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Subject: Request for Applications for Title II Development Food Assistance Projects for Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, and Liberia

Title: Fiscal Year 2016 Title II Development Food Assistance Projects for Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, and Liberia

The U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Food for Peace (FFP) is seeking applications for funding for development food assistance projects.

Private voluntary organizations or cooperatives that are, to the extent practicable, registered with the USAID Administrator may apply. This includes U.S. and non-U.S. nonprofit organizations. Intergovernmental organizations are also eligible to apply.

Subject to the availability of funds, under this Request for Applications (RFA), FFP plans to enter into up to the number of awards as described in detail in the Country Specific Information (CSI). Please refer to the CSI for a complete description of possible locations and projects.

USAID reserves the right to use any assistance mechanism available to this agency (e.g., grant, cooperative agreement, leader with associates, etc.), and to adjust the number of awards, funding levels, sources of funding, and/or procedures. If Community Development Funds (CDF) are not stipulated in the CSI, applicants may consider requesting Section 202(e) funds. Monetization, if appropriate, will be authorized in the CSI. Levels of resources are driven by the applicants' project designs, but set by FFP for successful applicants. Successful applicants will be notified of any changes or updates, accordingly.

FFP plans to pilot a new programming model in two countries under this RFA. This model, called "Refine and Implement" is described in Annex II. Pilot countries will be specified in the CSI.

Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant, and all preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense. This includes the completion of all required documents for USAID awards.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of USAID. Final awards cannot be made until funds have been fully appropriated, apportioned, allocated, and

committed. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for award.

For the purposes of this project, this RFA is being issued and consists of this cover letter and the following:

[SECTION I – PROGRAM DESCRIPTION](#)

[SECTION II – FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION](#)

[SECTION III – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION](#)

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[ANNEX I: Definitions and Program Elements](#)

[ANNEX II: FY 16 Refine and Implement Pilot](#)

[ANNEX III: Past Performance Reference Questionnaire](#)

To be eligible for the award, the applicant must provide all required information in its application, including the requirements found in any attachments to this opportunity on www.grants.gov. Any future amendments to this RFA can be downloaded from www.grants.gov. This information may also be posted on the FFP website. It is the responsibility of the applicant to use the most up-to-date versions of all of the documents related to this RFA.

The RFA does not contain significant technical information because FFP developed Technical References for potential applicants' review and reference; these can be found [on the FFP website](#).

USAID policy is not to award profit under assistance instruments. However, all reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the agreement activity and which are in accordance with applicable cost standards, may be paid under the agreement.

USAID may (a) reject any or all applications, (b) accept applications for reasons other than cost, or (c) accept more than one application (see Section V - Application Review Information). USAID intends to award predominantly cooperative agreements, but reserves the right to award any other form of assistance agreement. USAID may waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received.

In the event of any inconsistency between this RFA and the referenced documents in the RFA, the RFA shall take precedence over any referenced documents (including the Technical References), **except** statute, regulations and CSI. In the event of an inconsistency in the RFA

documents or in the text of the RFA, it will be resolved at the discretion of the Agreement Officer.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

/S/

Matthew Nims

Acting Director, Office of Food for Peace

SECTION I – PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

I. General Description

The Office of Food for Peace (FFP), in the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA), is the U.S. Government (USG) leader in international food assistance. Through FFP, USAID supports multi-year development (i.e., nonemergency) food assistance projects to reduce hunger and extreme poverty in vulnerable populations by addressing the underlying causes of chronic food insecurity. USAID also provides emergency food assistance to address needs arising from natural disasters and complex emergencies often characterized by insecurity and population displacement. More information on USAID food assistance projects can be found on the [USAID website](#).

This Request for Applications (RFA) provides information on funding opportunities for multi-year development food assistance projects. Development projects are mandated in the Food for Peace Act. The projects are designed to improve food access and incomes through agriculture and other livelihoods initiatives; enhance natural resource and environment management; combat under nutrition, especially for children under two and pregnant and lactating women; and mitigate disaster impact through early warning and community preparedness activities. They are intended to build resilience in populations vulnerable to chronic hunger and repeated hunger crises, and to reduce their future need for ongoing or emergency food assistance. They are increasingly integrated with other USAID efforts to promote resilience and reduce extreme poverty; in fact, FFP receives mission concurrence on the Country Specific Information (CSI) that accompanies the RFA before a project can take place in country. Multi-year development food assistance projects support the President's Feed the Future (FTF) initiative, and in FTF focused and aligned countries, whenever possible, every effort is made to jointly fund these projects with community development funds (CDF) from USAID's Bureau for Food Security—increasing program flexibility and reducing the need to monetize Title II commodities. Note that Title II assistance made available pursuant to this RFA may be used to meet emergency/exceptional circumstances as provided in accordance with the terms of those awards and 22 CFR 211.5(o).

More specific information on the objectives, activities, geographic locations targeted within the countries, and/or funding levels and types covered by this RFA may be found in the CSI posted on the [Country Fact Sheets](#) page of the FFP website. In addition, Bellmon analyses¹ and other related resources are also posted to the Country Fact Sheets page, as applicable. It is essential that applicants review the CSI carefully because details contained in the CSI take precedence

¹ For food assistance projects, whether with food aid distribution and/or monetization projects, applicants must demonstrate that (a) the distribution (or monetization) of commodities in the recipient country will not result in a substantial disincentive or interference with domestic production or marketing in that country; and (b) adequate storage facilities are available in the recipient country at the time of exportation of the commodity to prevent the spoilage or waste of the commodity.

over the generalities contained in this RFA. Please refer to the Agreement Officer's introductory letter for order of precedence.

If conditions permit, as determined by FFP, the application process will include two phases. The first phase is the submission and review of an initial application (technical application and budget). Successful first-phase applicants may also receive letters of invitation to present their projects orally, and to address "topline" issues identified during the initial review of their applications. If they occur, oral presentations will constitute the second phase of the technical review process and will be a condition of the award. After discussions have concluded, the successful applicant(s) will receive a final issues letter, if necessary, and will be required to submit final technical and cost applications.

2. Authorizing Legislation

The FFP Act, Section 201 (7 U.S.C. 1721) General Authority, authorizes the USAID Administrator to establish programs to provide [food assistance] to foreign countries on behalf of the people of the United States to address famine and food crises; combat malnutrition, especially in children and mothers; carry out actions that attempt to alleviate the causes of hunger, mortality and morbidity; promote economic and community development; promote food security and support sound environmental practices; carry out feeding interventions; and build resilience to mitigate and prevent food crises and reduce the future need for emergency aid.

The Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) authorizes USAID to provide development assistance. Certain funds appropriated for this purpose have been made available to FFP. These funds are referred to as Community Development Funds (CDF) and may be used to support FFP development projects, when signaled in the CSI.

For more information, particularly concerning eligible uses of Section 202(e) and CDF funding, please refer to [Food for Peace Information Bulletin \(FFPIB\) 14-01](#).

3. Project Eligibility Requirements

Applications which do not include the direct distribution of food commodities will be considered provided that applicants otherwise propose a sound approach to addressing high rates of wasting, stunting, and food insecurity. Any proposed direct distribution of Title II and/or locally and/or regionally procured (LRP) commodities and/or cash transfers/vouchers must clearly support interventions that sustainably reduce vulnerability to food insecurity, including increasing the availability of nutritious food, building incomes/assets to increase year-long access to a diverse and adequate diet, and/or improving knowledge and behaviors to ensure that food consumption supports health and healthy growth.

4. Award Administration

Awards will be made and administered in accordance with the FFP Act, FAA, as applicable, and U.S. Government regulations. As applicable, the award will be administered under 22 CFR 211, 22 CFR 216, 2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 700, USAID Standard Provisions, and FFP Information Bulletins which are available on the USAID website. Notwithstanding the foregoing, because intergovernmental organizations are subject to different requirements, USAID reserves the right to make awards to such organizations on different terms and conditions than those made to private voluntary organizations and cooperatives.

SECTION II – FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

I. Estimate of Funds Available

Subject to the availability of funds under this RFA, FFP plans to enter into a number of awards as specified in the CSI that has been posted on [the FFP website](#). A separate or amended RFA will be issued for any additional countries.

USAID reserves the right to adjust the number of awards, funding levels, and/or sources of funding. Note that not all funding is interchangeable and some budget adjustments may need to take place. Successful applicants will be notified of any changes or updates accordingly.

2. Anticipated Start Date and Performance Period

The anticipated start date is October 1, 2016. Typically, the award will be issued for a performance period of five years, unless otherwise noted in the country-specific information.

3. Assistance Awards

USAID may (a) reject any or all applications, (b) accept applications for reasons other than cost, or (c) accept more than one application. USAID intends to award predominantly cooperative agreements but reserves the right to award any other form of assistance agreement. USAID may waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received.

USAID may award the resulting assistance award(s) on the basis of initial applications received, without discussions, negotiations and/or oral presentations. Therefore, each initial application must contain the applicant's best terms from a technical and cost standpoint. As part of its evaluation process, however, USAID may elect to discuss technical, cost, or other pre-award issues with one or more applicants. Alternatively, USAID may proceed with award selection based on its evaluation of initial applications received, use an alternative process (e.g., keep or drop oral presentations), and/or commence negotiations solely with one applicant.

4. Authorized Geographic Code

The anticipated authorized geographic code for procurement of goods and services under the prospective award(s) is 935; USAID reserves the right to modify this.

5. Substantial Involvement

In accordance with Automated Directives System (ADS) 303.3.11, the cooperative agreement will require the following elements of substantial involvement by USAID/FFP, if applicable to the project design:

- Approval of the Awardee's Implementation Plans
- Approval of Specified Key Personnel
- Agency and Awardee Collaboration or Joint Participation covering:
 - selection of advisory committee members
 - assessments, analyses, and reviews of the theory of change, project design, and implementation
 - concurrence on the substantive provisions of sub-awards
 - approval of the awardee's performance management and/or monitoring and evaluation plans and evaluation team members
 - monitoring to authorize specified kinds of direction or redirection because of interrelationships with other projects
- Agency Authority to Immediately Halt a Construction Activity

For specifics and additional detail, please refer to ADS Part 303.3.11 - Substantial Involvement and Cooperative Agreements.

SECTION III – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

I. Eligibility Requirements

To be considered for an award, the applicant must be a private voluntary organization (PVO) or cooperative that is, to the extent practicable, registered with the USAID Administrator, or an intergovernmental organization, such as the World Food Program. This includes U.S. and non-U.S. nongovernmental organizations (NGO) as defined in Section 402 of the Food for Peace Act and as described on the USAID website under PVO Registration.

In the case of a consortium, the applicant must be the consortium lead and must identify any other members of the consortium or individuals tied to the implementation of the project as described in the application, along with all sub-awardees. The respective roles of any other members of the consortium or individuals, including all sub-awardees, must be described and separate budgets must be attached for each.

2. New Partners and Local Organizations

USAID encourages applications from potential new partners (i.e., those who have not received any USAID funding previously) and local organizations.

USAID supports applicants signing non-exclusive letters of commitment with local partners, if applicable.

3. Cost Share

Cost share is not required.

4. Minimal Qualification Requirements

USAID has no additional minimal qualification requirements.

5. Limit on Number of Applications

An applicant, defined as a submitting organization, may only submit one application per country under this RFA. However, an applicant may be a sub-awardee on applications submitted by other organizations.

