



SUBJECT: Amendment No. 01 – Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone Emergency Response and Recovery for Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)-Affected Countries
USAID/DCHA/FFP Annual Program Statement (APS) No. FFP-15-000001
International Emergency Food Assistance

DATE: March 25, 2015

Consistent with Section III.B of APS FFP-15-000001, this amendment requests concept paper submissions to address emergency and early recovery food security needs in West Africa as a result of the EVD outbreak. Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone are the most impacted by the virus. As of March 16, 2015, more than 24,000 cases had been identified in the three countries, with more than 10,000 deaths, including 840 deaths among health care workers. The full impact of this multifaceted emergency is difficult to quantify yet requires well-targeted interventions to address food insecurity, disrupted livelihoods, and economic losses resulting from EVD.

To have grant awards in place in time to support the 2015 agriculture and lean seasons, USAID's Office of Food for Peace (FFP) is requesting concept paper submissions by **April 13, 2015**. All applications are to be submitted electronically through FFP's Management Information System (FFPMIS)¹ no later than **12:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST)**. FFP will consider applications received after the deadline only after reviewing those submitted on time, if sufficient responses were not received and funding remains available. This amendment specifically responds to the EVD crisis in West Africa. Following the process outlined in the APS, FFP estimates that the time from submission of a concept paper to award issuance is approximately two to three months. Organizations with current FFP Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP) funding related to the EVD emergency that wish to be considered for an extension should submit modification requests under this amendment.

Priority will be given to applications that propose to support households disproportionately affected by the economic impacts of EVD. This could include households directly impacted by EVD in need of food assistance beyond immediate U.N. World Food Program (WFP)-provided support. Households indirectly impacted by EVD could be experiencing lost household income due to market and trade disruptions, lost employment and/or other livelihoods opportunities, low harvest yields, and/or increased food prices. These impacts are herein referred to as second-order impacts. FFP estimates that second-order impacts have had a more deleterious effect on the most vulnerable households, which, in the context of EVD, is up to the applicant to define with strong

¹FFPMIS can be accessed at <https://usaid-ffp.entellitrak.com/etk-usaid-ffp-prod/login.request.do?service=%2Fhome.do>. Training and support materials on accessing and using FFPMIS can be found at <http://www.fsnnetwork.org/document/food-peace-management-information-system-ffpmis-resources>.

justification. Applications should clearly explain why targeted populations are in need of emergency and/or early recovery food assistance as a result of EVD.

Activities should focus on maintaining and/or restoring adequate food consumption and livelihoods among vulnerable populations. It is expected that interventions will aim to meet immediate food needs and assist affected households and communities to regain livelihood levels to cope with the coming lean season and prepare for upcoming main and off-season agricultural planting seasons. Applicants must provide evidence demonstrating EVD-related emergency and early recovery food security needs and justification for the proposed geographic target areas. A clear justification of needs and how FFP activities will fill response gaps is essential. This APS amendment does not seek to respond to chronic food insecurity; instead, FFP seeks to target the most vulnerable populations impacted by the second-order impacts of EVD.

FFP will confer with USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance and relevant USAID Missions to evaluate applications and make funding decisions. FFP non-emergency development programs will remain the main vehicles for multi-year FFP resilience-building initiatives. This amendment to the APS will support awards up to 18 months in duration. Among other criteria, applications and their associated food assistance delivery modalities will be evaluated based on their ability to deliver assistance quickly using a cost-effective approach.

Except as specifically amended herein, all other terms and conditions of the subject APS remain unchanged and in full force and effect. Accordingly, the subject APS, available at <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/agriculture-and-food-security/food-assistance/programs/emergency-programs>, is hereby further amended as follows:

Background:

The current EVD epidemic is a multi-faceted humanitarian emergency with significant social, economic, political, and security dimensions. The disease and containment efforts have disrupted trade and rain-fed agriculture—two primary livelihood sources in the affected areas. Traditional cross-border and inter-country supply routes—particularly to and from Guinea—became inaccessible as entire geographic areas were cordoned off and other countries in the region closed borders and other access points (sea and air). Current conditions vary within countries, as they are in different stages of the response, and the crisis continues to evolve in a context of extreme poverty, high market dependency, poor crop yields, and low health indicators. The situation is further complicated by continued political fragility following decades of conflict and civil strife in the affected countries. Importantly, the areas most affected by the outbreak and prevention measures are also some of the most productive agricultural zones from which domestic food output normally flows to less productive areas within the countries and across borders.

