**Issuance Date**: <mark>TBD</mark>

**Deadline for Questions:** <mark>TBD</mark>
**Closing Date**: <mark>TBD</mark>
CFDA Number: 98.007
**Closing Time**: 11:59 a.m. (Eastern Standard Time)

**Subject**:     Request for Applications for Development Food Security Activities in Ethiopia

**Title**:   Fiscal Year 2020 Request for Applications for Development Food Security Activities in Ethiopia

**Funding Opportunity Number**: 72DFFP20RFA00006

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Food for Peace (FFP) is seeking applications for funding for development food security activities (DFSAs) in Ethiopia.

Private voluntary organizations (PVOs) or cooperatives, including U.S. and non-U.S. nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), may apply. Public international organizations (PIOs) are also eligible to apply.

Subject to the availability of funds, under this Request for Applications (RFA), FFP plans to award up to four cooperative agreements with the goal of "**Improved food security of vulnerable households in targeted Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) communities, contributing to a sustained reduction in rural poverty**" in up to three regions of Ethiopia: Oromia, Amhara, and Tigray. Subject to availability, the anticipated funding for all awarded Ethiopia multi-year DFSAs is approximately $550 million over a five-year period. Please refer to Section 1- Program Description for a complete description of possible activities. Applicants are not limited to targeting only one region.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of USAID, nor does it commit the U.S. Government to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of the comments/suggestions or an application. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense. This includes the completion of all required documents for USAID awards.

**RFA Merit Review, Co-Creation, and Refine & Implement (R&I) Process**

Please be aware that this RFA follows a multi-stage review process, as well as a Co-Creation and Award phase.

**Evaluation Phase I**: Applicants will submit an Initial Application. After review of the Initial Application, those submissions with the highest evaluation scores will be invited to participate in Phase II.

**Evaluation Phase II**: Applicants with the highest evaluation scores from Phase 1 will be invited to participate in a structured interview of their proposed approach in Washington, D.C., with possible video-conferencing. The structured interview may also be held virtually. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of the oral presentations by letter after the completion of all oral presentations.

**Co-Creation Phase:** Applicants who best meet the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the selection criteria contained herein and selected from Evaluation Phase II will be the Apparently Successful Applicant(s) (ASA).[1] The ASA(s) will be selected to participate in a joint co-creation workshop which may include, USAID, other USAID food security partners, and the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) (See Appendix III: Co-Creation, Refine and Implement, and DFSA Handover Guidance). This workshop will be hosted by USAID in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia or may be held virtually. The details of the co-creation workshop will be outlined to the ASA(s) after the oral presentation. Following the co-creation workshop, the ASA(s) will continue to work remotely to refine key parts and revise the Initial Application and accompanying cost-application to submit a final and full Application approximately four weeks (or earlier) after the conclusion of the co-creation workshop.

**Final Application Phase**: USAID will review the final full technical and cost application(s) and may provide additional clarification questions at this final review stage.

**Award Phase**: Per USAID's requirements, the final full technical and cost applications will be reviewed and incorporated into resulting cooperative agreement(s). An award will be drafted and submitted to the ASA(s) for review. Once the award(s) is signed, the Awardee(s) may start incurring costs.

**Refine and Implement Phase**: During the post-award Refine and Implement (R&I) phase, new awardees will be expected to carry out traditional start-up tasks and additional R&I related activities as detailed in Appendix III: Co-Creation, Refine and Implement, and DFSA Handover Guidance. During implementation year one, it is envisioned that awardees will not be directly responsible for full scale delivery of core PSNP services. Awardees will have approximately nine months to coordinate handover and delivery of core PSNP activities. More details on

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[1] Per 2 CFR 700.1, Apparently Successful Applicant(s) means the applicant(s) for USAID funding recommended for an award after merit review, but who has not yet been awarded a grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance award by the Agreement Officer. Apparently Successful Applicant status confers no right and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award, which still must be executed by the Agreement Officer.

> implementation year one handover, piloting, and assessments are in Appendix III: Co-Creation, Refine and Implement, and DFSA Handover Guidance.

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 award, the RFA consists of this cover letter and the following:

To be eligible for the award, the applicant must provide all required information in the 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.

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements detailed in Section IV. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, Applicants are encouraged to begin registration early in the process.

Please send any questions to FY20-DFSA-RFA-Ethiopia@usaid.gov. The deadline for questions is **TBD**.

The RFA does not contain all significant technical information. Applicants should also refer to the Development Activity Application Guidance on the FFP website, including Technical References and the Monitoring and Evaluation Policy.

Per 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700, USAID regulations do not 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 any other supporting documents including documents referenced in the RFA, <u>the RFA takes precedence over any referenced documents (including the Technical References)</u>, *__except__* <u>statute and regulations</u>. 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 (AO).

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

   /S/

Clyde Hicks
Director, USAID Office of Food for Peace

## *SECTION I - PROGRAM DESCRIPTION*

### 1. Overview

This RFA provides information on a funding opportunity for a multi-year DFSA in Ethiopia. Development activities are mandated in the Food for Peace Act and are aligned with the [FFP 2016-2025 Food Assistance and Food Security Strategy](). The resulting award will be subject to 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and USAID's supplement, 2 CFR 700, as well as the additional requirements found in Section F. More specific information on the objectives, interventions, geographic locations targeted within the country, and/or funding levels and types covered by this RFA may be found in the Program Description section.  In addition, FFP posts market analyses, Climate Risk Profiles and other related resources on the [FFP website](), as applicable.

FFP intends to award up to four cooperative agreements with the goal of "**Improved food security of vulnerable households in targeted PSNP communities, contributing to a sustained reduction in rural poverty"** in up to three regions of Ethiopia: Oromia, Amhara, and Tigray. Subject to availability of funds, the anticipated funding for all awarded Ethiopia multi-year DFSAs is approximately $550 million of Title II Development funding over a five-year period. Applicants may request variable funding levels over the life of the activity.

Since FY 2016, FFP has been awarding its development food security activities under a post-award model known as Refine and Implement (R&I) which is intended to improve the activity's design, fit to context and implementation planning. Given the complexity of related designs, USAID will utilize both a pre-award co-creation workshop and a post-award R&I model. (See Appendix III: Co-Creation, Refine and Implement, and DFSA Handover Guidance.)

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implementation year one handover, piloting, and assessments are in Appendix III: Co-Creation, Refine and Implement, and DFSA Handover Guidance.

## 2. FFP Global Strategy and DFSA Background Information

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 lead operating unit overseeing international food assistance. FFP works to reduce hunger and malnutrition and assure that adequate, safe, and nutritious food is available, accessible, and well-utilized by all individuals at all times to support a healthy and productive life.

● **FFP Development Food Security Activities**

Through FFP, USAID supports multi-year development food security activities (DFSAs) to improve and sustain the food and nutrition security of vulnerable populations. Particular sectoral or activity focus under DFSAs are context dependent, but broadly encompass food access, livelihoods, formal safety nets, agriculture, natural resource management, early warning and disaster preparedness and mitigation, health, WASH, nutrition, and local systems building. These activities work at the individual, household, community and institutional levels to address the underlying causes of food insecurity and strengthen transformative opportunities. DFSAs are intended to strengthen resilience in populations vulnerable to acute or chronic hunger and recurrent shocks, stresses, and crises to reduce future need for development or emergency food assistance. These activities are integrated with other USAID efforts to promote resilience and reduce extreme poverty.

● **FFP Strategic Priorities**

In FY 2017, FFP launched a new [Food Assistance and Food Security Strategy 2016-2025](#) (FFP Strategy) which laid out priorities for the future around sustainability, systems approaches and a new set of cross cutting areas of focus addressing gender equity and youth empowerment, social cohesion, and social accountability. In seeking improved and more sustained food and nutrition security for vulnerable populations, the FFP Strategy works through two parallel objectives: to protect and enhance lives and livelihoods while strengthening and transforming communities and institutions.

The FFP Strategy's Results Framework is a global framing of FFP's work, outlining what is considered within FFP's mandate, as well as what is expected as the skill sets and capacities of our implementing partners. At the field level, the exact parameters of a program will depend on context, need, available resources, and the skills, capacities and roles of other food and nutrition security actors working in the same space. This RFA is also grounded in [USAID's Local Systems Framework](#)[3], which emphasizes a "systems approach" that focuses on multiple interconnected actors and relationships.