SECTION IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

I. Point of Contact

Questions on RFA Documents

Any questions concerning this RFA, its annexes, any CSI(s), and Technical References must be submitted in writing within 30 days of its posting to Ms. Juli Majernik, FFP grants manager, at jmajernik@usaid.gov with a copy to FACG@amexdc2.com or via mail to the address below:

AMEX International
Attention: FY201X Title II Development Food Assistance Projects RFA
USAID Food for Peace Institutional Support Project
Ronald Reagan Building, North Tower
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 270
Washington, DC 20004, USA

- Please include “FY2016 RFA” in the subject line for email correspondence.

2. Application Format

The application must be specific, complete, and concise. Applications that do not meet the requirements of this RFA will not be considered. The application shall be divided into the following sections, with the maximum number of pages given per section, excluding the table of contents, but including any endnotes and/or footnotes, as follows:

- Cover Page (1 page)
- Executive Summary (2 pages maximum)
- Project Description (35 pages maximum)
- Management and Logistics (8 pages maximum)
- Budget (no page limit, see requirements in paragraph e)
- Annexes (see paragraph f)

The above bullets correspond to the sections of the RFA described below and constitute the general application format. If submissions exceed the page number maximum, only the pages up to the limit will be reviewed, and pages exceeding the maximum will not be considered.

a) Cover Page (1 page)

The cover page must have the following:

- Name of the applicant's organization and country involved in the proposed application;
- Name and title of the organization's representative who has signatory authority and authority to submit the application;
- Name, title, and contact information of the organization's point of contact with whom USAID will coordinate on matters related to the application (if different from the organization's representative with signatory authority and authority to submit the application). Contact information should include mailing address, e-mail, and telephone and fax numbers;
- Title II food assistance request, if any, in metric tons by direct distribution and/or monetization with the percentage of total metric tons requested for monetization, if applicable;
- Total funds requested (in U.S. dollars), including CDF/Section 202(e), and, if relevant, ITSH, cost share, and the monetization budget request in U.S. dollar equivalent, if applicable;
- Valid Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number;
- Registration date in System for Award Management (SAM) – note that successful applicants must maintain SAM registration;
- Participant information as requested in the table below:

Number of Project Participants

Total Direct Project Participants ²	
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Direct Project Participants by Program Element

Program Element ³ (These are examples; a full list of program elements is in Annex I.)	Participant Numbers ⁴	Cost per Direct Participant ⁵
Maternal and Child Health		
Nutrition		
Agricultural Sector Capacity		
Capacity Building, Preparedness and Planning		

b) Executive Summary (2 pages maximum)

The executive summary must have the following:

- Problem Statement, including the underlying causes of food insecurity to be addressed;
- Underlying theory of change (ToC) that describes the hypothesized series of changes to achieve the project's food security objectives considering the context and proposed set of interventions.

² The applicant must present the total number of individuals who will directly participate and benefit from the project over the life of the award. FFP would like to know how many unique people will participate in project activities over the life of award. One participant may benefit from activities in more than one program element. However, when reporting on the total number of direct project participants, this individual should only be counted once.

³ The definitions of program elements come from the U.S. Foreign Assistance Standardized Program Structure (SPS), which was jointly developed by the U.S. Department of State and USAID. The SPS and definitions establish a consistent way to categorize and account for State- and USAID-managed assistance, including a set of commonly agreed definitions. This table contains only four examples. The full list of program elements can be found in Annex I.

⁴ The participant number presented in this table does not have to be unique individual participants. Rather the applicant should present the number of project participants by program element in this table. An individual who participates in activities in more than one program element should be counted once under each program element from which s/he receive benefits. Therefore, an individual can be counted twice or more depending on the number of program elements s/he participates in. However, an individual who participates and benefits directly from multiple activities within one program element should only be counted once.

⁵ Cost per direct participant equals the total budget for the program element divided by the number of individuals directly participating in that program element over the life of the award.

Separate from the executive summary, a life of award Executive Summary Table (EST) is required with five fiscal years of data. The EST will be data entered through FPPMIS.

c) Project Description (35 pages maximum)

The project description must reflect:

1. **Adherence to Country Specific Information.** Provide an explanation of how the proposed project adheres to the information within CSI as indicated in Section VIII – Other Information, I. Country Specific Information.
2. **Analysis of the underlying causes of food insecurity.** This must have the following:
 - Rationale for geographic and participant targeting. FFP strongly encourages considering a geographic focus while targeting. At least all communities within a third level administrative division should be targeted instead of selecting a subset of communities in each administrative division.
 - Brief analysis of the underlying causes of food insecurity (including food access, availability and/or utilization/consumption) in the targeted geographic area and how these causes impact the vulnerable population in the proposed target area. At a minimum, this analysis must include and/or reference appropriate and current data, major determinants and underlying causes of food insecurity and under-nutrition, sources of risk and vulnerability, especially as linked to gender, youth, the environment, and conflict, along with a specific description of the area of intervention (including a map and exact geographic location).
3. **Project Design.** This must include the following:
 - **Theory of Change (ToC):** Every applicant should include a ToC in the project application. A ToC describes the hypothesized series of changes that are expected to occur in a given context as the result of specific activities. In the context of FFP programming, it makes explicit how a project design team thinks outputs from the proposed activities will interact with other concurrent activities and contextual conditions to stimulate or enable a series of outcomes that will ultimately lead to the achievement of desired objective(s). A complete ToC would define all of the necessary and sufficient conditions to effect change at each level, including, for example, policy and institutional requirements, systemic conditions, and complementary activities. It is likely that FFP will not support all of the interventions required to assure outcomes in the ToC, but the ToC must identify where external action is necessary and explain how the project will help ensure that other actors undertake these actions in the required timeframe. (A description of required elements for a ToC and brief guidance can be found in the Technical References on ToC.)

- **Logical Framework (LogFrame):** FFP requires that all applicants submit a brief LogFrame in the project application and a detailed LogFrame matrix as an Annex. LogFrame is a tool that summarizes the ToC and presents the project design in a standard format. It shows the causal linkages between outputs, outcomes, and goal, and identifies the conditions that are external to the project but necessary to achieve the objectives, potential risks and contextual factors critical to the success of a project, along with the indicators that would help to measure and track project performance. The LogFrame consists of a matrix with four columns and many rows, summarizing the key elements of a project, namely:
 - a) Narrative summary: The project’s hierarchy of objectives (Goal, Purpose, Sub-purpose, Intermediate Outcome, and Outputs);
 - b) Assumptions: The conditions external to the proposed project but necessary to achieve project results; contextual environment and key external factors critical to the project’s success;
 - c) Indicators with targets: How the project’s achievements will be monitored and evaluated. In identifying indicators to measure results, applicants must review the [Food for Peace Indicators](#). While all outcome indicators are required, FFP does not require applicants to list all output indicators in the LogFrame. Including only FFP required output indicators in the LogFrame should be adequate. FFP requests applicants to provide targets only for baseline indicators. These targets must be linked to the context, food security and nutritional analyses, and ToC. Applicants’ targets have to be ambitious yet achievable and linked to FFP’s targets; FFP aims to achieve a minimum of 2 to 2.5 percentage point annual reduction of prevalence of stunting⁶, a minimum of 3 to 4 percentage point annual reduction of prevalence of under-weight, and a minimum of 4 percentage annual reduction of depth-of-poverty. For all other indicators, targets must be ambitious yet achievable.

Note: The Indicator Performance Tracking Table is required for successful applicants after the M&E workshop. For those applicants not for the FY 16 Refine and Implement Pilot (see Annex II), the M&E workshops will take place typically within three months of the start date of the award.

- d) Data sources: Where the indicator data will come from, and when it will be collected.

The LogFrame also provides the basis on which resource requirements (inputs) are determined. FFP requests that the applicant follow the following logical hierarchy of narrative summary in developing the LogFrame: **Goal < Purpose < Sub-purpose < Intermediate Outcome < Outputs**. Include the LogFrame in

⁶ Based on an average of cumulative impact over the five years of the project.

the project design⁷ section and attach as an annex. (A description of required elements of a LogFrame can be found in the Technical References on LogFrame.)

- **Analyses:**

Gender: Consistent with USAID’s Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (USAID 2012), all FFP multi-year development food assistance projects are required to complete a gender analysis within the first year of development projects, or within the refinement period in refine and implement countries, to inform project design and strengthen programming. Applicants are required to submit a plan for the Year I Gender Analysis in their application as an annex. The annex, entitled Gender Analysis Plan, should be no longer than four pages. It should include illustrative questions along the applicant’s proposed ToC that the analysis is likely to address, a brief description of tools likely to be used for data collection, an estimated budget, and a focused look at the gender, age, and other socio-economic factors that can facilitate or impede progress along the proposed ToC. Applicants will not be restricted to the details of this plan should their application be awarded, but it should be evident from this plan that the applicant has (1) an understanding of what a gender analysis entails within the context of an FFP project, (2) the capacity to incorporate the analysis findings into the project design, and (3) the capacity to conduct the activities. Applicants should refer to ADS chapter 205 (Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID’s Program Cycle) and the Technical Reference on Gender.

FFP will host a three day consultation in the initial months of the award to bring together implementing partner staff with local leaders and government officials to explore gender and youth issues related to the food and nutrition security of the country’s poor and extreme poor. The consultation will lay the groundwork for the Year I Gender Analysis and for continuing collaboration between partner staff and local leaders in ensuring gender and age issues are addressed effectively and inclusively in all project interventions. Partners will be asked to bring a field team that includes their project’s Gender/Youth Adviser(s), technical staff who understand the technical areas of the award, and at least one senior manager.

Climate Change, Environmental Safeguards and Compliance: In compliance with USAID environmental regulations (22 CFR 216 and Executive Order 13677), it is expected that environmental safeguards and climate risk management strategies are logically integrated throughout the body of the application. Applicants must also summarize plans for climate and environmental safeguards in a four-page Environmental Safeguards Plan. The environment plan is a brief summary concerning how climate/environmental safeguards and

⁷ The LogFrame, to be presented in the project design section, may not need to include outputs. However, outputs should be included in the LogFrame Matrix presented in the Annex.

compliance will be planned for in the project. This stand-alone plan must summarize:

- o How environmental safeguards and climate risk management strategies have been integrated into project design;
- o How climate and environmental stand-alone and integration indicators have been included in M&E systems;
- o How funds for climate and environmental safeguarding have been allocated in the detailed/comprehensive budgets and described in the budget narrative.

USAID developed a high-level FFP RFA-level Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), which describes the overall, global environmental compliance procedures for development food assistance during both the application development and over the life of project (including the Project IEE). This FFP RFA-IEE is a mandatory reference for environmental compliance of FFP development projects.

Project IEE Deadline: Only successful applicants may submit a Project IEE for USAID review. Project IEEs will be an analytic tool that is used during the M&E Workshop. The Project IEE must be updated with any post-workshop changes to the ToC, IPTT, etc., prior to submission to USAID. The Project IEE must be cleared by the USAID DCHA Bureau Environmental Officer prior to the implementation of medium-risk field activities (i.e., classified as a Negative Determination per 22 CFR 216). The Project IEE must be submitted within 60 days after the M&E workshop.

The intent of having the Environmental Safeguards Plan followed by a later Project IEE is to avoid requiring USAID and unsuccessful applicants who are not successful having to devote resources to this analysis. (A description of essential environmental considerations can be found in the Technical Reference on Environmental Safeguards and Compliance.)

