

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

Name of Project	Feed the Future Bangladesh Livestock Production for Improved Nutrition
Request for Applications (RFA) No.	J0843-02-03-2019
Date of Issue	January 03, 2019
Closing Date for Receipt of Applications <i>(Late applications will not be considered)</i>	February 02, 2019
Questions on this solicitation should be submitted to e-mail address provided no later than the date indicated.	E-mail: procurement@acdivocalpin.org No later than: January 15, 2019
The project will hold a briefing for interested parties on the date and location indicated. Those interested should notify the e-mail above of their planned attendance.	January 17, 2019 at 3PM Ventura Iconia Floor 6, House 37, Road 11, Block H, Banani, Dhaka

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Program Overview

The USAID-funded Feed the Future Bangladesh Livestock Production for Improved Nutrition (hereinafter referred to as ‘Livestock and Nutrition’) project is a five-year project to impact rural household nutrition, incomes, and livestock markets for livestock farmers in targeted regions of Bangladesh. The project works to increase livestock productivity among female and male farmers through increased access to better livestock management techniques and primary animal healthcare services; improve access of rural households to hygienic, diverse, and high-quality food to enhance nutrition and health status, especially among women and children; and improve nutrition-related behaviors of rural households.

The Livestock and Nutrition project implements the following activities and approaches:

- Enhances female and male market actors’ capacity to provide female and male livestock farmers in project areas with high-quality inputs and livestock extension services (embedded and stand-alone) on breeding and rearing practices, artificial insemination, and hygienic milk collection, preservation, and processing.
- Supports male and female input and output market actors to develop innovative business models that increase sourcing and selling of livestock products to foster income growth for participating households and increase consumption of milk and meat products.
- Improves nutritional status of women and children through a social and behavior change communication (SBCC) campaign that triggers nutrition behavior change.

In addition to these interventions, the project also focuses on the revitalization of direct linkages between local government and private actors as well as livestock-rearers in the project's target zone to ensure appropriate incentives for ongoing improvements in livestock production, household nutrition, and sustainable provision of demand-driven services inclusive of females and males.

The project's geographic focus is USAID's Feed the Future Zone of influence (ZOI), which covers 20 districts of **Barisal, Dhaka, and Khulna divisions** as well as the **Resilience Focus Area** of Cox's Bazar and Bandarban districts of Chattogram Division. The Livestock and Nutrition project implements its key activities in six districts (Khulna, Jashore, Satkhira, Barishal, Faridpur and Rajbari) and the proposed grant activities must be implemented in one or more of these districts.

To request additional information on the Livestock and Nutrition project, please email procurement@acdivocalpin.org.

Cost Reimbursable Grant Objectives

The project has identified several opportunities to partner with local public, private, and institutional actors in the market system to strengthen, pilot and scale sustainable, market-based ways to improve input, services, and output markets for males and females across the market system. The project is requesting applications from multiple organizations and institutions to apply for different types of grants, varying sizes depending on the application submitted by the applicant. The project shall consider applications for grants ranging from 30,000 - 50,000 USD (Approx. 2,500,000 TK – 4,100,000 TK). Further information is outlined in Section II. Award Information of the RFA. The project welcomes grant proposals from entities interested in working in one or more of the following areas:

1. **Livestock-related Training:** The Livestock and Nutrition project encourages training institutes to apply for grants that ***create pathways for local independent training institutes to provide trainings on a sustainable basis to farmers and livestock service providers (LSPs) in the implementation areas.*** The Livestock and Nutrition project encourages applications from interested for-profit companies, livestock training institutes, social enterprises, foundations, and/or livestock financial service providers to train market actors, including LSPs and farmers, to provide sustainable and fee-based skills development/training services. Currently, NGOs train farmers and LSPs, but this is not a sustainable or a viable business in the long-term. Foundations, organizations, companies, and livestock financial service providers have training curriculum and understand the political landscape of veterinarians and LSPs, making them ideal partners for delivering training.

