Questions and Answers on the 2016 USDA FAS Food Aid Programs Solicitation

Week of August 31, 2015

General Questions

1. Please clarify which date is the correct submission deadline?

   The submission deadline is 5:00 p.m. EST on October 14, 2015

2. **Cost Sharing vs. Cash or Non-Cash Contribution:** Page 4 of the guidance notes that cost share is to be listed in budget narrative. Page 5 of the guidance requires that applicants must also document these non-CCC cash or non-cash contributions on the SF424. Page 106 of the guidance defines cost sharing as "the portion of project expenses, or necessary goods and services provided to carry out a project, not paid or acquired with Federal funds. The term may include cash or in-kind contributions provided by non-Federal entities". There is no definition listed for "contributions". On page 89 of Appendix F, the guidance references the "other details" section within FAIS where the PVO will be required to list any "cash or non-cash contributions". <u>Can USDA please clarify the difference between "cost share" and "cash or non-cash contribution" and clarify what type of details should be included within the budget narrative versus what should be included in the other details section of FAIS</u>.

   Cost share and *cash or non-cash contribution* are used interchangeably. They refer to any non-federal government sponsored contribution to the program. Examples could include (1) cash contributions by the country government, (2) in-kind contributions of time and materials by country government staff members, (3) cash or in-kind contributions by local communities in terms of labor, materials for the program, and (4) non-federal cash or in-kind aid (such as text books, water supply facilities) by other parties. These contributions must be listed in the budget narrative and included on the SF424. Starting in FY 2016, any proposal which discusses a contribution/cost share (whether cash or in-kind), will need to include the value both in the budget and in the SF-424. FAS will require this contribution/cash share to be met. The amount of contribution/cash share can be amended. It is not required to itemize these contributions elsewhere in the FAIS application process.

3. Would it be acceptable to submit a draft proposal attachment that would have all 8 sections as a reference (in addition to FAIS entry)?

   Applicants should avoid redundant and potentially confusing attachments.

   Food for Progress
   Sections of the proposal which must be submitted as attachments are listed on page iv under "What Is New In 2016"

   McGovern-Dole Program
   Sections of the proposal which must be submitted as attachments are listed on page iii under "New in 2016"

4. Page 11 of the FY2016 FFPr solicitation indicates that "A detailed budget is not required and will not be reviewed." However, the guidance for Section 9: Attachments in the FAIS system

(on pages 95-96 of the solicitation) indicates that *a detailed budget is required*. Could you kindly confirm that a detailed budget is NOT required?

A detailed budget is not a requirement.

5. If we propose a project that is building on prior success, would this result in us being allocated a smaller overall budget?

   No, during the proposal review process we do not distinguish –in terms of the monetary levels of the grant–between new projects and continuations of projects that have been funded earlier, which build on past success. If PVOs have previously implemented grants in a country, from USDA or other donors, in which they are proposing new work under this solicitation, we would expect that project budgets demonstrate parallel use or reuse of PVO resources.

6. We have lined up and partnered with a reputable monetization firm. Another competing organization (who will also be submitting a proposal) wants to use the same monetizing firm. Can two competing organizations submit their bids using the same monetization firm? Will use of the same monetizing firm affect us negatively on proposal review criteria?

   There is no problem with multiple organizations using the same monetization agent or firm. This will not be scored negatively in proposal review criteria. It is incumbent on the organization to judge and demonstrate the merits of any proposed monetization plan (including intermediary agents involved), as the organization would be the responsible party, if awarded.

7. Can a prime applicant propose a non-American, non-local NGO as a subrecipient/implementing partner?

   Applicants may propose any subrecipient. The Applicant themselves must ensure that the subrecipient meet requirements laid out in in 2 CFR 200.331.

8. In the budget, does an implementing partner apply NICRA again the monetization agent's fee?

   The monetization agent fee is a professional service contract and the implementing partner should apply NICRA on the fee in accordance with is negotiated NICRA agreement.

Food for Progress

1. **Value Chains:** Within specific country guidance, USDA infers that the applicant has to address all of the value chains listed. Can USDA clarify if all value chains must be addressed or can an applicant focus on one or two value chains?

   USDA would prefer a description of the main value chain that the proposed program will address. If multiple value chains are impacted, each must be described.

2. When considering the point of sale for land-locked countries (i.e. Malawi, Burkina Faso) should we design sales to be at the port of the country where the commodity discharges (and consider that destination for the shipping expense and cost recovery calculation purposes)? If the point of sale is at the port then is it expected that the buyer take responsibility for transporting the commodity overland/inland to the site of the program implementation?

 Food for Progress *only*
 You should consider USDA will only pay for transportation up to the port of discharge. USDA does not pay for internal transportation, shipping and handling to the final place of delivery. Cost recovery is calculated on the sales price at the port of discharge. It is expected and should be in the sales contract that the buyer will be responsible for receiving the cargo at the port of discharge and handling all additional overland/internal transport costs along with other obligations under CFR incoterm (cost and freight, as defined by the International Chamber of Commerce) sales.