Mitigating Second-Order Impacts:

Within this APS amendment, FFP seeks to maintain and/or restore pre-crisis food consumption levels, livelihoods, and/or productive assets, partially by rapidly stimulating the local production and marketing of staple foods so that the volumes of food available and accessible to vulnerable households are restored to pre-EVD levels. Therefore, in all interventions, FFP favors an approach that actively supports local market systems. Food assistance interventions could

include time-bound unconditional and/or conditional cash transfers, food vouchers, and/or market-based livelihoods support, such as agricultural input vouchers. Food assistance interventions could also include conditional and/or unconditional in-kind distributions of locally/regionally procured food commodities, where such a modality is most appropriate. Depending on program objectives and targeted beneficiaries, interventions could also involve the distribution of U.S. commodities alone or in combination with locally/regionally purchased food commodities and/or targeted cash transfers and/or food vouchers. For example, if targeting pregnant and lactating women and children under five years of age, it may be appropriate to include specialized nutrition products or fortified refined vegetable oil, which may be unavailable in sufficient volumes in intervention areas. As with all EFSP applications, applicants must demonstrate their ability to deliver assistance quickly using a cost-effective approach.

All programming should be closely coordinated with other food security and nutrition actors in terms of size/amount of transfer to be disbursed, geographic and beneficiary targeting, timing, duration, and modality. FFP does not seek to initiate long-term social safety net programming through this APS amendment. Rather, programming should meet emergency and/or early recovery food security needs for a specific and limited amount of time and be closely coordinated with planned and/or ongoing social safety net programs in targeted areas. All programming should be sensitive to the specific needs of women and vulnerable groups and include strong monitoring mechanisms and systems for beneficiaries to register complaints and/or report cases of possible fraud or abuse. Finally, applicants should provide detailed explanation of how staff will monitor market conditions to assess impacts of interventions and adjust activities accordingly, as needed.

Where the impacts of the EVD crisis have undermined community-based savings and loan groups, such as village savings and loan associations (VSLAs), and small-scale traders, negatively affecting the stable availability and/or access to food supplies at the community and household levels, strategies to restart savings and loan activities and small-scale trade are welcome. FFP is not interested in starting new savings and loan groups through this amendment, or addressing more fundamental issues that prevented groups from functioning pre-EVD. Some small-scale training to saving and loan groups and traders would be acceptable, as long as training builds upon pre-existing capacities. While FFP is supportive of restoring livelihoods among beneficiaries, interventions should not seek to teach new livelihoods activities that require sustained training and support.

Nutrition activities should be directly linked to the EVD crisis in terms of justification and proposed activities, and be well coordinated with the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) and government initiatives. Any food rations provided as part of nutrition interventions should be harmonized, as appropriate.

While the incorporation of Ebola-related messaging, including good hygiene practices, is welcome in all FFP-supported food security interventions, applications should not include stand-alone behavior change or water, sanitation, and hygiene components.

Relief to Development

Applications should include sound transition strategies. Despite the attempts of numerous

surveys and assessments, disentangling the economic and food security challenges caused by EVD from more chronic problems that pre-dated the disease—including persistently high rates of poverty and stunting—has proven difficult. Applicants should be mindful of this reality and ensure that any short-term activities address the acute emergency while linking with and feeding into the long-term development agenda, which is aimed at addressing more chronic issues. Proposed activities need to align with government recovery plans and strategies.