Conflict Sensitivity: Applicants should consider and articulate how the project may positively or negatively impact social cohesion, conflict over resources, and/or other social, economic, and political tensions which could contribute to conflict. A conflict sensitive approach must at a minimum avoid inadvertently contributing to conflict. A conflict sensitive approach requires an implementer to (i) understand the conflict context in which it operates; (ii) understand the interaction between its operations and the conflict context; and (iii) act upon these understandings in order to minimize unintended negative impacts and maximize positive impacts of their interventions. Applicants should describe how conflict dynamics were taken into account, including any identified risks that FFP resources will exacerbate conflict, and how these risks will be mitigated throughout the program cycle.

Technical Interventions: Applicants should explain how the proposed technical interventions address country-specific causes of food insecurity. Proposed interventions should be described in sufficient detail to assess their operational and technical appropriateness and feasibility. This must include, at a minimum, the following:

- Type, purpose, location, and feasibility of activities;
 - Systematic description of the links among implementation activities, outputs, immediate outcome, sub purpose, purpose and goal. This section must identify the assumptions at each level of results to complete the logical links, basis for the assumptions, and applicant's plan to track the assumptions;
 - Detail of how each activity will be implemented and by whom;
 - Description of the target population for each activity, direct participants within the target population, including selection criteria, and strategy to promote secondary adoption;
 - Description of how gender and social inclusion will be integrated as a cross-cutting theme under each purpose and the ways in which the knowledge and experiences of women and men of all ages and social groups in the project area will be incorporated as a resource to guide project activities;
 - Discussion of possible effects project activities may have on gender-based violence (GBV) at the household and community levels, and how activities will be tracked overtime to ascertain any unintended consequences related to gender and GBV;
 - Description of how climate-screening and environmental safeguards will be integrated as a cross-cutting theme. Under each purpose, applicants should provide detailed information sufficiently describing how these factors will be integrated;
 - Details of and justification for ration size, selection of commodities, if any is proposed, either imported or locally procured, and the commodities' nutrient contribution to the diet (in the case of rations for pregnant and lactating women and children under age two); if no ration is proposed, details of how the project proposes to address immediate consumptions gaps and/or asset depletion along with quality nutrition gaps for the most vulnerable, particularly children <24 months and pregnant and lactating women, which characterize chronically food insecure households;
 - Description of approach and proposed activities for the promotion of recommended behaviors and practices; and
 - Description of an overall implementation strategy that seeks to create self-financing and/or self-transferring models that will continue to spread under their own momentum both during and after the activity.
- **Refine and Implement:** *If applicable*, details of the refinement period benchmarks envisioned for Year One (see Annex II). A table format with short explanations will suffice.

- **Coordination and Linkages:** Describe how the proposed project will (1) leverage existing public, private and donor investments to achieve the project goal; (2) complement the activities of the local government, and donor facilitated health, nutrition, agriculture, natural resources management and climate change interventions; and (3) support proposed strategies to leverage Feed the Future investments in the region to reduce hunger and extreme poverty in vulnerable populations.
- **Sustainability and Exit Strategies:** Applicants must present thorough and realistic sustainability and exit strategies that will result in lasting change. The sustainability strategy should identify all of the necessary and sufficient critical capacities, practices, behaviors, systems and linkages needed to sustain outcomes. These strategies should build capacity of host country entities, whether private or public, and leverage incentives and investments of key stakeholders to ensure demand and/or supply of goods and basic services are sustained or enhanced once the project withdraws support. Efforts to achieve these ends must be incorporated into the project design at every level, and for any specific tangible resource transfer the project plans to provide to project beneficiaries. The sustainability plan should also reflect the proposed project's ToC and should address all issues pertaining to program phase down, handover, or termination of FFP-resourced activities. Considering that not all strategies, activities, and partnerships will be identified until after project implementation is under way, any feedback loops that will inform refinements in post-award project design should be presented. FFP looks favorably upon efforts to create, wherever possible, self-financing and self-transferring models that will continue to spread under their own momentum both during and after the program. FFP expects that these models will be adopted and adapted by a significant proportion of the population helping to improve both sustainability and impact of the interventions. (A description of required elements related to sustainability and exit strategies, along with a link to supporting references, can be found in the Technical References on Sustainability.)
- **M&E Plan:** An abridged M&E plan that describes the applicant's planned M&E approach. Building upon the ToC and LogFrame included earlier in the project description, the M&E plan should illustrate (1) the applicant's approach to annual monitoring and M&E staffing (with M&E staff included in the organizational chart); (2) the strategy to strengthen M&E capacity; (3) project monitoring; and (4) a short summary budget that includes staffing, monitoring, data quality assurance, project participant registration, and a database. FFP strongly encourages applicants to adapt databases/management information system (MIS) that were developed by partners using FFP resources. FFP may not approve developing a database/MIS from scratch unless it is an awardee's organization-wide initiative that the project must comply with. FFP plans to contract and manage a third-party firm to conduct the project's baseline study, interim and final evaluations. The "refine and implement" applicant

does not need to budget for the baseline, interim evaluation⁸ and final evaluation surveys. However, the applicant for a traditional project⁹ should budget for midterm evaluation. (A description of required elements related to the M&E plan can be found in the Technical References on M&E.)

- **Learning, Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Strengthening:** Applicants must develop a project learning plan that identifies how the project will: (1) ensure robust partner engagement with local government, civil society, other donor funded projects, and local researchers and academics; (2) identify and fill knowledge gaps, including ongoing efforts to understand and assess local context, and community needs and capacities; (3) ensure analysis and application of knowledge to improve project effectiveness; (4) capture and share results, lessons learned, and promising practices, and; (5) strengthen capacity of staff, partners and communities based on best practices and program learning.

d) Management and Logistics (8 pages maximum)

The management and logistics section of applications must include the following:

1. **Management Structure.** The management structure should ensure the efficient use of resources and strong and effective management, technical implementation, and administrative support. Include any details of consortium arrangements, including anticipated sub-awardees or sub-contractors. If a consortium is proposed, letters of commitment from consortium members must be included. Note that USAID supports applicants signing non-exclusive letters of commitment with local partners, if applicable. The applicant should explain the management structure presented in the organizational chart (see Staffing below); personnel management of expatriate and local staff; procurement arrangements for goods and services; and lines of authority and communications between organizations and staff. Also, include a brief description of each key management staff member's role, technical expertise, and estimated time (level of effort) each will devote to the project. USAID requires the key personnel function at 100 percent level of effort (defined as 40 hours/week).
2. **Staffing.** This section describes the applicant's staffing plans for all activities with descriptions of the number and type of each project staff (e.g., project officer, technical officer, field monitors, etc.) and support staff (e.g., financial manager, administrative officer, data entry clerks, etc.) members roles and responsibilities. The staffing plan should specify the composition and organizational structure of the entire implementation team (including home office support). It should also include an organizational chart and the curricula vitae (CV) of the proposed Chief of Party (COP)

⁸ Refine and implement model will have an interim evaluation

⁹ Traditional project that does not follow a refine and implement model will require a midterm evaluation, while refine and implement model would not require a midterm evaluation.

and Gender/Youth Adviser as annexes. In certain contexts, the CSI may specify special staff requirements. FFP's minimum requirements for a COP include:

- o Master's degree in development studies, international relations, agriculture, nutrition, public health or related field;
- o Minimum of ten years of progressively increasing management responsibility in international development projects;
- o Prior experience managing development assistance projects of a similar size and scope in developing countries; experience managing multi-sectoral projects including agricultural development and maternal child health and nutrition;
- o Proven leadership skills. Demonstrated experience recruiting, developing, and managing staff;
- o Demonstrated ability to build and maintain relationships with host governments, donors, other donor-funded projects and stakeholders, local organizations, and partners;
- o Understanding and demonstrated commitment to the importance of gender and youth issues in food security programming;
- o Experience managing programmatic and financial reporting requirements;
- o Excellent oral and written communication skills in English and other language(s), as required;
- o Ability to travel within the country and internationally, as required; and
- o Appropriate references.

FFP considers that attention to gender integration is key to realizing intended outcomes, and expects that the Gender/Youth Adviser will lead gender integration throughout the entire award period. The Gender/Youth Adviser should have:

- In-depth understanding of gender, age and other socio-cultural factors in the context of food security programming;
- Demonstrated capacity to lead the collection, analysis and utilization of information from a broad range of sources in order to ensure effective integration of gender and youth concerns throughout the project's duration; and
- Ability to foster commitment and build capacity among project staff and in-country actors to gender integration and empowerment.

During the issues letter phase, successful applicants may be requested to identify and provide CV for other key technical staff. Possible key technical staff includes those responsible for nutrition and health, environmental compliance, M&E, agriculture, natural resource management, agribusiness, marketing, economics and more. If sub-awardees or a consortium management model are proposed, applicants should describe how the partnerships will be organized and managed to use complementary capabilities most effectively, so as to minimize duplication of home office and local office management structures and the attendant costs to the government. Specify the responsibilities of all principal organizations and the rationale for their selection, and

proposed staff and reporting relationships within and between each of these organizations. The applicant should also describe how they will ensure that standard approaches and procedures for engaging government and local authorities in implementation of activities will be utilized by the applicant and all sub-applicant organizations. Examples could include requiring standard procedures, qualifications, and criteria for hiring project staff across prime and sub-applicant organizations. Indicate timing of engagement of personnel based on anticipation of program needs across the life of project. Include location where proposed staff will be based.

3. **Logistics Plan.** This section includes an overview of the proposed food assistance commodity use, if any, along with commodity-related issues concerning direct distribution and monetization including, but not limited to, commodity requests, commodity substitutions (if select planned commodities are not available from the US or through LRP), commodity certificates, port/warehouse/road/rail infrastructure, commodity management, including fumigation¹⁰, and commodity transportation (including inland and internal transport). The applicant is required to include an Annual Estimate of Requirements and Commodity Pipeline for Title II commodities, i.e., data entered in FPMIS. If the applicant has a current Title II award within the country they are applying, they must indicate any anticipated carry-over commodities and/or resources. Regarding Title II commodities for landlocked countries, applicants must note the designated points of entry (which are limited to four), and for special procurement or shipping requests, such as containerization or through-bills of lading, a detailed justification must be provided.

4. **Monetization and/or Distribution Plan(s).**

For information concerning the Monetization Plan, if applicable, please refer to the CSI. For the Distribution Plan, if applicable, the applicant must discuss the local market factors and potential risks that may affect distribution of Title II and/or LRP commodities. Food assistance commodity distributions need to be planned and implemented in accordance with [FFPIB 09-02](#) entitled, *New Procedures to Determine Compliance of P.L. 480 Title II Food Assistance Program Proposals with the Conditions of the Bellmon Amendment*.

Information on the status of the Host Country Agreement must be included as well. Please see Section VIII – Other Information, 2. Host Country Agreement.

e) Budget (no page limit)

Cost applications include the executive summary table, general budgets, such as the SF 424, SF 424A, SF 424B, comprehensive budget, detailed budget, and budget narrative and must be

¹⁰ In keeping with requirements of the [Programmatic Environmental Assessment](#): Commodity Protection by Phosphine Fumigation in USAID Food Aid Programs (i.e., “Fumigation PEA”).

submitted into FFPMIS separately from the technical application portion; cost applications (i.e., budget components) are not subject to the page limitation of the application. Cost applications must be in U.S. dollars only and include budget details as described below for the applicant, each member of the consortium (if applicable), sub-awardees and/or sub-contractors. Note that for restricted goods, the applicant (or prime in the case of sub-awards or lead in the case of a consortium) must ensure that they are identified in each budget and follow up with any approvals, as required. Applicants are required to minimize their administrative and support costs for managing the project to maximize the funding available for project activities.