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[3] USAID (2014). Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development. Available: *https://www.usaid.gov/policy/local-systems-framework*

- **FFP Strategic Objectives**

*SO1: Lives and livelihoods protected and enhanced*

FFP works to protect and enhance the lives and livelihoods of those affected by crisis, and those vulnerable to crisis due to chronic poverty and hunger. In acute emergency situations, this may be by meeting immediate food and nutrition needs of those most vulnerable to food deficits through direct resource transfers accompanied by complementary programming to maximize the impact of those resources. In recovery and development settings, the emphasis may shift more strongly towards improving the lives of the most marginalized and protecting development investments through capacity building, knowledge transfer, household asset-building, or other productive investments contributing to improved food and nutrition security outcomes across a range of sectors.
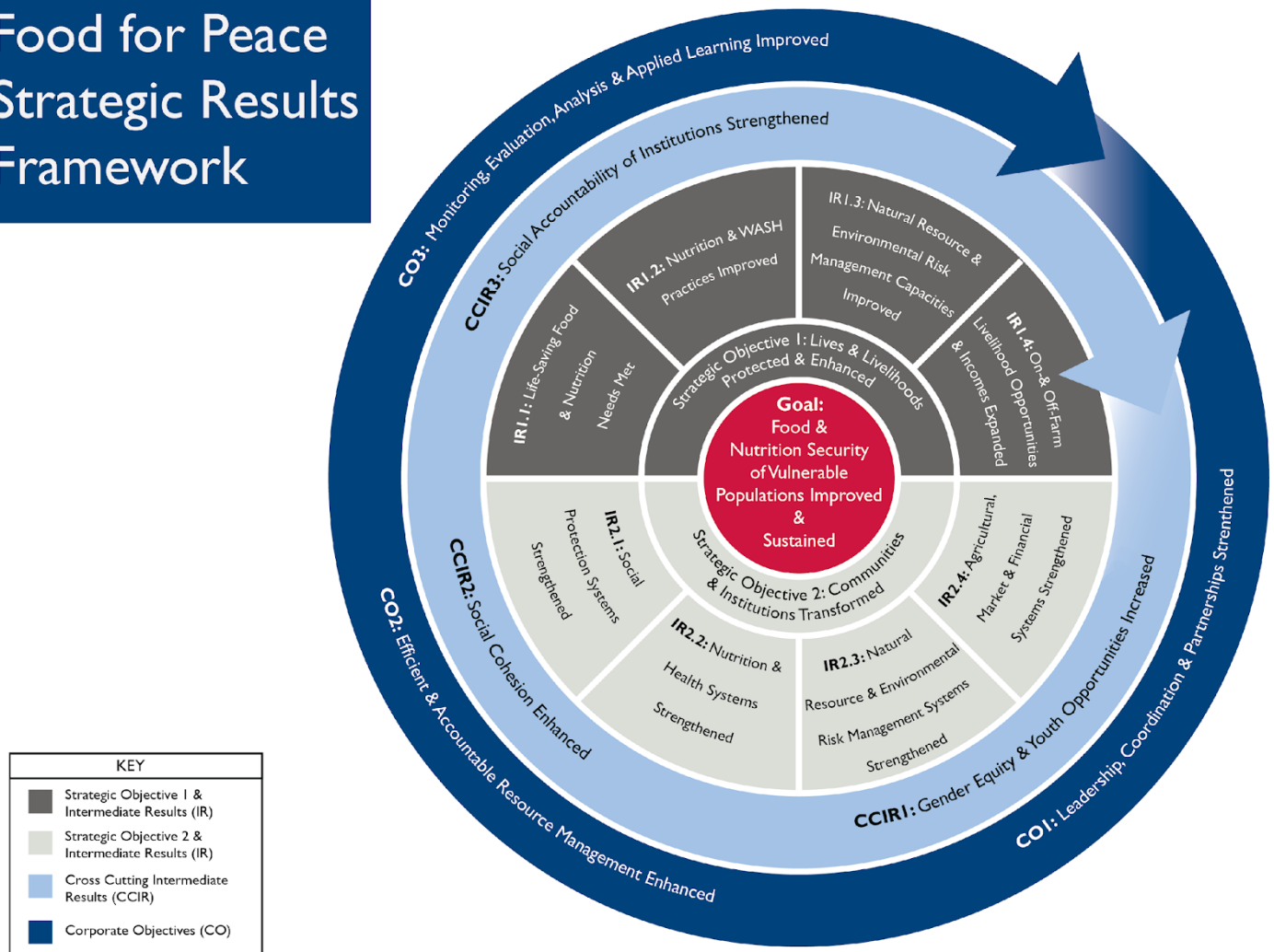
*SO2: Communities and institutions transformed*

Even in the most acute crisis, an important foundation for transformative change includes assistance that does no harm and succeeds in strengthening local systems - including both social dynamics and formal and informal institutions. Under SO2, FFP works to strengthen communities and institutions that serve as catalysts for greater and more sustainable change in emergency response and long-term development settings alike. SO2 provides a pathway to address root causes and drivers of food insecurity through efforts at the community level and, where appropriate, up to national policy and planning levels, in ways that strengthen the capacity of both formal and informal institutions, reduce risks, and provide engines of growth, opportunity and change.

- **FFP Strategy Intermediate Results**



Food for Peace Strategic Results Framework

KEY
- Strategic Objective 1 & Intermediate Results (IR)
- Strategic Objective 2 & Intermediate Results (IR)
- Cross Cutting Intermediate Results (CCIR)
- Corporate Objectives (CO)

The SOs in the FFP Results Framework (RF) are each supported by four Intermediate Results (IRs) that address social protection, nutrition, environmental management and increasing incomes and assets. The IRs under SO1 focus on the individual - and household-level capacities required for positive change, while those under SO2 address the community and institutional capacities required to promote, support and sustain those changes.

Across all IRs, FFP's strategy calls for a broadened concept of risk management that, in addition to natural hazards such as drought and flooding, addresses risks posed by fragility, conflict, pandemic disease and climate change, as well as idiosyncratic shocks, such as the death of a household head. Working at multiple levels, efforts to protect and enhance the lives and livelihoods of individuals and households while also strengthening local systems, creates synergies between the two SOs and the IRs under them. It also increases the need for FFP and its partners to sequence, layer, and integrate activities within FFP programs, as well as with

other USAID, local government, and other donor-funded efforts.

- **FFP Strategy Cross-cutting Intermediate Results**

A set of cross-cutting IRs underpin the SOs and IRs to support the empowerment of women and youth, enhance social cohesion, and strengthen social accountability. They are intended to bring new focus and clarity to work to positively influence the local systems – including both social dynamics and formal and informal institutions – in which FFP emergency and multi-sectoral development food security activities are implemented.

- **FFP Strategy Corporate Objectives**

The FFP strategy also includes three Corporate Objectives relevant to FFP and partners alike. These are designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of FFP's work through strengthening partnership and influence, capacities of staff and institutions, and the evidence base underlying work in food and nutrition security.

- **Other U.S. Government and USAID Strategic Priorities**

The FFP Strategy and programming contribute to countries' Journey to Self-Reliance, by improving capacity and commitment of government and local systems, and USAID's mission to end extreme poverty and promote resilient democratic societies; and to the DCHA Bureau's strategic objectives, notably "Supporting areas of recurrent crisis to become more resilient." The FFP Strategy also contributes to and reflects the USAID Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy 2014-2025, USAID policy and program guidance for Building Resilience to Recurrent Crisis, USAID's policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment; USAID's policy on Youth in Development, the U.S. Government's Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity strategy, USAID's Local Systems Framework, and USAID's Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Strategy. Notably, through FFP's development food security activities, the Strategy also contributes to the U.S. Government Global Food Security Strategy, 2017-2021, launched in October 2016.

The FFP Ethiopia DFSA Conceptual Framework (sub-Section 3 below) aligns with the USAID Ethiopia Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) 2019-2024 with the goal: "Ethiopia transitions to a more democratic, resilient, and prosperous country with accountable institutions and private-sector led growth." In particular, this RFA is expected to jointly align with the CDCS Development Objective 1: Disaster risk management strengthened, as well as Development Objective 2: Resilience of vulnerable populations to key shocks increased. Furthermore, FFP aligns with and supports the Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS) Ethiopia Country Plan with the goal: "Sustainably reduce poverty, hunger and malnutrition in the Feed the Future Zone of Influence."

In addition, FFP development food security activities are expected to align with planned FFP Emergency activities and USAID Ethiopia Mission activities particularly in the areas of Livelihoods, Nutrition, and Health.

### 3. Background and Country Context

Over the past 20 years, Ethiopia has made significant progress in improving health, nutrition, education, and other human development indicators. Life expectancy has risen dramatically, while the percentage of the population living in poverty and hunger has fallen by a third in the last 10 years. Sustained economic growth and strong pro-poor spending by the GoE have been critical to this success, supported by the commitment of development partners such as USAID to support Ethiopia's aspirations in poverty reduction. Yet for millions of Ethiopians, the combination of poverty, vulnerability, and food insecurity erode community and household resilience. These factors are exacerbated by climate change[4], conflict, and other acute and chronic shocks and stresses. Poorer areas of rural Ethiopia are characterized by small and often uneconomical agriculture plot sizes. Population density is high, and a large proportion of these households are without access to sufficient land and other productive assets. Excessive cultivation over the years also has depleted soils, resulting in poor productivity.

As a result of these factors, Ethiopia continues to have a significant segment of its population in need of food assistance. The country's Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) is the primary vehicle for identifying humanitarian need and securing resources to support those affected by drought and other drivers of transitory food insecurity. In 2016, the country was heavily affected by impacts of the El Niño-induced drought, which was the most severe in 50 years; more than 10 million people depended on humanitarian food assistance during the drought, which negatively affected household and community resilience, and increased vulnerability. In 2017, another drought occurred in south and southeastern Ethiopia, and 8.5 million Ethiopians needed relief food assistance. In 2019, the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) estimated that 8.2 million people were in need of emergency food assistance (8 million reached), which included three million conflict displaced IDPs. In 2020, the HRP targets 4.6 million food insecure Ethopians, with wide ranging projections for new caseloads from various shocks in the year ahead. The U.S. Government continues to be the largest humanitarian donor for food assistance, which has averaged about $400 million annually in recent years. The USAID Joint Emergency Operations Program (JEOP) is the primary vehicle for providing humanitarian U.S. food assistance to more than 1.4 million transitory food insecure beneficiaries in 86 woredas/districts. USAID also supports food and nutrition assistance through the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) across the country.