Role of Private Sector Partnerships

USAID views partnerships as an arrangement involving two or more parties acting together to achieve a common goal and/or objective by bringing to bear a set of complementary assets. Ideally, each partner offers assets that draw on its core institutional capabilities. Moreover, the process of partnering produces concrete value-added attributes that benefit all partners, helping each to achieve something that no single partner could have achieved on its own. Similarly, each partner is better able to achieve its own objectives than it could have operating alone. As FFP is in favor of partnerships because of their potential for long-term benefits to targeted EVD communities and beneficiaries, FFP-funded interventions should note opportunities for private sector collaboration wherever practicable.

Systems Approach

A systems perspective is essential to ensuring that EVD response and recovery efforts are part of government-led efforts within each country. For this reason, wherever possible, successful applications will credibly demonstrate coordination with government systems and engagement in consultative policy dialogues around key issues such as the social safety nets and other national initiatives. By engaging with the government and implementing activities that support local systems, FFP anticipates increased capacity of host governments to withstand and recover from future shocks, while also avoiding the further "projectization" of humanitarian relief and recovery. (See information on a systems approach: <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/LocalSystemsFramework.pdf>).

Coordination and Coherence of Effort Among Actors

Due to the significant level of response by the U.S. Government and other donors to this emergency, it will be essential for the applicant to clearly identify food security needs and gaps in the response and recovery process. FFP resources should ensure that EVD response efforts are coherent, complementary, and do no harm. As such, successful proposals must demonstrate how they will support, complement, and avoid duplicating or competing with the activities of other existing programs/partners, including government-led programs. All FFP partners must participate in relevant in-country food security cluster and/or cash working group meetings.

Ensure Flexibility

Each of the three affected countries is in different stages of the response and the time it will take for each country's economy to recover remains unknown. Moreover, some countries may see a resurgence of EVD before declaring an end to the epidemic. As such, partners must fully understand the issues to which they are responding as they relate to the impacts of EVD in order to adjust food security activities effectively in response to changing conditions. Such changes could include, but are not limited to, changes in market conditions, disease resurgence, and new border closures.

Innovation

Applicants are encouraged to employ innovative approaches in program design. Innovative methods of providing assistance, including innovative technologies that exploit the appropriate use of information and communication technologies, such as real-time, two-way data reporting systems and digital financial services, should be considered. FFP encourages the use of digital payment systems including mobile money, card-based, and non-card electronic voucher systems when and where feasible, unless otherwise justified.

Eligible Program Interventions:

- Under this APS amendment, FFP has identified the following primary mechanisms—listed in no particular order—for providing appropriate and effective food assistance. Each proposed intervention must be justified by linking the objective of the intervention, including which beneficiary group the intervention is designed to assist, with an assessment of the feasibility and appropriateness of the chosen modality, based on information about the local operating context, including market conditions. Applicants must demonstrate their ability to deliver assistance quickly using a cost-effective approach.

Conditional and/or unconditional food vouchers

- **Food vouchers** could be used to restore and/or maintain food consumption among beneficiaries while incentivizing traders to bring sufficient amounts of nutritious food to local markets. Applicants should ensure adequate traders with a variety of nutritious food are willing and able to travel to target areas. Applicants must justify the use of food vouchers over other modalities, and explain how market conditions and possible fraud or abuse will be monitored. Applicants should not plan to use food vouchers where significant movement restrictions are in place, unless strong justification is provided. Applicants should not premise interventions on the lifting of restrictions beyond their immediate control.

Conditional and/or unconditional cash programming

- **Targeted cash transfers** should be intended for beneficiaries' purchase of food; therefore, cash transfer amounts should be based on local food baskets and well-coordinated among other actors implementing cash-based programming in targeted areas. Applicants must justify the use of cash over other modalities, and explain how market conditions and possible fraud or abuse will be monitored.
- **Cash-for-work** should be used to build or rehabilitate community assets, as identified by the community. Applicants should consider whether infrastructure will be sustainable after a project's conclusion and help communities create sustainability plans where applicable. Potential partners should not introduce new technology via cash-for-work within this APS amendment that are unlikely to be sustainable beyond the 18-month timeframe. Activities should not undermine local private sector wages or direct labor away from agriculture productivity. Wages should be harmonized with any national policies, and with other major cash-for-work interventions, as appropriate.