2. **Animal Health:** The Livestock and Nutrition project encourages proposals to pilot and strengthen ways to increase coverage across the project area, embed relevant training and services into business models, and implement customer-oriented marketing inclusive of males and females, so that ***animal health companies gain competitive advantage, learn about the needs of their end customers, and meet the needs of the market while increasing sales.*** Approximately 20 percent of a pharmaceutical company's portfolio is dedicated to animal health products. The number of animal health companies selling products in Bangladesh has grown tremendously over the past decade; it is increasingly difficult for companies to compete and position themselves in a crowded market. LSPs often buy from small shops, but a greater opportunity exists for the shops and LSPs to deepen connections to animal medicine companies. However, there is often a large disconnect between the medicine companies and the local animal health service providers and farmers who are buying their products. These companies

have very little, if any, market knowledge about what is happening at the consumer level (e.g. brand recognition and perception). For example, foot-and-mouth disease vaccines are unavailable in areas where outbreaks occur because companies do not have adequate market knowledge. Other key concerns are quality and outreach. This opportunity allows animal health companies to partner with ACDI/VOCA to understand more about how products could be effectively distributed and sold through the value chain.

3. Animal Feed and Fodder: The Livestock and Nutrition project encourages proposals to pilot and strengthen ways to increase quality feed and fodder coverage across the project area, embed relevant training for feed traders and retailers, including advisory services into business models, and implement customer-oriented marketing promotion and packing inclusive of males and females. As a result, ***animal feed companies shall gain competitive advantages by helping them learn more about the needs of their end customers and possibly embed farmer training in addition to selling quality feed.*** With the ban of live cattle from India to Bangladesh, there is an increasing demand for cattle and related inputs, such as feed. In some areas of southwestern Bangladesh, however, there has been an over-investment in feed company infrastructure which is being underutilized. Feed companies need more customers and annual portfolio of major feed companies are growing significantly. As in the case of the medicine companies, there is a large disconnect between feed companies and what they know about how their products are used and perceived by farmers on the ground. There is an opportunity to work with them to develop quality feeds tailored to farmers' needs.

4. Breeding/Artificial Insemination (AI): The Livestock and Nutrition project encourages to pilot and strengthen ways to increase artificial insemination coverage across the project area, embed relevant training to AI technicians and farmers and services into business models, and implement customer-oriented marketing of animal insemination products inclusive of males and females. There are new entrants in the AI market with their own bull stations and AI technicians. However, they have yet to penetrate more remote areas. This is an opportunity to ***expand quality AI service delivery tailored to farmers' needs and hard-to-reach areas.***

5. Access to Financial Services and Livestock-related Products: The Livestock and Nutrition project encourages applicants to consider grants that ***develop loan and insurance products for females and males across the market system, with trainings offered by financial institutions in order for them to test new products and market opportunity.*** Some financial institutions have developed livestock loan/insurance products that include training. Similarly, insurance companies are testing new products, often in combination with loan products. An expansion of these products could address the sustainability of farmer training and access to critical financial and risk mitigation products.

6. Information and Communication Technology (ICT): The Livestock and Nutrition project encourages applications for grants to ***pilot, refine, and scale ICTs that fill critical gaps (e.g., in access to finance, markets, information, etc.) and/or improve inclusion, competitiveness, and resilience across the sector.*** ICTs must be equally accessible for male and female actors. The application of ICTs can cut across many inputs like feeds, medicines, financial products, training local market service providers, and other market system functions. Most of the market actors with whom the project works have smart phones.

7. Output Marketing and Value Addition: The Livestock and Nutrition project encourages applicants to consider grants that *support semi-formal/informal (small and medium size enterprises (SMEs)) dairy and meat processors to enhance their quality, food safety, milk collection and processing abilities, end-market alignment, and marketing to increase market demand for milk and diversified dairy and meat products.* Developing the output market is one of the most challenging opportunities of the livestock market system in the southwestern Bangladesh. Formal sector dairy processors/meat buyers do not operate to their full extent in the southwest because transportation costs and logistics make it more expensive than alternatives like the northwest. There are quality and food safety issues as well with livestock products. The project shall facilitate partnerships with dairy companies, live cattle buyers, and SME processors and producers in an effort to operationalize cooling infrastructures and diversify products to increase the availability of dairy and meat products for improved nutrition.

Cost Reimbursable Grant Activities and Results

Applicants should propose to result-oriented activities to help achieve the objectives described above. A result is a significant, intended, and measurable change in the condition of a beneficiary or a change. The application should demonstrate the applicant's understanding of these objectives by proposing to achieve results that can be quantified and measured.

At a minimum, a results-oriented grant application should have the following three key elements:

- Identifies specific results to be achieved and identifiable strategies and processes to achieve the intended results.
- Performance management system to measure and assess the achievement of planned results. This will include baseline data and performance goals at various levels against which actual achievement can be compared.
- Responsibility for performance to determine who is accountable for achieving results.