4. The PSNP began in 2005 to try and break a perpetual cycle of hunger brought about by recurrent and prolonged **drought** and other shocks. The objective was to support chronically food-insecure households and enable them to overcome vulnerabilities without eroding their assets, and over time, to support households to build their productive asset bases. The PSNP is a GoE-led program, with assistance from multiple development partners. It is now in its fourth phase, covers nearly eight million people in more than 350 woredas, and has been widely studied; multiple studies have shown that the PSNP has positively impacted food-insecure households. The public work, resource transfer, livelihood, and other components of the PSNP as outlined in the

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[4] USAID conducted a Climate Risk Profile (CRP) for sub-national Ethiopian country contexts described in the RFA, located on the USAID food assistance Ethiopia country page, and on Climatelinks.org, at: https://www.climatelinks.org/countries/ethiopia.

PSNP Program Implementation Manual (PIM), which detailed guidance and requirements, have played an important part in smoothing consumption, buffering shocks, and preventing degradation of, and restoring, natural resources. The PIM is the final source of guidance on program concepts, objectives, principles, and procedures for the PSNP.

Although smallholder agriculture will remain an important feature of rural livelihoods in the Ethiopian highlands, large scale improvement in the standard of living will require a shift to alternative livelihood options for a substantial portion of Ethiopia's rural population. Consistent with the goal of promoting alternative livelihood opportunities that offer sustainable pathways out of poverty, various adjustments in the PSNP, which will be reflected in the revised PIM, are currently under discussion by the GoE. These include firm commitments to:

- Increase poor households' savings and ownership of productive assets;
- Enhance the capabilities (financial literacy, life skills and job relevant skills) of PSNP beneficiaries; and
- Help poor households take advantage of formal and informal employment opportunities.

Although the longstanding practice of providing conditional resource transfers to build community assets will continue in the PSNP, alternative conditionalities are also under consideration. For example:

- Food and or cash/vouchers for training, which currently is allowed to promote nutritional outcomes, might be authorized for other skills development objectives (e.g., job relevant skills); and
- Conditionalities that are designed to help prepare households for alternative employment, including enterprise development; off-farm employment/skilled labor; and agricultural livelihoods for those with access to land.

These DFSA activities will support the GoE-led PSNP 5. There are several noteworthy shifts expected in PSNP 5, which will be outlined in the revised PIM:

- Poverty, and not food insecurity, will be the principal indicator for targeting. This focus should result in more woredas being included in PSNP 5, but in many cases fewer households in a woreda (the eight million beneficiary caseload is anticipated to remain unchanged) may be targeted.
- Resource transfers and other processes are being changed/streamlined to allow for more timely and predictable transfers of both food and cash. Additionally, modernizing the infrastructure and processes of the PSNP will include digitizing cash transfers.
- Recognizing that transforming livelihoods and providing new opportunities will require a robust set of interventions, **USAID will finance activities that go beyond those included in the PSNP Program Implementation Manual (PIM).**
- PSNP 5 seeks to operationalize a more robust "continuum of response" —a scalable safety net—that links the PSNP to the humanitarian response system in order to respond to shocks more effectively.

● And finally, USAID has advocated for and expects greater engagement afforded to DFSA Implementing Partners in carrying out activities, e.g., greater say in the planning process at the local level, targeting clients, designing public works, and other processes.

This section does not attempt a comprehensive review of the PSNP. Instead, it focuses on specific contextual factors that are relevant to key features of this solicitation. Applicants are encouraged to consult the substantial literature on patterns of poverty and food insecurity in Ethiopia. Some key references are included in Appendix IV: Essential Supplemental Documents.

### 4. Conceptual Framework

FFP has developed a high-level Conceptual Framework to guide applicants in their design and ensure harmonization across possible multiple awards. Further refinement of the design will take place during the R&I period post award. This Conceptual Framework includes the strategic objectives (SOs) and intermediate results (IRs) that FFP believes will lead to the activity goal of sustained poverty reduction in targeted PSNP households and communities. Based on contextual and geographic appropriateness, FFP encourages Applicant(s) to challenge the provided Conceptual Framework and suggest alternative Intermediate Results (IRs). In suggesting new or additional IRs, Applicant(s) should consider their comparative advantage, maintain the strategic focus outlined in this RFA, and not duplicate or replicate ongoing activities. While aligning with PSNP, the framework encourages partners to go beyond activities specified in the PSNP 5 PIM to further strengthen the program, provide room for innovation, and test models that could be scaled up in a government system.

**Goal: Improved food security of vulnerable households in targeted PSNP communities, contributing to a sustained reduction in rural poverty**

The Government of Ethiopia (GoE)-led Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) started in 2005 and financed by 10 donors, has been a successful model for targeting food and cash resources to millions of chronically food insecure households across Ethiopia. There have been four iterations of the PSNP to date, phased across implementation periods that (generally) are three-five years in length. Additionally, the PSNP has played an important longer-term role in preventing the need for more costly emergency assistance interventions.[5] Each iteration of PSNP has learned from previous experiences and has incorporated improved linkages with activities that promote better nutrition and livelihoods. The end goal of the PSNP has been to graduate recipients from needing assistance.

Despite the important risk mitigating influence of the PSNP, many rural households in highland Ethiopia remain trapped in poverty. The purpose of this activity is to identify pathways toward graduation from poverty. This activity's poverty reduction goal is consistent with PSNP 5, the GoE's poverty reduction strategy, USAID Ethiopia's CDCS, and USAID's Journey to Self-Reliance.

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[5] A USAID report (2018) estimated that the "transfer" part of safety net programming, along with resilience building, and an early humanitarian response could have saved the US Government $1.2 billion over 15 years (2001-16), a savings of 35% of total USG emergency outlays.

The activity's core approach will be to help layer a robust poverty alleviation program onto the PSNP's core social protection platform. To do so, FFP will maintain its food assistance consumption smoothing support through in-kind food transfers, which has been a core element of the PSNP since its inception. It will also build on and strengthen innovative elements of PSNP 4 that focused on helping the rural poor accumulate economic assets, increase essential skills, and transform their livelihood strategies. This activity will also link with other actors and complementary initiatives designed to reduce malnutrition, increase employment opportunities for the poor, and support efforts to strengthen Ethiopia's financial sector.

**SO 1: Vulnerable Households and Individuals Have Sufficient Quantity, Quality, and Diversity of Food at All Times**

FFP supports multi-year development food security activities to improve and sustain the food and nutrition security of vulnerable populations. These activities work at the individual, household, community, and institutional levels to address the underlying causes of food and nutrition insecurity and strengthen transformative opportunities. This includes ensuring synergies between improved food access to, availability and utilization of quality foods, income entitlements, agriculture and other livelihoods initiatives to help improve nutrition outcomes.

*IR 1.1 Consumption Smoothed*
Consumption smoothing is a core-component of the PSNP and a necessary first step in supporting households along the pathway to graduation. It is key to ensuring basic household needs are met, achieving basic food security outcomes, and minimizing episodic/seasonal food deficits at the household level to avoid negative coping strategies. The PSNP transfer covers approximately 20% of the consumption requirements over 12 months for the poorest households which is inline with the international benchmark for adequacy in social protection transfers.[6]

*IR1.2  Access to, Availability, and Utilization of Quality Nutritious Foods Improved*
Insufficient availability and access to nutrient dense food is a widespread problem in the Ethiopian highlands and is particularly acute among poor rural households that have insufficient productive capacity, purchasing power and/or entitlements. Food availability varies by locality, season, and year. Even when animal source food (ASF) is in demand, the availability and access to ASF for rural, poor households are very limited. Dietary diversity in general is low resulting in high caseloads of acute and chronic malnutrition. Spot shortages and seasonal food deficits often occur in drought years, further impairing year-long food and nutrition security.

*IR 1.3 Optimal Infant and Young Child Feeding Behaviors Practiced*
Nutrition social behavior change interventions that aim to improve maternal diets, nutrition during pregnancy, optimal breastfeeding practices, and infant and young child feeding

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[6] World Bank Adequacy Analysis based on 2016 Households Consumption and Expenditure Survey

practices are critical for PSNP households, especially Temporary Direct Support (TDS)[7]clients. Existing interventions in the Ethiopian highlands to promote optimal nutrition behaviors have been unable to overcome the significant socio-cultural barriers that keep Pregnant and Lactating Women (PLW) and children from practicing improved behaviors.

### SO 2: Livelihoods Transformed

USAID recognizes that household livelihoods among PSNP beneficiaries are fragile and that markets available to PSNP households are fragmented. PSNP households are disproportionately affected by weak market systems that limit their income potential and exacerbate their downside exposure to shocks and stresses. With limited diversification options, PSNP households are often forced to work in less productive sectors that are vulnerable to system-wide shocks. Most PSNP households lack access to formal financial services which limits their risk appetite and skills acquisition, trapping them in cyclical poverty. Achieving sustainable pathways out of poverty at the household level requires enhancing household savings and accumulating and protecting productive assets. Maximizing the productivity of these assets requires increasing human capital (financial literacy, life skills, job-relevant skills); and a precondition for overcoming barriers to entry into the marketplace and for optimizing economic opportunities. As appropriate, interventions should leverage existing local systems.

*IR 2.1 Household Assets Increased*
Helping poor households protect and accumulate privately-owned economic assets is a key element of resilience building, and a necessary step in supporting households along the pathway to graduation from chronic poverty. This activity seeks to measurably increase asset ownership on the part of poor individuals and households. The accumulation of liquid assets (savings and other stocks of value) enhances households' ability to cope with shocks and enables them to plan for the future. Acquisition and improvement of privately held productive assets enables the rural poor to increase their productivity and income, and to leverage access to credit and other financial services.

*IR 2.2 Individual and Household Capabilities Enhanced*
Helping the rural poor acquire basic capabilities became a key element of the PSNP in its fourth phase. This activity seeks to help PSNP participants acquire life skills, financial literacy and job-relevant skills, and adopt behaviors and personal attributes necessary to cope with and recover from shocks and stresses. In addition to targeting poor households, successful applicants will include gender and youth appropriate approaches in their application.