1. **Executive Summary Table for the Life of Award.** Separate from the Executive Summary, an Executive Summary Table for the Life of Award must be submitted through FFPMIS. It captures dollar amounts of the proposed Title II commodity resources, if any, and various funding for the life of the award.
2. **Comprehensive Budget.** The comprehensive budget must incorporate all planned costs by object class, category, and funding type (funding source) for each year of the project. The comprehensive budget will be uploaded into FFPMIS.
3. **Detailed Budget.** The detailed/itemized budget must list and account for individual line items within each *object class* and *category* for each program element. Object class categories are logical groupings of costs, such as staff salaries, fringe benefits, travel, capital equipment, supplies, and indirect costs. All costs must be associated with an applicable funding source and program element (see Annex I for definitions). A [suggested budget format](#) is available on the FFP website. All budgets must be completed on a fiscal year basis. Applicants may use budget formats they have developed that contain the requested information or use budget formats, as appropriate, from other sources such as [grants.gov](#). If reimbursement for inland transport charges will be requested, include in the detailed budget an estimate of total U.S. dollars needed for inland transport. If this information is not yet available, please include the estimate and state in the budget narrative when the information will be submitted to FFP.
4. **Budget Narrative.** The budget narrative justifies proposed expenses and explains how costs were estimated. Applicants must provide their rationale for cost development, such as the methodology and assumptions used to determine individual costs. For ease of review, budget narratives must follow the order of line items in the detailed budget and should contain clear explanations.
5. **Cash and LRP information entered on FFPMIS.** Please note, for applications requesting enhanced Section 202(e) and CDF, the following information is required: month, country, total request amount, program element, activity, fund type, and modality. If requesting LRP, the following information is required: country, region/sub-region, commodity, country of purchase, country of origin, commodity metric ton amount, commodity amount, ocean freight, inland freight, and ITSH.

f) Annexes

The following is a list of annexes that must be included with the application.

Annex Type	Methodology
1. Executive Summary Table for the Life of Award	Data Entered on FFPMIS
2. Comprehensive Budget	Uploaded into FFPMIS
3. Detailed Budget	Uploaded into FFPMIS
4. Budget Narrative	Uploaded into FFPMIS
5. Monetization Table: If applicable , anticipated monetization proceeds and cost recovery data for all years. See CSI for further information.	Data Entered on FFPMIS
6. Annual Estimate of Requirements and Commodity Pipeline and/or enhanced Section 202(e) and CDF cash funding request (if relevant)	Data Entered on FFPMIS
7. Log Frame and ToC Graphic (<u>upload the LogFrame as one document and the ToC Graphic as the other in lieu of the Results Framework & IPTT</u>)	Uploaded into FFPMIS
8. Gender Analysis Plan (provide information about the gender analysis plan only) <u>four pages maximum</u>	Uploaded into FFPMIS
9. Environmental Safeguards Plan (provide information about the environmental safeguards plan only) <u>four pages maximum</u>	Uploaded into FFPMIS
10. Country Map(s) with any proposed and any ongoing Activity Area(s) by Applicant and/or members of the consortium	Uploaded into FFPMIS
11. For Successful Applicants Only: Past Performance Supporting Documentation, including the Past Performance Reference Questionnaire (<u>upload a blank Word document in lieu of past performance documentation with application</u>)	Uploaded into FFPMIS
12. Applicant Organizational Chart (and information on consortium or sub-awardee structure, if applicable)	Uploaded into FFPMIS
13. CV of Chief of Party and CV of Gender/Youth Adviser upon submission of the application; and later CV of other key personnel (based on the successful applicant's project design) requested in an issues letter prior to the signing of the award	Uploaded into FFPMIS
14. Motor Vehicle Procurement Table	Uploaded into FFPMIS
15. Letter(s) of Commitment	Uploaded into FFPMIS
16. Glossary and List of Acronyms	Uploaded into FFPMIS

3. Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant (unless an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

- Provide a valid Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number; and
- Be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) – note that successful applicants must maintain SAM registration.

FFP may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. This is justification for not signing an award.

4. Submission Date and Time

The application submission deadline is Monday, June 13, 2016 at 11:59am EST. The applicant is responsible for ensuring that the electronic application is received by the due date and time specified.

5. Funding Restrictions

For special considerations and information pertaining to ineligible and restricted goods, services, and countries, please see the USAID Automated Directives System (ADS) [Major Functional Series 300: Acquisition and Assistance, Chapter 312 - Eligibility of Commodities](#). Additionally, it is the legal responsibility of USAID awardees to ensure compliance with all U.S. laws and regulations, including those that prohibit transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism.

6. Pre-Award Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient

Successful applicants must provide a signed copy of [Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient and Solicitation Standard Provisions](#) as described in ADS 303.3.8 on the USAID website in response to the issues letter.

7. Other Submission Requirements

Food for Peace's Management Information System (FFPMIS)

FFP requires that applicants use FFPMIS to apply for a development food assistance project under this RFA. FFPMIS can be accessed at <https://usaid-ffp.entellitrak.com/>.

- User guides and additional FFPMIS resources can be found on the [Technical and Operational Performance Support \(TOPS\) site](#).
- Any technical questions on the use of FFPMIS should be emailed to FFPMIS_Support@devis.com.

- Any questions concerning submission of applications using FFPMIS must be submitted in writing to FFPMIS_support@devis.com with a copy to FACG@amexdc2.com.
- The FFPMIS helpdesk is staffed from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- Potential applicants are encouraged to start the submission process early, as new account creation and answers to technical questions may take more than one business day.

FFPMIS submission will require a combination of data entry and document uploads. All uploaded documents must be completed in accordance with the format detailed in this RFA and must adhere to the following:

- Written in English and in 12-point Times New Roman font;
- Text in tables or charts may be 10-point Arial Narrow font;
- Narratives must be prepared in Microsoft Word with print areas set to 8.5 x 11 inch, letter-sized paper with one-inch margins, left justification and a footer on each page including page number, date of submission, proposed country, and applicant name;
- Spreadsheets must be prepared in Microsoft Excel, with print areas set to 8.5 x 11 inch, letter-sized paper;
- Official (signed) documents, memoranda, and certifications may be submitted as Adobe PDF files, with one-inch margins;
- Emailed, faxed or hard copy applications are not acceptable.

If any of the necessary documents listed in the RFA are not submitted according to the format and/or deadline referenced in the RFA, FFP will consider the application incomplete. Late or incomplete applications will be considered at FFP's sole discretion.

Please note that FFPMIS will not let applicants submit applications after the closing time.

Certain documents may be required to be submitted by the applicant in order for the Agreement Officer to make a determination of financial responsibility. Applicants may be required to submit any additional evidence of responsibility, as requested, to support the determination pertaining to:

- Adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources as required during the performance of the award;
- Adequate management and personnel resources and systems;
- Ability to comply with the award conditions, considering all existing and currently prospective commitments of the applicant, both nongovernmental and governmental;
- Satisfactory record of performance -- unsatisfactory past relevant performance is ordinarily sufficient to justify a finding of non-responsibility, unless there is clear evidence of subsequent satisfactory performance or the applicant has taken adequate corrective measures to assure that it will be able to perform its functions satisfactorily; and

- Integrity and business ethics; along with qualifications and eligibility to receive a grant or cooperative agreement under applicable laws and regulations.

Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant, and all preparation and submission costs for the application are at the applicant's expense.

SECTION V – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

I. Evaluation Criteria

Technical Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Possible Points
a) Project Design	40
b) Sustainability and Exit Strategies	15
c) Gender Equality and Gender Integration	15
d) Management and Logistics	30
Total Possible Points	100

a) *Project Design*

Factors under this criterion include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- A thorough and clear analysis of underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition in the target area, identifying the determinants of food insecurity including causes related to: poor governance and institutional barriers, sources of vulnerability and shocks, and behavioral determinants including the interplay of gender and age dynamics.
- A sound project design that demonstrates the linkages between the underlying causes and influencing factors of food insecurity and malnutrition specific to the target area, and includes a ToC that provides a clear road map showing how the proposed set of activities in interaction with activities and/or outcomes produced by other actors will produce all necessary and sufficient outcomes to achieve the goal based on existing evidence and plausible logical reasoning. An understanding of the assumptions that the applicant is making along the pathways of outcome level changes and the applicant's plan to track these assumptions. If there are outcomes that are necessary to achieve the goal, but they are not within the direct scope of the proposed project, an understanding of how the applicant is planning to ensure that the outcome will be realized.
- Sound technical sector interventions supported with a clear evidence base, along with adherence to CSI on the objectives, activities and/or geographic locations specific to the country, and relationship to proposed outcomes.
- A realistic and logical Annex 9: Environmental Safeguards Plan.
- A sound conflict sensitive project design that clearly articulates how proposed interventions will mitigate against risks to do harm while maximizing opportunities to positively impact the context.

- Clear inclusion of feedback loops to allow for regular monitoring of the local context, including conflict dynamics, to inform ongoing learning and adaptation.
- A well-developed LogFrame that includes all the key elements (goal, purposes, sub purposes, immediate outcomes, outputs and inputs), data sources, assumptions and key indicators with targets.
- A ToC. The ToC narrative should include a brief description of the graphic, including a description of the ToC, the basis of the ToC and critical assumptions, risks, and the key outcomes produced by other actors. This should be included in the project design section and a detailed graphic presentation should be included as an Annex. FFP encourages partners to include a comprehensive graphic of the ToC as well as graphics for each strategic objective (SO).
- An abridged M&E plan that illustrates applicant's approach to annual monitoring, M&E organizational chart; strategy to strengthen M&E capacity and summary budget for M&E.
- A coherent Climate Change and Environmental safeguard plan, and the integration of relevant considerations throughout the design of the program.

A description of essential technical considerations can be found in the Technical References.

b) Sustainability and Exit Strategies

Applicants are expected to provide a well-conceived sustainability plan which reflects their ToC and describes the resources, technical and managerial capacities, motivation, and linkages that will sustain program outcomes and/or activities after the program ends. Any strategy that requires a transition from a project financed service delivery system to a market-based or public service delivery system should include concrete timelines and benchmarks.

c) Gender Equality and Gender Integration

Applicants are expected to describe how gender will be addressed in all areas of the proposed project. Integration of a gender sensitive approach must be context-appropriate and reflected at every phase of the project (i.e., design, implementation, evaluation, etc.) Factors demonstrating gender integration under this criterion include, but are not necessarily limited to:

1. Examples of the ways in which gender and age dynamics could affect program activities and outcomes at key steps in the proposed ToC;
2. Recognition of the potential impact--either positive or negative--of project activities on access to and control over resources and benefits for boys, girls, men or women, and how any negative consequences will be avoided or mitigated;
3. Consideration of how proposed activities could affect women's time use and how this will be taken into account in planning project interventions (e.g. mothers' participation in project activities resulting in less time for child care);
4. Plans for how the project will ensure equitable participation and input from women and men from different age and socio-economic groups, with examples for different technical interventions; and

5. Extent to which the applicant has anticipated ways in which program activities could lead to, or exacerbate, gender-based violence (GBV) at the household and community level and has considered ways to prevent or mitigate its occurrence, should it occur.