Gender Sensitive Activities

Additionally, proposed activities must be gender sensitive. In order to submit a gender-sensitive application, applicants must have the following three components:

- When discussing targets (i.e., number of farmers reached), targets must be disaggregated by sex (i.e., number of female farmers reached, number of male farmers reached).
- The application must highlight relevant gender-based constraints and should consider these constraints in the design of the intervention.
- The applicant must consider and highlight any possible risks to women that are associated with the intervention, and how they will mitigate these risks.

Cost Reimbursable Grant Application Sections

Interested applicants must submit an application form that includes the following sections:

- Technical approach that aligns with project's objectives
- Timeline of implementation
- Budget and budget narrative section that includes 50 percent cost-share contribution

See section IV of the RFA for application format instructions. See Annex A for the Application Format template.

ACDI/VOCA will review and evaluate all complete applications submitted by the deadline. Selected applicants will then work closely with ACDI/VOCA's technical team to finalize their proposal and budget.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

Any amount that may be indicated below are estimations. Applicants should not use them as targets or assume them to be guaranteed amounts.

Projected number of grants to be awarded	Approximately 6-12 in total
Projected not-to-exceed amount of an individual grant	50,000 (USD) Approx. Tk. 410,0000
Currency in which grant will be issued and paid	Bangladeshi Taka
Anticipated period of performance of an individual grant	Up to 6 months, with possibility of extension based on performance
Anticipated start date of performance <i>(Note: Grants will not be expected to begin on the same date. This date is only a guide to when the initial batch of grants will be expected to commence.)</i>	March 1, 2019
<p>Type of grant that <u>may be</u> issued: <i>(Note: The final choice of grant instrument will be determined after all elements of the grant application have been evaluated, including any risk that may be identified by ACDI/VOCA.)</i></p> <p>Cost Reimbursable Grant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grantees will be reimbursed for allowable and allocable costs incurred up to the obligated (i.e., available funds) grant amount. 	
<p>Cost-Share Requirement: All grant applicants are required to provide a minimum of 50 percent cost-share. Applicants are encouraged to provide substantial cost-share demonstrating their commitment to the proposed grant activities in order to be competitive. The cost-share amount is in addition to the funded grant amount (e.g. if ACDI/VOCA provides 10,000 taka, the grantee must contribute an additional 5,000 taka minimum). Cost-share may be in the form of cash or in-kind, including real property, equipment, supplies, and other expendable property. Other examples of cost-share include volunteer services and donated office/venue space. To be counted, a cost-share contribution must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be verifiable – The applicant must be willing and able to provide sufficient documentation to support all recorded cost-share. Not included as contributions for any other U.S. government-assisted program. Necessary and reasonable for efficient and proper accomplishment of the objective(s). <p>*Applicants should be aware that reported cost-share is auditable, must be allowable under federal cost principles, and verifiable by the grantee's financial records.</p>	

III. ELIGIBILITY OF PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS

Applications from potential new partners are encouraged. All applicants must be able to demonstrate that they meet the following mandatory eligibility requirements:

1. A legally registered company or organization for at least two years (applicants do not need to have headquarters offices in Bangladesh but must be legally registered to operate in Bangladesh).
2. Not identified in the System for Award Management (SAM) as ineligible to receive U.S. government funds.
3. Not appear on the Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) and Blocked Persons List maintained by the U.S. Treasury for the Office of Foreign Assets Control, or "OFAC List."
4. Not listed in the United Nations Security designation list.
5. Agree to be subject to a pre-award assessment to examine its possession or ability to obtain the necessary management competence to plan and carry out the activities to be funded. The Applicant will practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for the funds and other assets to be provided under the grant.
6. Able and willing to sign and submit the following required certifications if selected:
 - *Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs*
 - *Certification Regarding Lobbying*
 - *Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing*
 - *Key Individual Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking*
 - *Participant Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking*
 - *Certification of Recipient*
7. Provide a documentable, measurable minimum cost-share requirement
8. The applicant must consider and highlight any possible risks to women that are associated with the intervention, and how they will mitigate these risks.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Format

1. All costs associated with responding to this solicitation shall be the sole responsibility of each applicant.
2. ACDI VOCA/the Livestock and Nutrition project reserves the right not to make any award from this solicitation.
3. Applicants must use the application templates provided in the Annexes for the technical approach, timeline of implementation, and corresponding budget and budget narrative. The technical approach section of the application form shall not exceed a total of three pages. Please see Annex A for the technical approach, timeline of implementation, and budget template and budget narrative instructions. Please see Annex B for the Excel budget template format.
4. Applications must be submitted in English.
5. The application must be signed by an officer of the Applicant organization who is duly authorized to represent the organization in further discussions and/or negotiations on the application.