*IR 2.3 Options for Diverse Livelihoods Increased*
Through diversifying livelihoods and economic activities, households can reduce their overall risk of shocks and build resilience. This could include supporting households in moving toward a mixed livelihood strategy that includes on- and off-farm activities. Livelihood diversification

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[7] TDS clients include pregnant and lactating women (up to one year after birth) and a primary caregiver with malnourished children are eligible for at least one per person food transfer for the household without a public works requirement.

activities must consider the differences for women and youth in livelihoods and opportunities to strengthen entrepreneurial and work related skills. Ensuring households are able to withstand shocks improves resilience and promotes pathways out of poverty.

## SO 3:  Accountable, Effective, and Shock-Responsive PSNP Services Delivered

PSNP beneficiaries are immensely vulnerable; these households require a high level of support from the GoE to sustain themselves above the survival threshold. Given their fragility, PSNP households require timely service provisions to improve their household consumption and considerable support in mapping their way out of poverty. Local government systems that deliver essential PSNP services are overburdened, often inefficient, and hamstrung by lengthy processes and procedures. As a result, current DFSAs face an estimated average 44 day delay in providing transfers, which forces DFSA beneficiaries to adopt negative coping strategies.

USAID's DFSAs will support improvements in the effectiveness and accountability of PSNP services to ensure they are provided on-time and according to the PIM. DFSAs will work closely with clients, communities, and local governments to improve the prioritization and delivery of community assets. Moreover, DFSAs will consider how to improve the integration of services provided by the PSNP with those outside of the PSNP, such as essential health services and basic education services that promote a healthy and engaged citizenry.

*IR 3.1 Planning, Construction and Management of Community Assets Improved*
Public works assets created under the PSNP have experienced issues in the past related to the type of assets chosen, lack of inclusive beneficiary targeting, implementation quality, inequitable access to the benefits of public works provided to communities and households, and post-completion sustainability. If designed and implemented with community involvement and long-term exit strategies, however, the creation and rehabilitation of public works can catalyze community transformation. With a holistic, inclusive approach to the site selection and planning processes that consider community needs, and operations and maintenance capacity, public works creation presents an opportunity to revitalize a community's natural resources, improve access to services, and provide communal economic benefits.

Since its inception, the PSNP has used cash and food assistance and savings promotion to help poor rural households build and protect privately-owned assets. In its next phase, applicants are encouraged to consider additional approaches that will help PSNP participants improve the management and increase the value of their productive assets. USAID's involvement in community engagement in the selection of public works among its DFSAs has been relatively limited.  Applicants are encouraged to propose new approaches for engaging with woreda officials to better align and prioritize community asset building activities with individual households' asset creation efforts. Food for work activities that substantially increase poor people's time burden without producing any clear and direct benefit for the participant other than the transfer itself should not be proposed.

*IR 3.2 Referral and Linkages to Essential Services and Institutions Improved*
The DFSAs will align, link, and layer programming with that of other actors and activities that are enhancing access to, and providing essential services (e.g., nutrition activities such as Alive

and Thrive; Community-based Health Insurance (CBHI); Education; Financial Services) to promote the integration and uptake of PSNP services.

*IR 3.3 Systems for PSNP Service Delivery Improved*

Local accountability for the timely delivery of PSNP services is lacking and the verification processes are overly complex. Additionally, citizen input into the prioritization of local public work projects is often missing. PSNP communities lack client-centered financial service products and services that are inclusive and reflect the unique needs of PSNP households. There are strong opportunities to improve accountability and strengthen social cohesion through community feedback loops and accountability mechanisms. Supporting efforts to streamline PSNP services with local officials will improve reliability.

*IR 3.4 Early Warning, Preparedness, and Shock Responsive Capacities Improved*

The Government of Ethiopia's rural safety net operations are comprised of the Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), which provides social protection to a stable caseload of chronically food insecure households, and the Humanitarian Food Assistance (HFA) crisis prevention and response mechanism. The GoE has recently committed to reforms that will link and harmonize these two systems so that, by working together, they are better able to scale up humanitarian assistance in times of shock, while at the same time ensuring predictable transfers to core PSNP clients who require continuous assistance. Applicants should anticipate that National Disaster Risk Management Committee (NDRMC) policies, administrative procedures and institutional arrangements may change over the course of this activity, and that they will be called upon to adapt to and support this reform process.

### 5. Programming Principles

- **Design for People-Centered Approaches**

FFP is committed to keeping the interests and the voice of the most vulnerable at the center of its work, and to crafting development responses based on the strengths, priorities, risks, and needs of the target population. Creating opportunities for vulnerable populations suffering from extreme poverty and food insecurity requires working in partnership with other stakeholders, and understanding their unique resources and capacities, as well as the broader systems that support or impede their ability to effectively use those resources. A people-centered approach also considers formal and informal institutions, and social dynamics that support or impede the development of vulnerable populations. Applicants should pay particular attention to existing community tensions, conflict, and exclusion related to ethnicity, livelihoods, gender, age, religious beliefs, social class, physical capabilities, and political affiliation.

- **Prioritization, Focus, and Context-Specific**

A highly complex set of determinants affects food availability, access, and utilization. In low resource environments, the myriad context-specific needs and opportunities can easily exceed the capacity of any one activity to respond comprehensively and effectively. Additionally, there are limits to the relative level of change in knowledge, attitudes, and practices that individuals, households, and communities can absorb.

Effective programming requires prioritization. Applicants should prioritize the most limiting factors for action in their design application. This will ensure responses are feasible, catalytic in nature, and tailored to the needs of each target subpopulation. FFP encourages partners to address the most limiting factors of each desired outcome sequentially—i.e., the most limiting factor is targeted first, the second most limiting factor is targeted second, and so on. In supporting the GoE-led PSNP and advocating for interventions that go beyond those detailed in the PIM, FFP seeks to extend the depth of programming to facilitate household movement on a pathway to graduation from extreme poverty.

- **Strengthen Systems to Improve Sustainability[8]**

Innovation and learning can be more systematically brought back into the PSNP to improve the overall system. Implementing Partners have a unique ability to engage directly with communities and with the operational levels of government. These relationships and lessons learned will be instrumental in helping to inform the overall PSNP system and develop the local capacity required for sustainability in the long term. There must be adequate feedback loops in place to help synthesize innovations and learning between DFSA implementers and the PSNP in order to ensure lessons are systematically brought forward within the wider PSNP process.

Equitable, inclusive, and participatory community engagement, along with DFSA support for community-level efforts, will be critical for sustainability. Social norms, power dynamics, levels of inclusion, institutional fragmentation, and participation within local systems have the potential to undermine development impacts when left unaddressed. When these factors are harnessed for positive change, they increase motivation, equity, social cohesion, and transparency in the provision of government services related to the PSNP. Conflict sensitivity is required to ensure lasting change takes hold in the local administration of social safety net programming in DFSA communities.

- **Leverage and Link to Strengthen Collective Impact**

FFP anticipates that activities will strategically and operationally align with relevant national and local government policies and systems. Activities should also link with other actors who are working to address the drivers of poverty and food insecurity. This requires coordination and joint planning with a broad set of stakeholders to ensure the activity complements collective impact and sustainability. Where possible, applicants should seek to layer, sequence, and integrate activities to create opportunities for positive change. Coordination with the GoE is critical to the success of the project and applicants must demonstrate they understand the special considerations for working with local and federal government in the Ethiopian context. As the GoE moves towards a continuum of response between emergency and development initiatives, coordination with the FFP Joint Emergency Operations Program (JEOP), and its corresponding GoE implementing mechanisms will be critical.

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[8] Sustainability: The degree to which services or processes continue once inputs (funding, materials, training, etc.) provided by the original source(s) decreases or discontinues.

USAID may support the Awardee(s) efforts to strengthen collective impact by establishing a CLA platform, which will manage and synthesize learning across DFSA and other relevant USAID investments (see Section IV, paragraph 4: Design Approach).

- **Anticipate and Manage Shocks and Stressors**

Ethiopia routinely experiences a wide variety of shocks and stressors including climatic, conflict, and economic shocks. Effective programming should anticipate and plan for context-specific shocks and stressors before they occur, build resilience capacities at the household and community levels, and be able to pivot and/or mitigate negative effects through response planning. Applicants must anticipate spikes in humanitarian needs in intervention areas over the life of award (LOA) and have strategies and contingency plans in place to adaptively manage activities in response to shocks. Specifically, it is expected that implementing partners will work closely with JEOP partners to provide a continuum of response.

- **Support the Enfranchisement, Aspirations, and Agency of Women**

Women are often disproportionately affected by shocks and stressors. Women have limited access to resources, land rights, and decision-making power in their communities and households. While women are also often responsible for growing food for the household, some may lack access to information and land which reduces their ability to provide for themselves and their families. In designing activities, Applicants(s) will consider the time constraints and multiple roles women have as mothers, housewives, and breadwinners for their families. There is significant evidence that societies with greater gender equality experience faster economic growth, and benefit from greater agricultural productivity and improved food security. Although women may have unequal access to resources, information, and influence in their communities, they do have the potential for making significant positive contributions to reducing poverty and food insecurity in their households and communities.