Local and regional procurement for food distribution

- **In-kind distribution of locally/regionally procured food**, where markets do not support demand-side interventions, or where the type of food to be distributed is not available in

sufficient volumes in markets in areas of intervention. All in-kind food distribution must be closely coordinated with WFP and other relevant food security actors. Applicants must justify the use of locally/regionally procured food over other modalities, and explain how staff will monitor market conditions in both the procurement and distributions markets, and possible fraud or abuse.

U.S. commodities for food distribution

- **In-kind distribution of U.S. commodities**, alone or in combination with locally/regionally purchased food and/or targeted cash transfers/food vouchers, where specific food commodities are unavailable on local markets or unavailable in sufficient volumes. For example, if targeting pregnant and lactating women and children under five years of age, it may be appropriate to include specialized nutrition products or fortified refined vegetable oil, which may be unavailable in sufficient volumes in intervention areas. If programming corn soy blend plus (CSB+) as a nutritional food supplement targeted to pregnant and lactating women and children six to 59 months in age, it is advised that the applicant refer to the Food Aid Quality Review for programmatic recommendations.

Complementary Food Security Programming

Based on their potential to contribute to the stabilization of household and community access to adequate nutritious food, the following interventions may complement the primary mechanisms for providing food assistance, as described above. Complementary activities should be subsidiary to the above activities, emergency in scope, and realistic in terms of what is achievable in an 18-month EFSP program. However, there is no limit on complementary services in terms of percentage of any application's total budget.

- **Agricultural input vouchers** could be used to restore seeds, tools, and/or other agricultural assets among farming households who lost or sold assets due to the EVD crisis. FFP prefers that applicants reconnect farmers and input suppliers, supporting both the supply and demand sides of the input market, rather than distribute inputs directly to beneficiaries. Applicants should ensure adequate suppliers with certified seed are willing and able to travel to targeted areas. Applicants should not plan to use agricultural input vouchers where significant movement restrictions are in place, unless strong justification is provided. Applicants should not premise interventions on the lifting of restrictions beyond their immediate control.
- **Financially restore community-based savings and loan groups** that decapitalized resources as a direct result of the EVD crisis. Applicants should target groups based on the vulnerability of their members and the extent to which they were impacted by the crisis, as opposed to targeting based on the pre-Ebola success of the groups as the only criterion. Interventions should not be primarily focused on addressing pre-EVD deficiencies that prevented community savings and loan groups from functioning properly but may include some complementary training.
- **Provide financial support to small-scale traders** who were unable to continue trading during the epidemic due to market restrictions, high transaction costs, etc. in order to stimulate local market activity by injecting cash into the economy. Applicants should target traders based on their vulnerability and level of involvement in local market systems.

- **Restore livelihoods activities** lost due to the EVD outbreak through grants or other means. This may include training, but partners should not aim to teach new livelihoods activities that require sustained training and support.
- **Nutrition activities** that focus on the restoration of community-based services, care groups, and other systems that failed as a direct result of the EVD crisis, integrating food vouchers, targeted cash assistance, and/or distribution of food commodities procured local/regionally and/or in the United States, as appropriate.

Beneficiary Target Groups:

Activities within this APS amendment will focus on supporting the most vulnerable populations experiencing increased food insecurity as a direct or indirect result of EVD. These could include:

- **Directly affected households:** Households that lost a wage earner due to EVD, survivors and their households, and households hosting children orphaned by EVD.
- **Indirectly affected households:** Vulnerable households in areas where markets, trade, livelihoods, and/or crop production were extremely disrupted due to EVD and control measures. Applicants must demonstrate a clear understanding of the economic impacts as they relate to EVD, as well as the food assistance need.

Geographic Targeting:

FFP will focus activities on the areas hardest hit by EVD and related second-order impacts due to, for example, quarantines, loss of employment, lower-than-expected harvests, and/or market closures. Prospective partners must demonstrate a strong understanding of how EVD specifically impacted targeted areas, including how those impacts relate to the seasonal calendar. Due to existing coverage of FFP EFSP EVD-focused programs compared to overall need, FFP will prioritize applications for Guinea and Sierra Leone.