All applications should be submitted to procurement@acdivocalpin.org by February 2, 2019 clearly stating the "Application in response to RFA # J0843-02-03-2019." The technical section and any attachments should be submitted using Microsoft Office Word 2013, or compatible version. The budget and budget narrative sections should be submitted using Microsoft Office Excel 2013, or compatible version, if possible. ***ACDI VOCA/the Livestock and Nutrition project will not be responsible for any failure of transmission by an Applicant.***

B. Additional Instructions for Budget Section

1. Applicants should propose only those costs that are necessary and reasonable to perform the activities described in the application. Guidance on certain limitations are provided in the Section II, Award Information.
2. Items of cost will be reviewed under the standards of the cost principles in U.S. government regulation, 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.
3. Applicants are required to submit a budget narrative that explains and justifies the need for the costs proposed in the budget. The narrative should help the reviewer understand ***why an item of cost is necessary and how it will be used for the activity for which it will be incurred.*** The budget narrative should demonstrate the relationship between the proposed activities and the budget. Just as the technical application should reflect the Applicant's understanding of the objectives and the proposed approach to achieve those objectives, the budget and the accompanying narrative should be realistic and show a similar understanding of the financial requirements of the proposed program of activities.

V. EVALUATION

Applications will be evaluated against the evaluation criteria in the table below.

Criteria	Maximum Score
Organizational capacity and past performance	15
Cost effectiveness and cost realism	25
Technical merits	60
Total:	100

These evaluation criteria elements are described more fully below.

A. Organizational Capacity and Past Performance: Evidence of the applicant’s capability to undertake and accomplish the proposed grant activities. The application should demonstrate the organization’s effectiveness in terms of internal structure, technical capacity, and key personnel, in meeting the grant objectives and goals. In addition, the organization must demonstrate adequate financial management capabilities. The evaluation will be based principally on the background, qualifications, reputation, appropriateness, and skills of its key personnel and the “track record,” reputation, and achievements (including development of self-sufficient, sustainable activities) of the organization. Previous or ongoing experience implementing similar activities. This examines an Applicant’s references and experience, which is a critical factor in assessing the capacity of the organization to implement the activity. **Total of 15 points.**

B. Cost Effectiveness and Cost Realism: The degree to which budgeting is clear, reasonable, and reflects the best use of organizational and grant resources. Applicant’s cost-share contribution reflects commitment to the proposed grant activities. Any applicant to be supported under this RFA is expected to provide a minimum of 50 percent cost-share to the proposed funding toward the implementation of the activity. **Total of 25 points.**

C. Technical Merits: The quality and feasibility of the application in terms of the viability of the proposed technical approach, (i.e., the proposed technical approach can reasonably be expected to produce the intended outcomes), appropriateness of the proposed methodology, innovativeness, and the work plan for achieving project objectives. Evaluation of approaches may include either approaches proven to be effective or new untried approaches with promise. Proposed mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation with objectively measurable indicators will also be appraised. **Total of 60 points.**

Technical merit will be evaluated on:

- Viability (20 points)
- Tested methodologies (20 points)
- Innovativeness (20 points)

Additionally, ACDI VOCA/the Livestock and Nutrition project will ensure environmental soundness and compliance in design and implementation as required by 22 CFR 216.

VI. AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

All grants will be negotiated, denominated and funded in *Bangladeshi Taka*.

All costs funded by the grant must be allowable, allocable and reasonable. Grant applications must be supported by a detailed and realistic budget as described in Section IV.

Issuance of this RFA and assistance with application development do not constitute an award or commitment on the part of ACDI VOCA/the Livestock and Nutrition project, nor does it commit the project to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Further, ACDI VOCA/the Livestock and Nutrition project reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received. Applicants will be informed in writing of the decision made regarding their application.

ANNEXES

Annex A – Application Format (Word)

Annex B – Budget and Budget Narrative Template (Excel)