- **Support the Enfranchisement, Aspirations, and Agency of Youth**

Young women and men also lack access to land, credit, agricultural inputs, education/ training and viable sources of livelihoods. Addressing the unique challenges of youth in the PSNP program will require innovative approaches and specific programming that goes beyond the PIM. Ethiopia has a youthful population with nearly half of people under the age of 18. More than a third of the population are considered to be in the youth cohort in Ethiopia (15-29 years of age). Capacity strengthening opportunities, particularly for this segment of the population, will be critical for creating livelihoods for youth, which will in turn foster broader national development. FFP is committed to strengthening local capacities to foster enabling environments that support youth in making decisions about their lives and livelihoods. This will involve contextually sensitive approaches that promote positive normative change that engages young women, men, and their communities in transformative interventions.

- **Adaptive Management**

In addition to assumed shocks and stressors, the GoE is considering changes to the PSNP and aligning humanitarian and development assistance interventions. Theories of Change and

activity designs will evolve over the course of the program and not remain static. Implementing partners will need to adapt through intentional collaboration and learning with other USAID partners, local actors, and the GoE. Accordingly, applicants should purposefully integrate adaptive management throughout their design. FFP encourages evidence-based approaches that will move highly vulnerable communities on a path towards sustainable change and out of the existing poverty traps in the targeted areas. As related to improved sustainability mentioned above, systems building, innovation, and learning must be more systematically brought into the PSNP to improve the overall system.

### 6. Authorizing Legislation

The Food for Peace Act, Section 201 (7 U.S.C. 1721) General Authority, authorizes the USAID Administrator to establish programs to:
- Provide agricultural commodities 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 assistance.

For more information, particularly concerning eligible uses of Section 202(e), and Internal Transport, Storage and Handling (ITSH) funding, please refer to FFPIB 19-01 "Eligible Uses of Section 202(e); Internal Transportation, Storage and Handling; Inland Freight, Monetization Proceeds; and Community Development Funds for FFP Awards."

### 7. Activity Eligibility Requirements

Any proposed direct distribution of Title II, locally, regionally, internationally procured (LRIP) commodities, cash transfers, and/or food vouchers must clearly support interventions that sustainably reduce vulnerability to food insecurity.  This includes increasing the availability of and access to 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.

### 8. Award Administration

Awards will be made and administered in accordance with the Food for Peace Act, Foreign Assistance 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, [FFP Information Bulletins,](FFP Information Bulletins) which are available on the USAID website.

Public international organizations (PIO) are subject to different requirements, so USAID reserves the right to make awards to such organizations on different terms and conditions than those made to private voluntary organizations (PVOs) and cooperatives.

## SECTION II - FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

### 1. Estimate of Funds Available

Subject to the availability of funds under this RFA, FFP plans to award up to four cooperative agreements focusing in up to three regions, as described in the Section I - Program Description. FFP will fund the award(s) with in-kind Title II commodities and Title II Section 202(e) for a five-year period.

The anticipated funding for all awards under this RFA is approximately $550 million of Title II Development over a five-year period.

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 of the new award(s) will be **on or about March 1, 2021**. The award(s) will be issued for a performance period of five years. FFP anticipates the Ethiopia FY 2021 DFSA(s) will use the R&I model to continue collaboration throughout the life of the award.

### 3. Substantial Involvement

In accordance with the ADS 303.3.11, a cooperative agreement, as distinguished from a grant, provides for substantial involvement between the Federal awarding Agency and the recipient in carrying out the activity contemplated by the Federal award. (The examples of substantial involvement below are a guide, not a checklist. The Agreement Officer will determine the appropriate level of substantial involvement based on the programmatic requirements of the award and include only those elements of substantial involvement as needed.) Examples of potential areas of substantial involvement during performance include the following:

- Approval of the recipient's implementation plans during performance.
- Ability to immediately halt an activity if the recipient does not meet detailed performance specifications (for example, construction specifications).
- Review and approval of one stage of work, before work can begin on a subsequent stage during the period covered by the cooperative agreement.
- Review and approval of substantive provisions of proposed subawards or contracts (see definitions in 2 CFR 200). These would be provisions that go beyond existing policies on Federal review of recipient procurement standards and sole-source procurement.
- Involvement in the selection of key recipient personnel.

- FFP and recipient collaboration or joint participation, such as when the recipient's successful accomplishment of program objectives would benefit from USAID's technical knowledge.
- FFP monitoring to permit specific kinds of direction or redirection of the work because of the interrelationships with other projects or activities.
- Direct USAID operational involvement or participation to ensure compliance with statutory requirements such as civil rights, environmental protection, and provisions for the handicapped that exceeds FFP's role that is normally part of the general statutory requirements understood in advance of the award.
- Highly prescriptive USAID requirements established prior to award that limit the recipient's discretion with respect to the scope of services offered, organizational structure, staffing, mode of operation, and other management processes, coupled with close monitoring or operational involvement during performance over and above the normal exercise of Federal stewardship responsibilities to ensure compliance with these requirements.

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

## 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. Nature of the Relationship between USAID and the Awardee(s)

The principal purpose of the relationship with the awardee(s) under the subject award is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the activities as described in the RFA, which is authorized by federal statute. The successful awardee(s) will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the award objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The awardee(s) will assume responsibility for administering federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, award objectives, and the terms and conditions of the federal award.

## 6. 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 grants. 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. However, as part of its evaluation process, 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.

## *SECTION III - ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION*

### 1. Eligible Applicants

To be considered for a Title II-funded award, the applicant must be a PVO, PVO consortium, or an organization designated by USAID as a PIO. PVOs may include U.S. and non-U.S. NGOs as defined in the Food for Peace Act. Per the Food for Peace Act, universities are not eligible to apply as primes for any Title II-funded activity. Universities can be sub-awardees or members of a consortium at the discretion of the prime applicant.

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 activity 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 detailed budgets must be attached for each. For more information, see Section IV. Application and Submission Information.

Note that GoE laws require prior registration for foreign and local organizations in order to implement programs or conduct any business in Ethiopia.

### 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. Applicants are highly encouraged to propose approaches that include local contributions demonstrating strong commitment to sustainability and self-reliance. This may include private sector engagement that supports the activity's goal and objectives. Applications that build strong coalitions with local partners (including local government, local NGOs, and the private sector) and progressively hand over management, implementation, and technical responsibilities through the course of the award will be favored.

Note that sub-awardees may be on more than one application to this request, and applicants may sign non-exclusive letters of commitment with sub-awardees (international and local partners), if applicable.

**GoE laws require prior registration for foreign and local organizations in order to implement programs or conduct any business in Ethiopia. Any ASA(s) must provide a copy of the certification of initial or final registration and license from the appropriate Ministry/Agency of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) prior to the start of implementation of the program. All local institutions or affiliates of international**

**organizations must be registered as a legal entity in Ethiopia. Local registration is not a requirement at the time of application, but is required prior to any award.**

### 3. Cost Share

Cost share is not required. However, if an applicant proposes cost share and receives an award, cost share will be incorporated into the award budget. (Note that because cost share is not required, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.306, it will not be used as a separate factor during the merit review of applications.)

### 4. Limit on Number of Applications

Each applicant is limited to one application and may target one or multiple regions. In addition, an applicant may also be a sub-awardee on applications submitted by other organizations. Sub-awardees may be on more than one application under this RFA.

## SECTION IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### 1. General Overview of Application Submission

Given the complexity of related designs, USAID will utilize both a pre-award co-creation process and a post-award refine and implement model. (See Appendix III: Co-Creation, Refine and Implement, and DFSA Handover Guidance.) Eligible parties interested in submitting an application are encouraged to thoroughly review this RFA to understand the type of activity sought, application submission requirements, and selection process. USAID will follow a three merit review process. As mentioned previously, the first phase is the submission of an Initial Application. Applicants will be evaluated and scored based on Evaluation Phase I (Initial Application). Successful applicants will be invited to participate in Evaluation Phase II (Oral Presentation).

During the Evaluation Phase II, applicants with the highest scoring Initial Applications will be invited to present their applications orally. This may be an oral presentation hosted in Washington, D.C. with potential simultaneous video-teleconference or may be done virtually.

Following Evaluation of Phase II, ASA(s) will be identified and invited to participate in the Co-Creation Phase. Unsuccessful Applicants not selected for the Co-Creation Phase will be notified at the end of Phase II.

ASA(s) may receive technical Issues Letters at each stage of the application process. The issues letters will highlight key technical areas that will be addressed following the next phase of the process.

During the Co-Creation workshop, the ASA(s) will collaboratively develop with USAID, other food security partners, and GoE, approaches and activities across a limited set of pre-identified

technical areas (see Appendix III: Co-Creation, Refine and Implement, and DFSA Handover Guidance).

Post Co-Creation Workshop, ASA(s) will submit a **final** full technical and cost application(s). During this final stage, USAID may provide additional clarification questions to the ASA(s).

During the Award Phase, per USAID's requirements, the final full technical and cost applications will be reviewed and incorporated into resulting cooperative agreement(s). An award will be drafted and submitted to the ASA(s) for review. Once the award(s) is signed, the Awardee(s) may start incurring costs.

### 2. Application Submission Guidance

Applications must be submitted via email to FY20-DFSA-RFA-Ethiopia@usaid.gov. Note that emails including all attachments must not exceed 10 megabytes (MB). Please therefore use multiple emails or zip files if needed. The ASA(s) will be invited to upload their final application and applicable annexes to the FFP Partner Portal.

### 3. Initial Application:  Phase I

- **Submission Date and Time:**

  Initial Application submission deadline is TBD at 11:59 am EST.  The applicant is responsible for ensuring that the electronic application is received by the due date and time specified. Successful Applicants from Phase I will be informed of their status and the timeline and the requirements for Phase II separately. Further, the ASA will be informed of their status and the timeline for Phase III.