Applicants will also be expected to:

- Describe how gender analysis results will be integrated into project activities and how gender changes, including unanticipated outcomes, will be tracked over time;
- Identify at least one gender indicator for each project purpose at either the sub-purpose or immediate outcome level.

d) Management and Logistics

Factors under this criterion include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Suitability of management structure;
- Appropriateness of number of positions and type of staffing;
- For consortium projects, a strategy to ensure a functioning consortium;
- Additional requirements relating to coordination, program integration, monitoring, training, and/or knowledge and learning as specified in the CSI;
- Adequacy and feasibility of logistics plan linked to any commodities (e.g., details about transportation, schedule, related contracts, warehousing, distribution, and more);
- Appropriateness and sufficiency of monetization plan, if monetizing;
- Clear understanding of country specific requirements (e.g., local, regional, national, international) for proposed use(s) of food assistance (e.g., in-kind, monetization, local/regional purchase, other); and
- Awareness of restrictions that may hinder operations or implementation (e.g., biotechnology restrictions or concerns).

2. Review of Cost Application

The review of the cost application will determine if the level of resources is appropriate for the number of participants and degree of change being proposed. Aspects to be considered under this criterion include the justification for project costs: general reasonableness, allowability under the cost principles and according to FFP Information Bulletins, and the allocability of the costs reflected in the budget. For further information on costs considered reasonable, allowable, and allocable, please refer to 2 CFR 200, subpart E.

The cost application must include:

- The breakdown of all costs associated with the program according to costs of, if applicable, headquarters, regional and/or country offices;
- The breakdown of all costs according to each partner organization or sub-contractor/sub-awardee involved in the program;
- The costs associated with external, expatriate technical assistance and those associated with local in-country technical assistance;

- The costs associated with robust monitoring and evaluation;
- The breakdown of the financial and in-kind contributions of all organization involved in implementing the proposed project;
- Potential contributions of non-USAID or private commercial donors to this proposed project;
- A procurement plan for equipment and commodities (may be incorporated into an existing or new Annex).

Areas to be listed/discussed in detailed budget and budget notes include:

a) Personnel

Salaries and wages should reflect the “market value” for each position. Salaries and wages may not exceed the applicant’s established written personnel policy and practice, including the applicant’s established pay scale for equivalent classifications of employees, which must be certified by the applicant. Base pay, or base salary, is defined as the employee’s basic compensation (salary) for services rendered. Taxes which are a responsibility or liability of the employee are inclusive of, and not additive to, the base pay or salary. The base pay excludes benefit and allowances, bonuses, profit sharing arrangements, commission, consultant fees, extra or overtime payments, overseas differential or quarters, cost of living or dependent education allowances, etc.

In accordance with ADS 303.3.12 and the evaluation criteria contained in Section V of this RFA, USAID will review proposed costs, including salaries, for reasonableness. USAID uses the top salary on the Mission’s Local Compensation Plan as one indicator of reasonableness for the base salaries of locally employed staff, and the Contractor Salary Threshold as one indicator of reasonableness for the base salaries of US and third-country national staff.

Annual salary increase and/or promotional increase must be justified, supported by appropriate documentation and may be granted in accordance with the applicant’s established written personnel policy and practice.

b) Fringe Benefits

Applicant must indicate the fringe benefit rate used and the base of application for each rate that has been approved by a U.S. Federal Agency. Submit the applicant’s most recent Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) as evidence of rate approval. If the fringe benefit rate has not been approved, the applicant must propose a rate and explain how the rate was determined. If the latter is used, the budget narrative must include a detailed explanation/breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits, such as unemployment insurance, workers compensation, health and life insurance, retirement, FICA etc. and the cost estimates of each expressed in dollars and as a percentage of salaries. The applicant must specify if paid leave is included in fringe benefits.

The applicant should indicate fringe benefits, for local employees as a separate item of cost, providing a detailed explanation/breakdown as described above. Specify which fringe benefits for local employees are required by local law and which are applied in accordance with applicant's compensation policy.

c) Travel

The applicant must:

- Identify total domestic and international travel as separate items.
- Indicate the estimated number of trips, number of travelers, position of travelers, number of days per trip, point of origin, destination, and purpose of trip.
- Itemize the estimate of transportation and/or subsistence costs, including airfare and per diem for each trip. Per diem shall be based on the applicant's normal travel policies and practices. However, proposed lodging and per diem must not be in excess of that authorized by Department of State Standard Regulations (DSSRs).
- Provide supporting documentation, such as the applicant's travel policy to justify these costs, as appropriate.

d) Equipment

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.33, in a brief description, "equipment" means tangible non-expendable personal property, including exempt property charged directly to the award having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.

The applicant must:

- Itemize the type of equipment and briefly justify the need for the items to be purchased as they relate to the applicant's technical approach.
- Indicate the estimated unit cost and number of units for each item to be purchased.
- Provide the basis for the cost estimates, e.g., pro forma invoice, published price lists, etc.

There are statutory constraints relating to the purchase of agricultural commodities, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals, pesticides, and more with USAID project funds. Applicants may obtain specific information on these regulations on [USAID Web Site](#), particularly ADS 312. Additional information for motor vehicles is found in Section VIII – Other Information, item 3.

e) Supplies

In accordance with 2 CFR 200, "supplies" means all personal property excluding equipment, intangible property, debt instruments, and interventions. The applicant must specify the supply items and briefly justify the need for those items to be purchased as they relate to the applicant's technical approach.

f) Contractual (if any)

The applicant must:

- Identify any sub-awards/transfers/sub-contracts (other than the purchase of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services) and provide this information in a chart which includes their total value.
- Provide sub-award/sub-contract budgets and accompanying budget notes in the same format as submitted by the prime applicant.

g) Construction

Per USAID-wide policy set out in USAID ADS 303.3.30, construction activities may only be carried out under assistance awards if they meet certain criteria. In particular, (1) the estimated cost of construction activities at a single project site must be less than \$500,000, and (2) the total aggregate estimated cost of construction activities under the award must be less than \$10 million.

For the purpose of this policy, the term “construction” includes “construction, alteration, or repair (including dredging and excavation) of buildings, structures, or other real property.” And a “single project site” is “a single undertaking of construction within a contiguous geographic location”, examples in the Agency’s publicly available policy guidance include a road, a building, a wastewater facility, a power plant, a school, a clinic, and any continuous multiples of the same. See “[USAID Implementation of Construction Activities: A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 303](#)”.

To help ensure compliance with the above limitations, if the applicant contemplates any construction activity, the application should list the type(s) of construction, the location(s) and estimated costs of the same.

h) Other Direct Costs

The applicant must:

- Identify other direct costs and briefly justify the need for each cost item as they relate to the applicant’s technical approach.
- Indicate the estimated unit cost and number of units for each item proposed.
- Provide the basis for the cost estimates.

i) Indirect Costs

The applicant must support the proposed indirect cost rate with a letter from a cognizant U.S. Government audit agency, a NICRA, or with sufficient information for USAID to determine the

reasonableness of the rates. For example, a breakdown of labor bases and overhead pools, the method of determining the rate, etc. The applicant must:

- State the percentages and amounts used for the calculation of indirect costs.
- Provide a copy of the latest Government-approved NICRA from the cognizant U.S. Government audit agency showing the Overhead and/or General Administrative rates.
- State if indirect costs have not been approved by a Federal agency and provide the basis for the proposed indirect cost rates, as appropriate. The applicant who does not currently have a NICRA from their Cognizant Agency must submit the following information:
 - Copies of the applicant's financial reports for the previous three-year period, which have been audited by a certified public accountant or other auditor satisfactory to USAID;
 - Projected budget, cash flow, and organizational chart; and
 - A copy of the organization's Accounting Manual.

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.414, eligible applicants may choose to apply a 10 percent *de minimis* indirect cost rate. Please note this is only for those applicants who have never received a NICRA.

j) Climate Resilient International Development

On September 23, 2014 President Obama signed Executive Order 13677 on Climate Resilient International Development. This new Executive order, combined with two previous ones (Executive Orders 13514 and 13653), establishes a strong foundation for coordinated and consistent action to incorporate climate-resilience considerations into policies and procedures throughout the USG. Executive departments and agencies with international development programs must now systematically factor climate-resilience considerations into international development strategies, planning, programming, investments and related funding decisions. Applicants are expected to describe how climate and environmental changes will be addressed in all areas of the proposed project. Integration of a climate sensitive approach must be context-appropriate and reflected at every phase of the project (i.e., design, implementation, evaluation, etc.)

3. Review and Selection Process

Consistent with the requirements set forth in the Food for Peace Act, FFP shall determine whether to accept an application no later than 120 days after receipt of a complete application (subject to availability of funds). FFP is committed to meeting this mandate; however, its ability to do so depends upon the quality of applications and their responsiveness to the standards and requirements set forth in the RFA.

Once an application is deemed complete, FFP will review it based on the RFA evaluation criteria and FFP policies. FFP field offices will collaborate closely with FFP in Washington in the

review of applications. Following its review of a complete application, FFP may accept the application, deny the application, or withhold a decision on whether to accept or deny the application pending resolution of outstanding issues.

SECTION VI – FEDERAL AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

USAID may (a) reject any or all applications, (b) accept applications for reasons other than cost, (c) accept more than one application, (d) accept alternate applications, (e) waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received, and/or (f) drop the oral presentation.

Successful applicants will find award administration information and reporting requirements in signed award documents.

The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds.

SECTION VII – FEDERAL AWARDED AGENCY CONTACTS

Agency contacts may be found in Section IV – Application and Submission Information, 2) Point of Contact.

SECTION VIII – OTHER INFORMATION

1. Country Specific Information

Country specific information, required to complete an application for this RFA, is found on the USAID/FFP website under the heading “[Country Fact Sheets](#)” by country name.

2. Host Country Agreement

The Host Country Agreement (HCA) is expected prior to finalization of the award. The HCA establishes the terms and conditions by which an applicant will be able to conduct a Title II project in a specific country in accordance with the applicable requirements of USAID 22 CFR 211. As such, the applicant must enter into a written HCA with the government of the country in which it is proposing to implement a Title II project. If the project will be implemented in a number of countries within a region, an HCA must be negotiated with each government. Applicants submitting applications to work in countries for which they do not have an HCA must make arrangements well in advance to ensure that a signed HCA is prepared prior to the food assistance project approval.

- Although it is 22 CFR 211 that stipulates the need for an HCA, FFP requests as a matter of policy an HCA for all food assistance programs, given that the reasons for an HCA

govern sound commodity and resource management and underscore an understanding of the host country government of the project activities.

Even though the HCA is expected and preferred prior to finalization of the award, the applicant may submit when asked during the review and approval process (if selected) either the HCA or the Mission Director's determination that the proposed food assistance project can be effectively implemented in compliance with 22 CFR 211.

- Note that the Mission Director's determination is not a substitute for an HCA.
- There must first be a written decision by the Mission Director that it is "not appropriate or feasible" for the applicant to have an agreement with the government at this time.
- Following that determination, projects may only be implemented after the Mission Director's determination is made that the project can be implemented without an agreement in place for the time being.
- If an HCA is not in place prior to finalization of the award, the AOR will include the awardee's explanation for the delay with the award language, along with a timetable for awardee's HCA negotiations and anticipated receipt of a signed HCA.

