreseeably have difficulty documenting changes on project indicators. Do you anticipate another bid process to continue the shorter projects if implemented successfully?

Existing projects are one factor of consideration, but other considerations will also be factored in such as country priorities determined in concert with U.S. Government priorities, annual funding, host-country government support, and others

5. Could you provide guidance on the number of indicators to be used: Is there a threshold or a maximum we must meet?

There is no maximum. We ask that the applicant use all *Standard Indicators* applicable to the proposed program.

6. The guidelines on 'Past Performance Records (PPRs) are inconsistent. "Applicants should include past performance records for no more than three (3) grants or contracts implemented by the organization. Applicants should include grants or contracts that are similar to the type and scope of the proposal. In addition, applicants should include major grants or contracts implemented in the proposed country if applicable. If a project is specifically mentioned in an applicant's introduction section of the proposal, this grant or

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contract must be one of the five records submitted with the proposal.” How many Past Performance Records are required— three or five?

Only three PPRs are required. The second reference to five is a typo.

7. For consortiums of organizations submitting an application together, are the allowable PPRs applicable to the whole consortium or for each consortium member?

PPRs are only required from one principal PVO in the scenario where there is a prime PVO that is providing subgrant(s) to other PVOs to implement specific, discreet aspects of the project. However we recognize other kinds of consortiums. If a consortium comprises two or more PVOs which are equal partners or in a prime/sub arrangement with the sub taking substantial responsibility, then PPRs should be submitted by each consortium member. Each PVO is allowed up to 3 PPRs.

8. What is the breakdown of cash versus commodities (in-kind) for budgeting purposes?

McGovern Dole Program

A loose estimate is that 15 percent goes toward Freight and 30 percent goes toward Commodities. All the rest (55 percent) is allocated to Administrative Costs. Administrative Costs covers all programming and activities, internal transportation, storage and handling, as well as other overhead administration needs.

Although this is an estimate, the percentage for each category (Freight, Commodity, Administrative Costs) can vary substantially between countries and projects depending on (1) the type of commodities requested, (2) the shipping distance to the country and region of the project, and (2) the type/amount of complementary activities.

Food for Progress

Unless CCC provides a cash grant for administrative costs, the entire budget provided is for the purchase and the transportation of commodities. For budgeting purposes the participant should estimate at a minimum 70% of the budget for the program operations..

For example, if the overall grant award is for 15,000,000, then the participant should submit an operating budget for \$10,500,000. This \$10,500,000 would include administration, indirect costs, and activities.

McGovern-Dole Program

1. Page 7 of the RFA states that applicants: *Identify the targeted beneficiaries, regions, and specific needs of the targeted population and the rationale on why they were chosen.* Does this require the applicant to identify concrete names and locations of schools, or can these be identified in the first 6 months of project implementation?

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While specific names of schools and exact locations are not required, we do suggest that the applicant be as specific as possible in describing the targeted beneficiaries, their grades/ages/schools/physical location of schools. For example, targeted beneficiaries will be primary school aged children attending schools located in the municipality of X in the Cap Haitien region.

2. Targeted Areas for Haiti are Cap Haitien, Port-au-Prince, and St. Marc. Will USDA give preference to applications that propose to work in all three areas?

Proposals need not cover all three regions, but would need to provide strong justification for selecting a specific region or regions.

3. Will applications that propose to work in only two of the targeted areas be evaluated lower than those that propose to work in all three?

The strength of the justification for selecting a specific region or regions or limiting work to specific regions will play a crucial part in the evaluation of the application.

4. Would it be possible to provide more information on what is meant by 'region'? Does Port-au-Prince mean "greater Port-au-Prince" including Croix-des-Bouquets, Delmas, Carrefour, which are officially independent villages, etc. and the same for St. Marc and Cap Haitien? Or does it include the whole "corridor" from Port-au-Prince up to Cap Haitien? If it refers to the last, is it possible to give the limits of the corridor considered in this project?

Priority is given to the geographic areas of the U.S. Government Development Corridors: Cap Haitien, St. Marc and Port-au-Prince.

5. In the case of Haiti does "school-aged children" refer to the three sections of the Elementary School, classes 1 to 9?

In general, the core grades are 1-6 for primary schools however this may differ from country to country and could include higher grades.

6. Are Pre-K and Kindergarten included as part of the beneficiaries?

Yes, Pre-K and Kindergarten students may be included as beneficiaries.

7. Page 20 of the RFA makes reference to 'special studies'. Certain conditions such as anemia or HIV among school age children, as well as filariasis and incidence of cholera have a high impact on school attendance, attentiveness and learning. We would like to inquire if a baseline assessment would be counted as a 'special study'.

No, a baseline assessment does not count as a special study. The baseline assessment is considered to be an integral part of the overall Evaluation Plan which also includes the Midterm and Final Evaluations.

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8. Page 37 of the RFA mentions (for Haiti): *Proposals do not need to cover all Feed the Future regions in Haiti, but need to provide a strong justification(s) for selecting a specific region(s).* Is current organizational presence in or near the proposed region considered a 'strong' justification?

Organizational presence in the priority country can be regarded as a strength. Taken on its own however, this may not be sufficient justification for selecting a region to work in, particularly if it's not within a priority region identified in the solicitation.

9. Would USDA consider targeting a region adjacent to one of their stated priority regions?

Priority consideration will be provided to those regions stipulated in the solicitation however FAS may consider other regions. As with the priority regions, the applicant will have to provide a strong justification for selecting another (adjacent) region.

10. Page 37 of the RFA mentions: *To support the MGD goal of creating sustainable, nationally-owned school feeding programs, competitive proposals will demonstrate how the applicant will work with the Government of the Haiti to strengthen its national school feeding program, "Programme National de Cantines Scolaires."* Is there any preference or restriction to work with public schools versus community, private and/or religious schools?

There is no restriction or preference to work with public schools.

11. The World Bank School Feeding program also requires the distribution of an Early Morning Snack. Would it be possible to include the purchase and distribution of a locally made snack, made from Haitian ingredients, within the project proposal and budget?

McGovern-Dole statute does not allow for funds to be used for local and regional procurement of commodities. The applicant may choose to provide two meals i.e. snack and lunch under its proposed program using US-donated commodities. In general student attentiveness is low and an early morning snack is strongly recommended to improve learning.

12. Page 54 of the RFA mentions that: *more consistent teacher attendance is a necessary result for improving the quality of literacy instruction. Projects should seek to support activities and approaches that promote and incentivize consistent and punctual teacher attendance. Examples of this may include distributing take home rations, additional classroom supplies and awards to teachers that meet attendance and time in instruction project goals, as well as building teacher housing near schools in remote areas.* Can the project plan for teachers' take home rations, even if all food for students will be spent on wet rations?

Take Home Rations (THRs) for teachers and other beneficiaries are permitted. The applicant however, must demonstrate how the use of THRs will lead to the expected result.

Food for Progress Program

1. Sierra Leone is as a priority country for the McGovern Dole Program. However, we intend to apply for the Food for Progress program in Sierra Leone. Will our application be taken into consideration?

Funding priorities will be first directed to the countries prioritized for Food for Progress in the FY 2016 solicitation. All proposals that are submitted will be reviewed regardless. Strong justification for selecting Sierra Leone, consistent with the results framework and strategic objectives of the Food for Progress program should be submitted in the proposal.