- **Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM)**

  Each applicant, unless they have an exception approved by the federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d), is required to:

  - Provide a valid DUNS number; and

  - Be registered in the SAM at the time of Award – Note that successful applicant(s) must maintain SAM registration throughout the life of the project.

  FFP may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. Failure to do so is justification for not signing an award.  Please note an awardee cannot make a sub-award to an entity unless that entity has provided a DUNS number.

● **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, sanctioned individuals, groups, and organizations.

● **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.

● **Other Submission Requirements**

All applications must be sent to FY20-DFSA-RFA-Ethiopia@usaid.gov
Note: Contact with any other U.S. Government personnel or FFP's institutional support contractors by an applicant pre-award which involves a proposed or submitted application in response to this RFA may result in disqualification of the application. All documents must be completed in accordance with the format detailed in this RFA and must adhere to the following:

1. Written in English and in 12-point Times New Roman font;
2. Text in tables or charts may be 10-point Arial Narrow font;
3. 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;
4. Spreadsheets must be prepared in Microsoft Excel, with print areas set to 8.5 x 11 inch, letter-sized paper;
5. Official (signed) documents, memoranda, and certifications may be submitted as PDF files, with one-inch margins;
6. Faxed or hard copy applications are not accepted.

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 discretion.

The applicant may be required to submit certain documents in order for the AO to make a determination of financial responsibility. Applicants may be required to submit any additional evidence of responsibility, as requested, to support the determination, such as:

1. Adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources as required during the performance of the award;
2. Adequate management and personnel resources and systems;

3. Ability to comply with the award conditions, considering all existing and currently prospective commitments of the applicant, both NGO and governmental;
4. 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 ensure that it will be able to perform its functions satisfactorily; and
5. Integrity and business ethics, along with qualifications and eligibility to receive a grant or cooperative agreement under applicable laws and regulations.
6. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant, and all preparation and submission costs for the application are at the applicant's expense.

- **Initial Application Format: (Phase I)**

The Initial Application is a slightly abbreviated format with reduced number of pages and annexes compared to the Final Application. 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. Applications that do not meet the requirements of this RFA will not be considered. The application is 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, figures, tables as follows:

a) Cover Page (1 page, see requirements in paragraph a)
b) Executive Summary (1 page maximum, see requirements in paragraph b)
c) Activity Design (32 pages maximum, see requirements in paragraph c)
d) Management and Staffing (10 pages maximum, see requirements in paragraph d)
e) Cost Application (no page limit, see requirements in paragraph e)
f) Environmental Compliance (see requirements in paragraph f)
g) Phase I - Initial Application Annexes (see paragraph g)

In addition to core PSNP activities, applicants should dedicate the majority of their applications to describing activities planned beyond those in the PSNP PIM. During the co-creation workshop, ASA(s) may engage with other DFSA implementing partners, other USAID food security partners, the GoE, and USAID to address the issues outlined in Appendix III: Co-Creation, Refine and Implement, and DFSA Handover Guidance. Issues letter responses and refinement of key technical areas from the workshop will be incorporated into the final full Application which, if accepted by USAID for the Award Phase, will make up the Program Description of the award.

**a) Cover Page (1 page)**
The cover page must include:
- Name of the applicant's organization;
- 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 number;

- Title II food commodity(ies) request, if any, in metric tons (MT) (rounded to the nearest 10 MT), if applicable separated between development and emergency finding streams;
- Total funds requested (in U.S. dollars), Section 202(e), and, if relevant, ITSH (please note ITSH is only associated with U.S. in-kind commodities) and cost share if applicable separated between development and emergency finding streams;
- Valid Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number;
- Activation date in System for Award Management (SAM) – note that SAM registration is required at the time of award and that SAM registration must be maintained throughout the life of the project; and
- Participant information as requested in the table below:

**Number of Activity Participants**

| | |
|---|---|
| Total PSNP Direct Activity Participants | |
| Total Direct Activity Participants | |
| Total Direct Activity Participating Households | |

a. Total PSNP Direct Activity Participants: The number of unique individuals who will directly participate in the activity interventions during the period of performance who are part of the official PSNP caseload.
b. Total Direct Activity Participants: The number of unique individuals who will directly participate in activity interventions during the period of performance (if someone participates in three interventions, only count them once).
c. Total Direct Activity Participating Households[9]: The number of unique households targeted by the project.

### b) Executive Summary (1 page maximum)

The Executive Summary must include:

- Problem Statement, including the underlying causes and major determinants of food insecurity and malnutrition to be addressed;
- Targeting - geographic rational and inclusion of other than core PSNP clients, if applicable (i.e., youth, PDS, PLW, etc.);
- Consortium members and summaries of their operational responsibilities; and
- Proposed set of interventions beyond core PSNP PIM responsibilities to achieve the DFSAs goals and strategic objectives as detailed in the high-level conceptual framework.

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[9] A household is categorized by people who live in the same homestead (dwelling structures and adjoining land occupied by family members) and also share the same eating arrangements. If people live independently in separate homesteads and do not share the same eating arrangements they will be treated as separate households.

### c) Activity Design (32 pages maximum)

In the Activity Design, the applicant should present an overall vision for reaching the activity goal and objectives of the Ethiopia DFSA(s), aligning to the proposed high-level conceptual framework. Based on contextual and geographic appropriateness, FFP encourages Applicant(s) to challenge the provided conceptual framework and suggest alternative Intermediate Results (IRs). In suggesting new or additional IRs, Applicant(s) should consider their comparative advantage, maintain the strategic focus outlined in this RFA, and not duplicate or replicate ongoing activities. The applicant should present the strategy and associated interventions proposed to achieve these objectives for the proposed target geographic zone and clients. It is not necessary to present full technical detail for the discrete technical spheres outlined in Appendix III: Co-Creation, Refine and Implement, and DFSA Handover Guidance, as these will be further refined in the pre-award co-creation workshop. Applicants must include the following sub-sections:

    (1) Context Analysis (1-2 pages);
    (2) Conceptual Framework (1-2 pages);
    (3) Targeting (2-4 pages);
    (4) Design Approach, including (24-28 pages); and
        a. Design Approach by SO and IR
            i. Innovation
            ii. Gender, Youth, and Social Dynamics Integration
        b. Local Systems Strengthening and Sustainability.

### 1. Context Analysis

A context-appropriate and effective activity requires a deep understanding of targeted participants' needs and their communities, and the unique constraints they face. A description of the context should demonstrate local, contextualized knowledge of the participants, and the target geographic area, as well as the larger enabling environment in the country. If only national level data and evidence are available, the Applicant should explain why the data can be generalized to the sub-national level. Elements may include:

- A description of the geographic area of intervention and the profiles of the target participants;
- A map that illustrates proposed intervention areas and activity layering at the woreda f(district) level;
- A well referenced and data-driven description of the current food security context, including chronic and acute malnutrition;
- A description of socio-economic, political, and climatic context; status of infrastructure and market(s); status of safety and security that may positively or negatively influence the implementation of the activity; and to achieve anticipated outcomes;
- A brief analysis of the underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition; and
- A description of the other development actors in the target area, including their goals and specific interventions.

### 2. Conceptual Framework

- **Theory of Change:**

A Theory of Change (ToC) is the conceptual foundation of an activity's design. At the Initial Application stage, the applicant should develop a high-level ToC that illustrates the conceptual framework of the design. The high-level ToC should illustrate the hypothesized series of changes **at the purpose and sub-purpose level** that are expected to occur to a specific target population in a given context. At the Initial Application stage, FFP does not expect the high-level ToC to go below the sub-purpose level (for example, down to the intervention or output level), but anticipates working with the ASA during the pre-award Co-Creation Workshop to refine and detail their activity design. Applicants will then be expected to develop a full, detailed ToC to submit with the Final Application following the pre-award Co-Creation Workshop.

Applicants should submit a ToC diagram as part of Annex 7. A ToC described in the Initial Application will be further expanded and detailed will be submitted as part of the Final Application following the pre-award Co-Creation Workshop.[10]

- **Logical Framework:** In their Initial Application, all applicants must submit a brief Logical Framework (LogFrame) with anticipated high-level results, indicators, and assumptions. FFP anticipates working with the Apparently Successful Applicants (ASAs) during co-creation to develop a mutually agreed upon monitoring and evaluation strategy for the Ethiopia DFSA that will also integrate with the Ethiopia GFSS Results Framework and fit within the Mission M&E strategy. This will include the selection of impact- and outcome-level indicators and indicator targets that still enable meaningful program evaluation in the event of programmatic shifts because of the operating environment. During and after co-creation, the ASA(s) will develop a full log frame with all associated indicators based on the ToC. The ASA(s) will then be expected to submit a full LogFrame with the final application that is in accordance with the FFP Policy and Guidance on Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting. For more information, please see the FFP Policy and Guidance on Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting.

3. **Targeting**

PSNP woredas and beneficiaries are identified and selected by the GoE based on poverty mapping and community participation as outlined in the PSNP PIM. For PSNP 5, targeting will shift from food insecure households to extremely poor households. DFSA-financed beneficiaries will be a subset of a projected 8 million PSNP caseload. DFSA implementers will need to work with GoE to ensure cash and food transfers are provided for all identified PSNP beneficiaries in the selected woredas as stipulated in the PIM. It is anticipated that DFSA

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[10] The ToC should be developed based on evidence, independently confirmed and not strictly based on project reports. A few common research repositories include 3ie Impact Evaluation Repository and J-PAL's library of randomized evaluations. Papers published in peer-reviewed journals could also be used as sources. For more information, please see the FFP Policy and Guidance on Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting and TOPS' ToC Curriculum.

implementers will be involved to some extent in refining caseload targeting in woredas where they are working.