3. Motor Vehicle Procurement Table

If procurement of any motor vehicles is requested in the application for the prime, members of a consortium, and/or sub-awardees, the applicant (i.e., the prime) must include (a) information on why procuring the vehicle(s) make(s) better value for money than leasing the vehicle(s) along with (b) a table with the following information for all vehicles to be procured as indicated in the budget(s):

- Type and number of motor vehicles (includes motorcycles);
- Manufacturer/make, model, and year of motor vehicles;
- Planned uses of motor vehicles, including who will retain title;
- Estimated cost of each motor vehicle;
- Funding source for each motor vehicle; and
- Fiscal year during which each procurement is planned.

The applicant must specify which organizations will use the vehicles; when and how purchases and transfers to consortium members and/or sub-awardees will occur; and a rationale for the purchase or long-term lease of all vehicles (US and non-US) in text accompanying the table.

The requirement to purchase or lease only U.S.-manufactured motor vehicles may be waived on a case-by-case basis when special circumstances exist and those special circumstances are supported by market research and adequate documentation. Special circumstances that merit waiving the requirement include, but are not limited to:

- The inability of U.S. manufacturers to provide a particular type of motor vehicle;

- The present or projected lack of adequate service facilities and supply of spare parts for U.S.-manufactured motor vehicles in the country or region within a country where the vehicle will be used; or
- An emergency requirement for motor vehicle(s) that can be met in time only by purchase of non-U.S.-manufactured motor vehicle(s) and for which no non-USAID funds are available.

The following is a step-by-step process (to be followed in this order) of the analysis and necessary documentation to be provided in requests to purchase a non-U.S. manufactured vehicle.

1. Describe the activity or program need and intended use for the vehicle and identify the type of vehicle that will fulfill that need and that is appropriate for the intended use. If appropriate, include specifications.
2. Detail efforts made to determine if the type of vehicle is produced in the United States.
3. For non-Title II funded applications, if the type of vehicle is produced in the United States, is it produced in an appropriate export model that the manufacturer will supply to the recipient country from the United States? If not, state this in the waiver request. If yes, state so and reference (b) or (c) above to justify waiver request.
4. For non-Title II funded applications, is a U.S.-manufactured vehicle available on the local market in country or from another country in Geographic Code 935? If so, no waiver is required to purchase that vehicle. However, if you want to purchase a different vehicle, use any of the circumstances in the bullets above to justify the case for purchasing that vehicle.
5. For non-Title II funded applications, if the type of vehicle is made in the United States and can be delivered from the United States, is the availability of service and spare parts for that vehicle adequate in country? If not, then use (b) above to justify the waiver.
6. For non-Title II funded applications, document the above information and efforts to support one of the special circumstances or waiver criteria in ADS 312. See circumstances outlined in the three bullets above.

For subsequent applications from previous or expiring FFP projects, applicants must provide in table format:

- The size and condition of the current motor vehicle fleet;
- Age of each motor vehicle;
- Funding source for each motor vehicle;
- Use of motor vehicles by activity; and
- Plans for maintenance and replacement.

Supporting text regarding the history of the motor vehicle fleet and its procurement by the applicant in the country must be included.

A Mission concurrence cable is required prior to the signing of an award with details pertaining to Mission vehicle procurement policies.

4. Branding Strategy and Marking Plan

The Branding Strategy and Marking Plan (BS/MP) is required for successful applicants only. Note that because USAID's branding and marking requirements have cost implications, such costs must be included in the application budget even if the applicant does not submit its BS/MP with the application. These rules do not apply to public international organizations (PIOs). Special markings may be required in FTF focused or aligned countries.

Under special circumstances USAID approved Marking Plans may be waived.

Agency branding and marking guidance can be found in the recently updated [ADS Chapter 320](#) and at the [USAID branding site](#).

ANNEX I: Definitions and Program Elements

Definitions

Call Forward: A request by the awardee for food assistance commodities for distribution and/or monetization to be procured for use in approved programs in a timely manner.

Carryover: Food assistance commodities or funds unused during a fiscal year that are transferred to the budget or planning levels for the following financial or reporting year.

Conflict sensitivity: A conflict sensitive project must at a minimum avoid inadvertently contributing to conflict. A conflict sensitive approach requires an implementer to: understand the conflict context in which it operates; understand the interaction between its operations and the conflict context; and act upon these understandings in order to minimize unintended negative impacts and maximize positive impacts of their interventions.

Delayed Shipping: The practice of when an awardee places a call-forward that requests a U.S. load port date later than the traditional procurement schedule. For example, in the traditional procurement schedule, if a call-forward was entered in WBSCM by May 10th and approved by USAID for the June purchase, it would have a July U.S. load port date. In the delayed shipping practice, the call-forward that was entered in WBSCM by May 10th and approved by USAID for the June purchase may have an October U.S. load port date. Commodity requests are entered based on the standard call forward schedule, but the date by which the commodity suppliers are required to deliver them to the specified U.S. load port is extended a maximum of two to three months beyond the standard delivery period. All commodities purchased in the current fiscal year must be loaded on board the contracted vessel prior to end of that calendar year.

Direct Participants: Those who come into direct contact with the set of interventions (goods or services) provided by the program in each technical area. Individuals who receive training or benefit from program-supported technical assistance or service provision are considered direct participants, as are those who receive a ration or another type of good. Note that all recipients are participants, but not all participants are necessarily food ration recipients. Services include training and technical assistance provided directly by program staff, and training and technical assistance provided by people who have been trained by program staff (e.g., agricultural extension agents, village health workers). If cooperatives or organizations receive training or technical assistance from the program, all members of the cooperative/organization are considered direct participants. In a Food for Training (FFT) program, the direct participants are those trained under the program. In a Food for Work (FFW) or Food for Assets (FFA) program that is implemented as a stand-alone activity (e.g., not as part of a wider set of interventions), direct participants are those who directly participate in the activity (i.e., receive a ration), not all of those who use or benefit from the infrastructure/asset created (e.g., a road). If a FFW or FFA activity forms part of a set of activities in a program element (e.g., FFW to build irrigation infrastructure, accompanied by technical assistance in new cultivation techniques and water management to a targeted group of

farmers), the direct participants include FFW participants and the farmers receiving the technical assistance and the two groups may overlap. In the case of food rations, direct participants include the individual recipient in the case of individual rations, and the recipient plus his/her family members in the case of family rations.

Direct participants do not include those who benefit indirectly from the goods and services provided to the direct participants, e.g., members of the household of a participant farmer who received technical assistance, seeds and tools, other inputs, credit, livestock, etc.; farmers from a neighboring community who might observe the effects of the training and demonstration plots in the target community and decide to adopt or model the new practices themselves; the population of all of the communities in a valley that uses a road improved by FFW; or all individuals who may have heard a radio message about prices, but who did not receive the other elements of an agricultural intervention necessary to increase incomes. Such individuals are considered indirect participants.

Direct Distribution Food Assistance Commodities: Food assistance commodities that are provided directly to participants as in-kind take home rations or for on-site feeding.

Environmental Safeguards: Components of a program that are developed as part of the project design to deal with mitigating potentially foreseeable negative environmental impacts of project activities, maintaining ecological goods and services and promoting their sustainable management by community stakeholders. Environmental safeguards are incorporated into application design and implementation under the mandate of the USAID environmental compliance regulation, 22 CFR 216.

Fiscal Year (FY): The U.S. Government's fiscal year begins October 1 and ends the following September 30.

Gender Analysis: An analytic, social science tool that is used to identify, understand, and explain gaps between males and females that exist in households, communities, and countries, and the relevance of gender norms and power relations in a specific context. Such analysis typically involves examining differences in the status of women and men and their differential access to assets, resources, opportunities and services; the influence of gender roles and norms on the division of time between paid employment, unpaid work (including subsistence production and care for family members), and volunteer activities; the influence of gender roles and norms on leadership roles and decision-making; constraints, opportunities, and entry points for narrowing gender gaps and empowering females; and potential differential impacts of development policies and programs on males and females, including unintended or negative consequences. More information can be found in ADS 205, *Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle*.

Indirect Beneficiaries: Indirect beneficiaries are those who benefit indirectly from the goods and services provided to the direct participants (as defined above). For example, indirect beneficiaries include: members of the household of a participant farmer who received technical

assistance, seeds and tools, other inputs, credit, livestock, etc.; farmers from a neighboring community who might observe the effects of the training and demonstration plots in the target community and decide to adopt or model the new practices themselves; the population of all of the communities in a valley that uses a road improved by a food for work activity; or all individuals who may have heard a radio message about prices, but who did not receive the other elements of an agricultural intervention necessary to increase incomes.

Metric ton(s) (MT): The standard unit of measurement for Title II commodities. One metric ton equals 1,000 kilograms.

Recipient: A recipient is a direct receiver of a food assistance ration. Each programmed recipient should be counted once, regardless of the number of months they will receive food aid. In other words, a recipient who will receive a food assistance ration for 12 months is counted once, as is a recipient who will receive a food assistance ration for three months.

Program Elements

Program Element: The general category or focus of activities for FFP resources in the form of direct distribution food assistance commodities, section 202(e) funds, ITSH funds, and monetization proceeds. The program elements are defined below.

Civic Participation: Strengthen the capacity of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) for policy analysis, advocacy, coalition-building, internal governance, membership representation and services, and engage in other activities aimed at fostering more peaceful and democratic societies. Areas of capacity building may include, but are not limited to, technical expertise (e.g., human rights, legal reform); CSO self-regulation (e.g., establishing NGO Codes of Conduct); organizational capacity (e.g., strategic planning, financial management and accountability, public relations, issue management, and outreach, revenue generation, accountable fundraising); and targeted advocacy training and technical assistance.

HIV/AIDS: Reduce the transmission and impact of HIV/AIDS through support for prevention, care and treatment programs.

Maternal and Child Health (MCH): Increase the availability and use of proven life-saving interventions that address the major killers of mothers and children and improve their health status, including effective maternity care and management of obstetric complications; prevention services including newborn care, routine immunization, polio eradication, safe water and hygiene; and treatment of life-threatening childhood illnesses. **Note that Household-Level Water, Sanitation, Hygiene, and Environment interventions fall within the MCH program element.** Objectives include increasing household-level actions to prevent disease, regardless of the state of public service infrastructure, with a focus on behavior change interventions. Example activities include: point-of-use water treatment; safe water storage and handling; sanitation marketing or promotion; promotion of handwashing with soap; and reduction of exposure to indoor smoke from cooking and other local sources.

Family Planning and Reproductive Health: Expand access to high-quality voluntary family planning services and information, and reproductive health care. This element contributes to reducing unintended pregnancy and promoting healthy reproductive behaviors of men and women, reducing abortion, and reducing maternal and child mortality and morbidity.

Water Supply and Sanitation: Objectives include increasing access to safe water and basic sanitation services. This program element focuses on water & sanitation hardware, as well as demand creation for products and services. Example activities include: source water protection; repair, rehabilitation, and/or construction of water sources and water supply infrastructure; and implementation of community-based approaches to the design, construction, and operations & maintenance of facilities. Where applicable and appropriate, cash for work or food for work mechanisms may be used to build water and sanitation-related infrastructure. **Note** that household-level interventions related to water, sanitation, hygiene, and environment fall within the MCH program element.

Clean Productive Environment: Objectives, as they relate to FFP participants, include **community-level** interventions to reduce health risks associated with environmental pollution (e.g. due to agriculture or other human activity). Example activities include improving management of solid waste; debris cleanup; drainage; livestock waste management; and environmental control activities for vector-borne disease. **Note** that household-level interventions related to environmental hygiene are reported on as part of the MCH program element.

Nutrition: Increase availability and use of proven nutrition interventions to improve nutritional status and reduce mortality, morbidity, and food insecurity, including nutrition education and social and behavior change to improve maternal diets, nutrition during pregnancy, exclusive breastfeeding, and infant and young child feeding practices; fortified or biofortified staple foods and specialized food products, community and/or household gardens, and animal husbandry activities to increase availability of animal source foods to improve consumption of quality food; and delivery of nutrition services including micronutrient supplementation and community management of acute malnutrition. Strengthen host country capacity by advancing supportive nutrition and food security policies and improving nutrition information systems.

Basic Education: Improve early childhood education, primary education, and secondary education, delivered in formal or non-formal settings. It includes literacy, numeracy, and other basic skills programs for youth and adults.

Social Assistance: Cash or in-kind transfers to the poor or to those suffering from temporary shocks. Health services provided in-kind should be captured under the respective health element(s).

Agricultural Sector Capacity: Sustain the productivity of the agricultural sector through investments that foster increasing returns to land, labor, and capital. Targeted interventions to male and female producers provide improvements in technology and management practices, expanded access to markets and credit, increased organizational and market efficiency, and restoration and protection of resiliency in production and livelihood systems.

Strengthen Microenterprise Productivity: Support the start-up and expansion of self-employment and micro and small enterprises owned and operated by low-income people.

Inclusive Financial Markets: Support equitable access to essential financial services (credit, savings, insurance, leasing, remittances and payment services) of diverse providers (including banks, credit unions, NGOs, non-bank financial institutions, buyers, and suppliers) to low-income families and female and male-owned micro-scale enterprises/activities.

Natural Resources and Biodiversity: Conserve biodiversity and manage natural resources in ways that maintain long-term viability and preserve the potential to meet the needs of present and future generations. Activities include combating illegal and corrupt exploitation of natural resources and the control of invasive species. Programs in this element should be integrated with the Agriculture Area under Economic Growth and Conflict Mitigation and Reconciliation Area under the Peace and Security Objective, when applicable and appropriate.

Protection and Solutions: Ensure full respect for the rights of the individual and communities in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law (international humanitarian, human rights, and refugee law). This involves both legal and practical approaches for implementation in humanitarian situations, including efforts to ensure humanitarian access, incorporate protection strategies in assistance programming and other measures to reduce vulnerability and uphold human dignity for all victims of conflict and disasters. Activities included herein should be linked to relevant GJD/Human Rights elements.

Assistance and Recovery: Provide goods, personnel, services and assistance to meet basic human needs in order to foster transition from relief according to principles of universality, impartiality and human dignity. This element should be employed, when possible, as part of an integrated, coordinated and/or multi-sectoral approach.

Capacity Building, Preparedness and Planning: Improve the ability of the USG, host countries and other partners to prepare for and mitigate the effects of disasters, including both natural disasters and complex emergencies, in a manner that accommodate varying physical, cultural and social abilities to move freely and access information and services. Activities under this component include any efforts to enhance the capacities of the USG (in Washington and in the field), humanitarian assistance providers, national host-country authorities, and local communities to engage in disaster reduction and response activities. Activities consist of standardized and coordinated assessments, monitoring, information sharing, data and situational analysis, joint planning; enhancement of coping mechanisms, including the capacity to address

adaptation to constantly changing situations on the ground including climate variability and climate change.

ANNEX II: FY 16 Refine and Implement Pilot

For fiscal year 2016 (FY 16), the Office of Food for Peace (FFP) introduces a new pilot approach for multi-year food assistance development awards in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Liberia called Refine and Implement (R&I). FFP envisions that with R&I, the project design will be shaped to better reflect the operating environment during project inception and respond to changing or unanticipated situations on the ground once the project is implemented. R&I includes two stages: (1) a refinement period during the first year in which successful applicants (i.e., new awardees) will carry out pre-implementation studies and refine the project's design, and undertake the preparation for implementation (e.g., hiring, training, procurements, etc.), followed by (2) the implementation of the activities. FFP expects that with the introduction of R&I, applicants will include strategic and creative approaches to achieve the stated goal and objectives because the R&I process provides the time and space for innovation and iterative learning.

In devising R&I, FFP considered input from the following:

- *Findings included in the Second Food Aid and Food Security Assessment (FAFSA-2, February 2013)* – From the FAFSA-2 summary, pages 43 and 44, FFP noted the following under *Improve Program Procurement and Enhance Program Effectiveness*:
 - Recommendation 3 – [FFP] should include options for extensions of awards or separate follow on awards to enable [FFP] to continue to support high-performing projects beyond five years and up to ten years while complying with the Automated Directives System (ADS) 303.3. This would be consistent with what is known about the time requirements of the [agriculture and natural resource management projects, e.g., the technology identification and adoption process,] and the evidence from the [maternal child, health and nutrition projects] that longer implementation periods are associated with greater impact.
 - Recommendation 6 – [FFP] should arrange for Awardees to make presentations during in-country application reviews, a practice followed in some other USAID procurements. This presentation, if managed correctly, can help clarify points up front and reduce the amount of time on the preparation of written issues and responses. This presentation might also help clarify the extent to which proposed local staff and key personnel are involved with and understand the proposed program design and implementation strategies.
- *Feedback from a June 2013 FY 14 Request for Applications (RFA) Consultation* – In June 2013, the Technical and Operational Performance Support (TOPS) program (<http://www.fsnnetwork.org/about-tops>) facilitated a consultation to solicit feedback from the implementing community to improve multi-year development food assistance project RFAs and country specific information (CSI). This discussion highlighted the need to extend the length of time for project development and community consultations.
- *Feedback from an August 2014 FY 15 & FY 16 RFA Consultation* – In August 2014, TOPS hosted a second consultation on FFP's RFA for development assistance projects. This

consultation showcased changes for the FY 15 RFA and introduced a vision for change for the FY 16 RFA. The possible changes FFP introduced for the FY 16 RFA included:

- o A refinement period early in the project cycle in which awardees could undertake further assessments and analyses, in consultation with FFP, and with possible participation of FFP technical staff during the assessment planning and more; refine and validate their theory of change (ToC) using baseline data, assessments and community consultations; and finalize partnerships to prepare for implementation;
- o After the refinement period, a “check-in” between awardees and FFP to ensure that the project planning is on track before full implementation moves ahead. Factors that would be considered:
 - ToC is sound;
 - Proposed interventions are necessary and sufficient to achieve the project goal;
 - Agreements on collaboration between the awardee and different public and private actors in the targeted areas are in place for shared success; and
 - A realistic sustainability strategy is developed.
- o In the middle of the implementation, a “check-in” between awardees and FFP to consider whether FFP will approve an extension of the award beyond five years in length based on the findings from the external evaluation (for example, up to seven to ten years).
- *Offsite, Internal Meeting with FFP’s Policy, Technical, Grants and Geographic Teams, an All Day Event* – In October 2014, FFP held a day-long, off site meeting for staff to discuss the pilot concept in detail and decide whether or not to move forward (including where and when). In general, details from this discussion fed into the update of the FY 16 R&I schematic (see Attachment 1). Management agreed that in most cases projects would not be terminated after an interim external quantitative and qualitative evaluation in year four that revealed nominal to above average success, but end as planned after year five. The goal would be for exceptional, high-performing projects to be extended an additional three to five years.
- *Feedback from a June 2015 R&I consultation* – TOPS facilitated a third consultation with PVOs and FFP on R&I in June 2015. FFP confirmed that it will be moving forward with this exciting pilot in FY 16 for DRC.
- *Input from Ongoing Discussions with USAID/Liberia* – In October 2015, FFP and USAID/Liberia decided that Liberia would also move forward with a pilot for FY 16.

Overall

FFP will start the FY 16 RFA process as per the norm with the formation of a selection committee (SC) and selection of an SC chairperson to review applications, determine apparently successful applicants, complete the issues letter process, review finalized applications and proceed with awards. However, the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Workshop will be

moved to the fourth quarter of the first fiscal year to take advantage of the information gained (i.e., results and further analysis) from the refinement period.

Refinement Period – Months One through Six

During the first six months, the awardees will review and refine geographic targeting at the community level; provide a list of communities to FFP within the first three months to be used for the baseline surveys; consult with the communities and validate proposed interventions, assumptions and the overall ToC; analyze the institutions, the operating environment and policies that might impact the project's implementation and success; carry out formative research and the initial environmental examination; begin a gender analysis and market analysis; note major shocks and stresses and how people are managing them; hire and train staff; and initiate project start up plans, e.g., administrative tasks, equipment and supply purchases, human resources.

During community consultations, awardees would discuss the communities' priorities and needs, causes of food insecurity and under-nutrition, vulnerability to food insecurity and malnutrition, and capacity to recover from food insecurity shocks. In looking at institutions, operating environments and policies, awardees would research the institutional and policy environment, governance issues, synergies with other U.S. Government investments and other donors, and existing and potential linkages to achieve broader resilience objectives. In addition to required analyses (gender, environmental impact, and climate change impact), formative research, as indicated, may investigate positive deviances and the determinants as well as barriers to optimum health and nutrition practices for pregnant and lactating mothers and children under two; barriers and proven pathways to proper hygiene, sanitation, and access to safe water; challenges and opportunities to recovery from food insecurity; and water resources vulnerability analysis. It is important to note that some of the assessments/studies may continue after the first six months of the refinement period.

During this time, FFP will review and approve Awardees' work plans, undertake scoping visits with Awardee technical staff, review and approve scopes of work for research, assessments and analyses, and implement the baseline studies. Ideally, FFP will provide comments on scopes of work within four weeks. FFP will contract and manage the survey firm(s) to conduct the baseline surveys for the awards. FFP anticipates that preliminary data from the baseline surveys will be available to the Awardees in the fourth quarter of the first fiscal year for use during the refinement period. (Note that baseline studies will collect data for high level outcome and impact indicators. Awardees' may need to consider collecting baseline data from direct project participants for lower level outcome indicators with the annual monitoring.)

Refinement Period – Months Seven through Twelve

From month seven to month twelve, the Awardee will review the ToC and refine it along with select project strategies based on the results from the baseline survey and other research, assessments, and analyses; develop an M&E plan integrating gender, youth, environment and climate change indicators, as appropriate and as required; finalize targets for all indicators

included in the Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT); establish partnerships with Feed the Future, Global Climate Change and other projects with benchmarks; and continue to hire and train staff. Toward the end of this period, the chief of party for each award will present the refined project design in country, if feasible, highlighting changes from the original and the reasons for the changes along with supporting data. FFP will share a framework for the chief of party presentations with the invitation to Awardees approximately six to eight weeks before the date.