Geographic Targeting
Targeting will be a subset of PSNP woredas, which is expected to increase from 350 to approximately 450 woredas in PSNP regions. **DFSA applicants should focus their applications to the highland regions of Tigray, Amhara, and Oromia in PSNP 5.** Within these regions, applicants will be asked to further refine and select sub-national geographic targeting (by woreda) and are encouraged to consider contiguous woredas. Applications should include a proposed geographic focus area, outlining regions and woredas where project activities are expected to take place. Applicants should justify the proposed area of intervention and outline the criteria used for region- and woreda-level selection. While applicants should develop their own set of criteria, possible factors to consider include: need, potential for interventions to address the root causes of food insecurity, accessibility, security, appropriateness of food or cash modalities, and the potential to build upon, complement or overlap with other USAID investments. Woredas with existing FFP resources, as well as woredas without current FFP presence may be considered for DFSA programming. In areas where FFP has had a long-term presence, a rationale for continued inclusion will be expected.

Woredas are classified by GoE as either food, cash, or, a combination of food and cash. Given the predominance of Title II food available for transfers, **DFSAs should primarily operate in** *woredas where in-kind* **food is more appropriate[11], reserving FFP cash resources for deepening USAID's efforts to enhance beneficiaries' livelihoods.** While applicants will provide a proposed geographic focus for activities, the specific woredas for implementation are subject to negotiation. USAID will have final approval of the geographic focus in order to maximize opportunities for strategic layering of related implementing mechanisms post-award.

Segmentation
While resource transfers are for all PSNP households in a woreda, implementing partners are expected to further segment PSNP households for livelihood and other targeted interventions. FFP expects a similar overall caseload as current programming however, this activity should deepen investment in livelihoods with a smaller subset of the PSNP caseload. **Applicants are expected to target at least one-third of the overall PSNP households in their selected woredas for livelihood / income generating interventions. It is not expected that enhanced livelihoods activities (livelihoods deepening) will be done in every DFSA woreda, although it is encouraged that Applicants focus on households that are between the Household Economic Approach (HEA) analysis thresholds of survival and graduation levels (**Annex 7). Household Economy Analysis Based Graduation Analysis for 2018-2019**)**

In developing the targeting strategy for livelihoods, applicants should consider vulnerability, gender dynamics, gender equity in decision making, access to and control of resources, livelihood options, and time burdens. Applicants should discuss different targeting strategies

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[11] USAID anticipates status quo in cash/food split woredas, where FFP resources finance the months that are designated for food transfers and the GoE covers the months designated for cash. An exception to this is where this activity will finance up to two cash-only designated woredas in order to maintain a voice in advocating for financial deepening and digitization of cash transfers.

for women, men, boys, and girls, and how they intend to deliberately engage these gender and age groups across all livelihood interventions.

Given population growth, increasing unemployment, limited access to land, and other factors affecting youth, PSNP youth should be given increased priority. Engaging youth, which are 40% of Ethiopia's population[12], will help ensure inclusive and sustained growth in rural Ethiopia. FFP seeks to spotlight the contributions and importance of youth and young adults they make toward building a resilient future. Applicants must incorporate vulnerable youth, including landless youth, in developing alternative pathways and livelihood targeting strategies, such as including temporary employment opportunities within the PSNP public works. Applicants should propose interventions that provide youth from PSNP households with public works and tailored livelihood opportunities as part of a "wage employment pathway" that includes cash transfers. USAID is targeting no fewer than 100,000 youth in the overall DFSA design across all potential awards. Applicants should indicate how they will define and target vulnerable youth.

4. **Design Approach**

The technical interventions should be designed and prioritized to address the key drivers of rural poverty for each sub-population targeted by the activity. The technical interventions should tie directly to the conceptual framework provided and contribute to the applicant's ToC. This section should include an explanatory narrative about *what* the interventions will be, the evidence about *why* those interventions are being prioritized, and *how* they will be integrated across sectors, sequenced and layered within FFP and other USAID investments to achieve the goal. In discrete technical areas that will be covered in the pre-award co-creation workshop (see Appendix III: Co-Creation, Refine and Implement, and DFSA Handover Guidance), applicants should propose a concept for their approach to co-creation.

FFP does not expect applicants to invest in each sector equally. Rather, investments should be targeted toward those interventions where the activity can realistically achieve transformational yet sustainable improvements in household resilience, livelihoods, and PSNP system capacity and service delivery. Priority should be placed on those interventions that specifically target the factors that are most limiting to sustainably reducing poverty for each targeted sub-population. Applicants must explain how they have selectively prioritized interventions best suited to their strengths in the review of context and during the development of their Theory of Change.  Applicants should be explicit in explaining how prioritized interventions will most effectively reach the activity's intended outcomes as described in their ToC.

Proposed interventions should align with the FFP Strategy and Programming Principles described in Section I and describe in sufficient detail to assess their operational and technical appropriateness and feasibility. While developing the sector-based technical approach, applicants should review FFP's Technical References. The technical approach must include, at a minimum, the following:

- Details of **why** each intervention was prioritized and selected;

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[12] Nearly 40% of Ethiopia's population are youth aged 10-29 years of age (EDHS 2018)

- Details of **how** each intervention will be implemented and **by whom**;
- Details of how the interventions will work together;
- Description of the sub-population for each intervention. This includes direct participants within the sub-population, including the selection criteria of the participants, and a strategy to promote secondary adoption. A description of how the applicant will work to ensure proper integration of multi-sectoral interventions at the household level should also be included.

Applicants are requested to propose direct participant data by purpose/sector in the following table to help FFP understand how the applicant plans to integrate multi-sectoral interventions at the household level. Please use the following table to present the number of unique direct participants targeted under each purpose. Please add (or delete) columns for more (or fewer) purposes.

Table: Number of Direct Participating Households Targeted Multiple Interventions by Purpose

|  | Total Unique Direct Participant Households (A) | Purpose 1 only (B) | Purpose 1 & 2 (C) | Purpose 1 & 3 (D) | Purpose 2 only (E) | Purpose 2 & 3 (F) | Purpose 3 only (G) | Purpose 1, 2 & 3 (H) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total number of Unique Direct Participant Households | =(B+C+D+ E+F+G+H) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

The numbers in each column should be mutually exclusive. For example, column B should include the number of participating households that will receive interventions only for Purpose 1 and from no other purposes, while column C should include the number of participating households that will receive interventions for Purposes 1 and 2, and so forth.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Vulnerable Households and Individuals have Sufficient Quantity, Quality, and Diversity of Food at All Times

USAID recognizes that vulnerable households and communities in Ethiopia are routinely exposed to a wide range of shocks and stressors, which immediately impact food and nutrition security of these vulnerable households. Applicants should therefore design activities in such a way which assumes areas of implementation **will** face these shocks and stressors both during and after the life of the projects. In order to sustainably reduce food and nutrition insecurity, the design will need to carefully consider leverage points which enhance households' as well as communities' ability to plan for shocks. This planning should encompass efforts to reduce exposure to shocks as well as planning to enhance the ability of households and communities to cope with and recover from shocks. Specifically, as per the conceptual framework, under SO 1, applicants are required **at minimum** to address:

● Consumption smoothing to minimize seasonal and/or episodic food deficits;
● Increase the availability and access of nutritious food, especially animal source foods; and
● Improve knowledge and behaviors to ensure that food consumption supports health and healthy growth.

*IR 1.1 Consumption Smoothed*

A key enabler for vulnerable households to weather shocks and cultivate resilience is ensuring routine consumption needs are met via timely and predictable transfers. This component of the safety net enables households to avoid negative coping strategies and to plan for the future.  It also allows households to unlock potential for further asset accumulation and capacity development. While USAID understands that most elements surrounding implementation of consumption smoothing transfers are governed by the PSNP PIM, it expects partners to clearly indicate any areas where they will diverge and the associated rationale. For planning and budgeting purposes, partners should align with the PSNP PIM guidance on transfer values, which equates to 15 kgs of cereal per person per month plus USAID's supplementary basket of 1.5 kgs of pulses, 0.45 kgs of oil per person per month. Cash transfer values, modalities per woreda, frequency and work norms are fully governed by the PIM. Applicants are required to clearly indicate the planned caseloads and above-mentioned variables with their submission, keeping in mind that the predominant resource transfer available for consumption smoothing is Title II commodities. USAID intends to utilize the co-creation workshop to develop a harmonized approach to targeting of DFSA and JEOP clients based on vulnerability, which could influence the determination of appropriate consumption smoothing transfers relative to food gaps.

*IR 1.2 Access to, Availability, and Utilization of Quality Nutritious Foods Improved*

While there are numerous nutrition pathways to be strengthened in Ethiopia, given the envisioned scope of the DFSA, applicants should focus efforts on sustainably improving household women's, and children's dietary diversity. This will require a nuanced understanding of the barriers (both cultural and economic) which PSNP households and individuals face in accessing, consuming, and decision making for a healthy diet. Applicants are expected to identify key entry points into communities and households, as well as propose evidence-based approaches which will lead to achieving improved dietary diversity. Applicants are expected to ensure the nutrition sensitive package for PSNP households are outlined in the GoE PIM at a minimum, and in addition, suggest complementary nutrition sensitive interventions to further improve dietary diversity for PSNP households.