During this time, FFP will review the various reports generated by the Awardees' research, assessments, and analyses; provide oversight of the baseline survey firm; review the draft baseline survey report; and possibly participate on additional scoping visits with Awardee technical staff. Awardees will attend the M&E Workshop organized by FFP. At the workshop, Awardees will finalize the project ToC, logical framework (LogFrame), and IPTT ensuring that it reflects the findings of any specialized analyses, as well as those emerging from required analysis. For each Awardee, the revised ToC, LogFrame, and IPTT will be due to FFP within 30 days after the completion of the M&E workshop. In addition, Awardees must complete and submit the comprehensive M&E Plan for the project and the final Project IEE within 60 days after the workshop. FFP will share M&E workshop details approximately eight to ten weeks before the date.

Milestones

In the application, applicants should propose milestones for all key activities included in Year One. Milestones will be used to mark progress throughout the refinement period. All milestones will be tied to specific activities and timelines included in the awards. Applicants are encouraged to identify pertinent analyses and/or pilot activities that address the constraints cited in the CSI and integrate these into the proposed application. For example, the applicant may have planned a market study in Year One. The application should provide a clear timeline for key activities needed for the market study. It should include the scope of work, literature review, fielding the team/hiring the consultant(s), data collection, and submission of the draft report and final reports.

Implementation Period

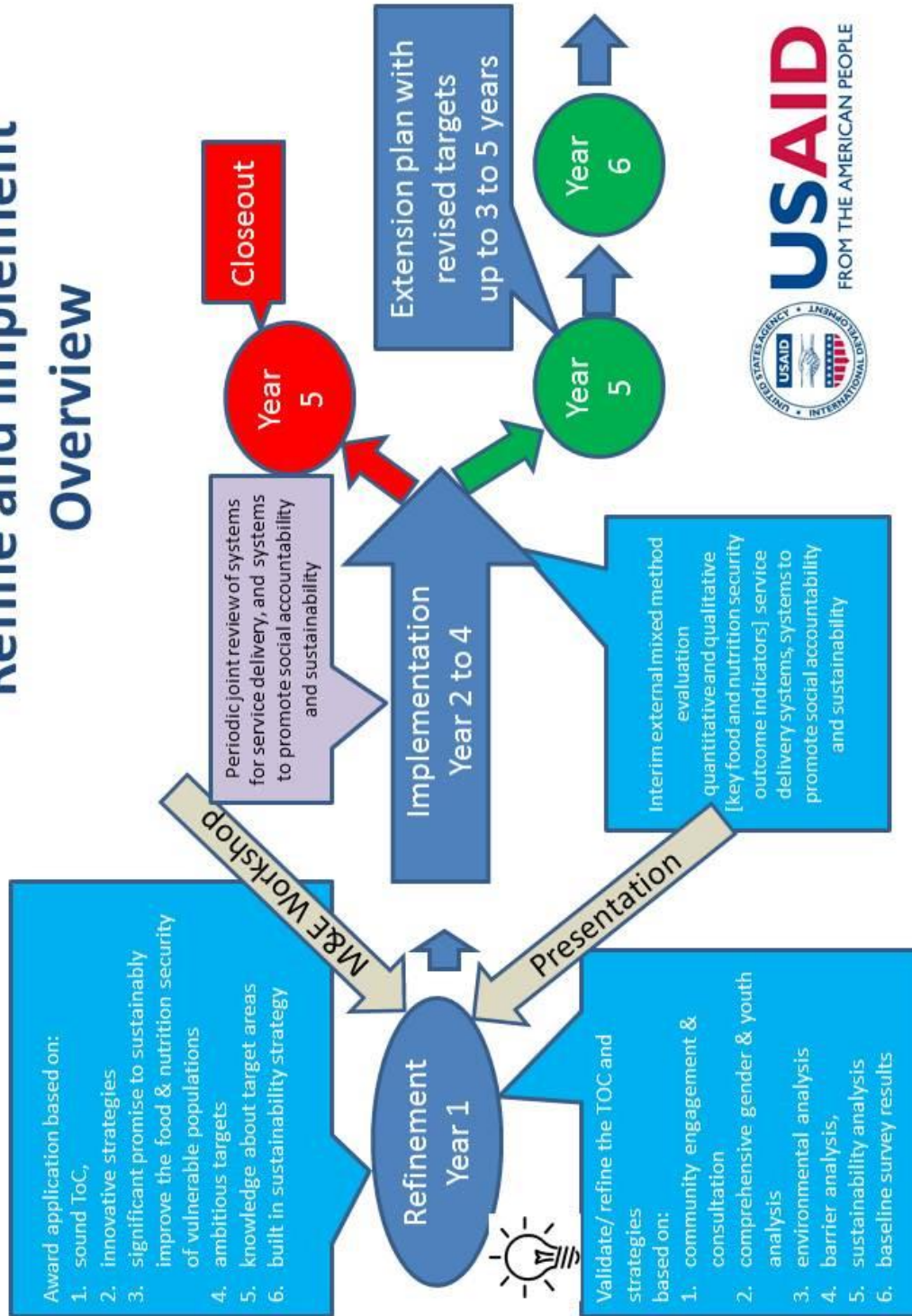
The implementation period will cover Year Two through Year Five of the multi-year development project. FFP recognizes that delays have occurred with previous project cycles and sees R&I as a way to capture and use the project's first year to jump start the project's second year by ensuring that all the "i's" are dotted and "t's" are crossed. The refinement period will allow for reflection, collaboration, and adjustments to expectations and planning, ensuring implementation will be successful.

An external evaluation will take place in Year Four. Ideally, FFP will share information about this evaluation approximately 12 months before it is scheduled. Ideally, within three months of the conclusion of the interim external evaluation and receipt of final report(s) and data, Awardees will be notified of the results and FFP's decisions regarding extensions. If projects

are deemed exceptional and high-performing, then FFP anticipates that it will extend those projects an additional three to five years. FFP defines exceptional high-performing projects that not only making substantial progress in key food and nutrition security outcome indicators but also established highly effective service delivery systems, and systems to promote social accountability and sustainability be determined through both qualitative assessments and quantitative measurement of key outcome indicators. The qualitative assessments will be project specific based on its ToC. Extensions will require “extension plans”, budgets, revised targets, possibly a few new indicators and more; in addition, extensions will be subject to availability of funds and commodities, along with approval by USAID authorities. If projects are deemed successful or less than successful, performing moderately or below what was envisioned due to a variety of conditions and circumstances within or outside of the Awardees’ control and management, then FFP anticipates that it will not extend those projects; these projects will maintain their original end dates. Thus, for those projects maintaining their original end dates, close out plans would be due as indicated in the award language, i.e., six months prior to the award’s end date. Given the timing of the interim external evaluation, those awards with extensions will have a final evaluation 12-18 months prior to the new end date, while those awards maintaining the original end dates will not have a final evaluation.

Attachment I: FY 16 Refine and Implement Schematic

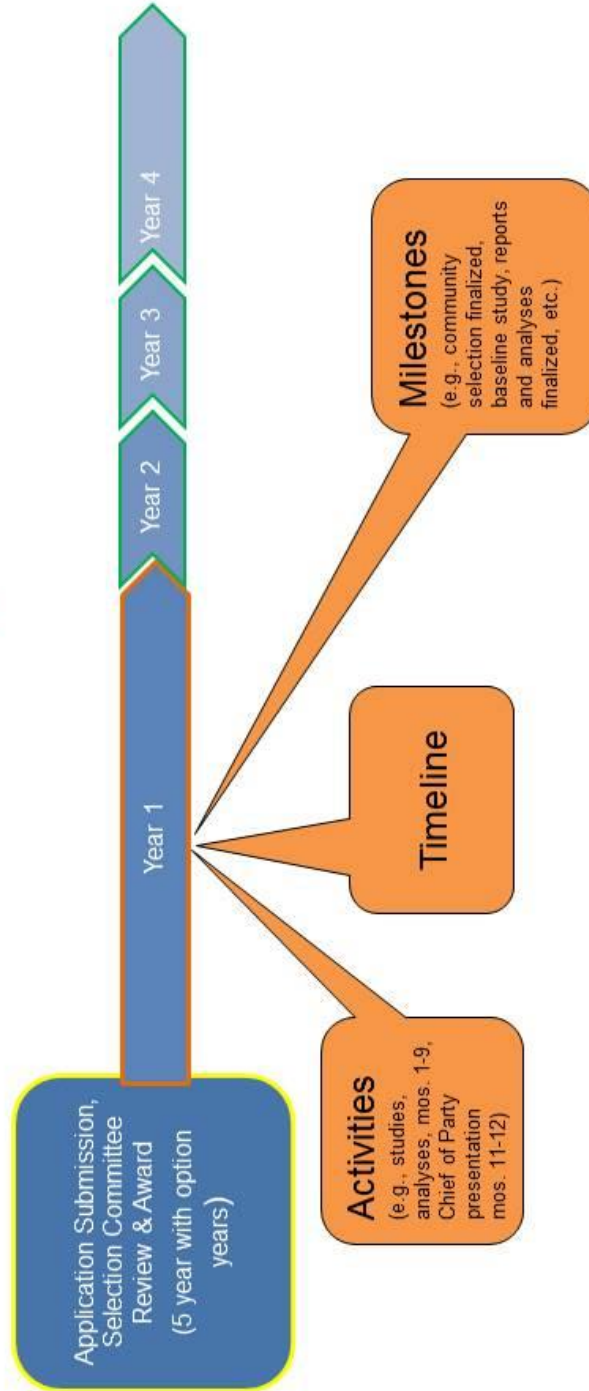
Refine and Implement Overview



Attachment 2: FY 16 Refinement Stage Schematic



Refinement Stage



ANNEX III: Past Performance Reference Questionnaire

With the technical application, please upload a blank Word document in place of the required Past Performance document in FFPMIS. Only successful applicants must upload the completed section A of this questionnaire to FFPMIS. A successful applicant’s history of performance is part of the pre-award risk assessment. The remaining sections shall be completed by USAID.

A. CONTRACT/GRANT/COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT INFORMATION:

Name of Company/Organization Being Evaluated:

Address:

Contract/Award Number:

Contract/Award Value:

Contract/Award Type:

Period of Performance:

B. DESCRIPTION OF CONTRACT/AWARD:

During the contract/award being evaluated, this firm was the

Prime Contractor/Awardee

Significant sub-contractor/sub-awardee

Team Member

Other (Describe):

Does anything other than a customer/supplier relationship exist between the firm being evaluated and your organization?

No

Yes

If yes, please describe the nature of this relationship:

C. EVALUATOR:

Name:

Title:

Organization:

Address

Telephone No:

Email Address:

D. PERFORMANCE

O = Outstanding, V = Very Good, G = Good, F = Fair, P = Poor, N/A = Not Applicable

Please rate the Contractor/Grantee's technical performance and/or management abilities in the following areas:

Quality of service, including consistency in meeting goals and targets.	O	V	G	F	P	N/A
Cost control, including forecasting costs as well as accuracy in financial reporting.	O	V	G	F	P	N/A
Timeliness of performance, including adherence to agreement schedules and other time sensitive project conditions and effectiveness of home and field office management to make prompt decisions and ensure efficient completion of tasks.	O	V	G	F	P	N/A
Customer satisfaction with performance including responsiveness to client needs and requests and to host country partners (Government, private sector) in implementation.	O	V	G	F	P	N/A
Effectiveness of key personnel, including appropriateness of personnel for the job and prompt and satisfactory changes in personnel when problems with clients were identified.	O	V	G	F	P	N/A
Overall	O	V	G	F	P	N/A