*IR 1.3 Optimal Infant and Young Child Feeding Behaviors Practiced*

Targeted nutrition interventions should complement all food/cash transfer, livelihood intervention, and/or other inputs proposed by the applicant ensuring that all PSNP households, especially Temporarily Direct Support (TDS) clients, simultaneously improving both food security and nutrition related practices. This includes but is not limited to:
● High quality and intensive SBC and nutrition education across nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive interventions ensuring appropriate dialogue, discussion, problem solving, and promotion of optimal nutrition practices ***linked across SOs***;

- Strengthened GoE nutrition service delivery systems to ensure PSNP households are reached with quality nutrition services such as IYCF counseling, growth monitoring and promotion, and acute malnutrition services when needed; and
- Strategic linkages and synergies with other nutrition related activities from the GoE, USAID or other donors' nutrition programs (early childhood psycho-social stimulation, WASH, health systems strengthening, etc.).

*Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)*
Food and nutrition security gains are nullified if the environment surrounding vulnerable households is unhygienic. In addition to strengthening nutrition pathways, applicants should consider ways to strengthen WASH programming that focuses on:

- Interrupting prioritized and targeted fecal-oral pathways of concern, such as water quality, food hygiene, limiting soil ingestion by children, and reducing environmental contamination from animals;
- Implementing an area-wide or community approach because WASH interventions only focused on a small subset of the community are unlikely to show impact; and
- Reducing barriers to social and behavior change, which includes, but is not limited to aspirational products, improving supply in markets, and making hygiene behavioral changes less dependent on the limitations of household resources.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: LIVELIHOODS TRANSFORMED

Consistent with the poverty reduction goal of this activity, DFSAs are expected to promote sustainable pathways out of poverty for extremely poor households. A large proportion of these households lack sufficient land and other productive assets required to adequately meet their basic needs. In addition, smallholder households that do have land rely on rainfed agriculture, increasing their vulnerability to climatic shocks.

Although smallholder agriculture will remain an important feature of life in the Ethiopian highlands, large scale improvements in the standard of living will require a shift to alternative livelihoods for a substantial portion of Ethiopia's rural population. Successful applicants will develop an approach to livelihood transformation that includes significant investment in off-farm or employment-based economic activities.

**Activity design should be informed by the "graduation into sustainable livelihoods approach" first piloted by BRAC in Bangladesh, elements of which were included in PSNP4.[13]** This approach focuses on building the economic assets, and capabilities of extremely poor households.[14] Specific graduation initiatives should be adapted to local circumstances, and should be designed to systematically address the multiple constraints that poor households face. Standard elements include efforts to: smooth consumption (see SO 1); reduce exposure to risk and enhance the ability to cope with shocks (see SO 1); increase ownership of liquid and

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[13] J-PAL. "Targeting the ultra-poor to improve livelihoods." https://www.povertyactionlab.org/case-study/building-stable-livelihoods

[14] Banerjee, Abhijit, Esther Duflo, Nathanael Goldberg, Dean Karlan, Robert Osei, William Parienté, Jeremy Shapiro, Bram Thuysbaert, and Christopher Udry. 2015. "A Multi-Faceted Program Causes Lasting Progress for the Very Poor: Evidence from Six Countries." Science 348 (6236): 1260799. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1260799.

productive assets; build confidence, life skills, financial literacy and job- relevant skills; and link participants to new economic opportunities. Successful applicants will demonstrate their intention to carefully layer interventions so that each participating household receives a complete package that is designed to methodically help it overcome multiple barriers to upward mobility. **FFP anticipates that at least a third of the proposed participants will be reached through the "graduation into sustainable livelihoods" approach.**

### *IR 2.1 Household Assets Increased*
The next phase of the PSNP continues to invest in the development of community assets. The DFSAs will continue to support those activities. Additionally, FFP intends to emphasize investment in strategies that promote accumulation of liquid and productive assets that are privately owned by poor households.

FFP also encourages innovative approaches that promote acquisition or construction of privately-owned productive assets. Subject to the availability of resources, FFP intends to invest in livelihood transfers that contribute to asset accumulation. Although the longstanding practice of providing resource transfers, such as Food for Work (FFW), to build community assets is likely to continue in the PSNP, partners may consider alternative food assistance conditionalities for piloting in consultation and agreement with the Kebele Food Security Task Force and woreda officials. For example, Food for Training might be used to incentivize acquisition of job-relevant skills. Additionally, conditionalities that are designed to help prepare youth for alternative employment, such as paid apprenticeships may be considered.

Promotion of savings, which was a successful element of PSNP 4, should continue in PSNP 5. Improved savings has multi-faceted benefits, helping to develop financial literacy, smooth consumption, cope with shocks, pay school fees, acquire assets, fund small-scale economic activities, and build social capital. Building financial assets also tends to expand planning horizons, enabling participants to visualize and pursue longer term economic goals.

USAID proposes using a Making Markets Work for the Poor (M4P) approach to foster more inclusive rural markets that provide sustainable pathways out of poverty for PSNP beneficiaries. The M4P approach recognizes that vulnerable households are both *affected by* and are *key actors within* rural market systems, and that their livelihood prospects are inextricably linked to the markets that surround them. PSNP beneficiaries lack access to quality supporting functions which limit their ability to maximize market opportunities. PSNP beneficiaries, including women and youth, face constraints in engaging with market systems. USAID recognizes that the DFSAs will not address many of the supporting functions or rules that govern the markets where PSNP beneficiaries live. Nonetheless, USAID requires that applicants propose livelihood interventions that are rooted in market systems thinking to increase "pull" strategies, facilitating access to economic opportunities that incrementally drive more beneficial and sustained inclusion of the very poor into market systems. USAID encourages applicants to consider DFSAs as a catalytic force in rural market systems development and to address supporting functions and rules in partnership through strategic layering with other USAID activities and programs.

Access to finance is a critical supporting function in market systems development. PSNP beneficiaries lack meaningful access to client-centered savings and lending products and services. To address this gap, this activity will support the development of early stage rural financial sector deepening. Where financial service providers are non-existent DFSAs will facilitate the development of community-based savings and lending platforms. Where appropriate and viable, offerors should also consider ways to integrate technology into the extension of financial services to excluded communities and increase uptake of electronic payments. In communities with access to semi-formal or formal financial institutions, such as rural savings and credit cooperatives (RuSACCOs) or micro-finance institutions (MFIs), DFSAs will improve linkages to these institutions and will advocate for new approaches and products for PSNP beneficiaries.

*IR 2.2 Individual and Household Capabilities Enhanced*

Successful applicants will also propose innovative approaches to develop life skills, financial literacy and economic skills (including job-relevant skills). Promotion of savings should be accompanied by training in cost control, goal setting, and financial planning. Applicants are encouraged to refer to available value chains and labor market assessments during the initial refinement year in order to identify livelihood opportunities. Taking into account that participants are free to engage in mobile livelihood strategies, these assessments should consider trends and opportunities in rural-rural and rural-urban migration. Basic numeracy, as well as financial and business skills, may be considered as part of this training component. The provided training and technical assistance will be based on the labor market assessments of demanded skills. Additionally, all training will be gender and age appropriate, factoring in the unique needs of beneficiaries, seek to maximize potential return of the training, be sensitive to existing workload demands of participants and, if appropriate and feasible, complement or expand existing vocational training.

*IR 2.3 Options for Diverse Livelihoods Increased*

As a means to enhancing resilience to shocks and diversifying livelihoods, applicants should propose tailored and evidence-based on-farm, off-farm, and employment (formal and informal) pathways appropriate to the livelihood zone, market environment, and demographic profile (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, religion, etc.) of targeted clients. Where evidence is lacking, partners should propose research questions and innovative pilot approaches for how these will be addressed during the refinement period. USAID expects applicants to specifically propose how it will engage with vulnerable youth (including landless youth). It is further recognized that off-farm livelihood and employment opportunities in rural areas might be limited and therefore USAID envisions approaches which link to urban and peri-urban centers. Livelihood diversification under SO 1 should be integrated and layered with interventions under SO 2: Livelihoods Transformed.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Accountable, Effective, and Shock-responsive PSNP Services Delivered**

Systems strengthening is a broader concept than traditional capacity development, which tends to focus on the training of individuals and the provision of equipment. It is based on the recognition that focusing on the capacity of individuals alone is not enough, and that the

systems that deliver services must also be capacitated. In PSNP 5, this involves the use of common administrative mechanisms and processes.

A key element of systems strengthening involves multi-sector coordination and linkages to enhance the delivery of programs and services, which emphasizes building soft skills and creating awareness, in addition to helping to strengthen coordination mechanisms. Within this activity, partners will be expected to utilize existing Disaster Risk Reduction and Early Warning Systems to improve local actors' ability to respond; to support a continuum of response through collaboration with JEOP partners and contingency planning; to strengthen woreda level public works planning through a focus on integrated watershed management (IWM); and to ensure the reliability of core PSNP services.

*3.1 Planning, Construction and Management of Community Assets Improved*
The creation of community assets through the provision of public works is a core PSNP component. USAID encourages applicants to:
- Demonstrate a human-centered design approach for the creation and rehabilitation of productive community assets that is cognizant of existing capacities, gaps, and contexts of watershed management and livelihood practices in a community;
- Utilize a participatory planning approach, to identify needs, potential public works solutions, and community asset management capabilities, that considers the present capacity and training needs for local government staff and PSNP communities to design, construct, maintain, and operate a public works asset. Where appropriate, an economic analysis may be conducted and included by applications for interventions that are inherently new to the suite of interventions as defined by previous full-scale DFSA support or PIM guidance or otherwise not well documented in the literature. This would include but is not limited to youth-specific income generating activities, new off-farm and formal employment IGAs as well as an economic analysis of the cost benefit of PWs. Economic analysis should be used to inform the site selection and planning process. Any asset creation work using conditional food or cash assistance must follow FFP food/cash for assets guidance;
- Design and implement the public works assets that are primarily benefiting PSNP clients. Site planning should consider potential unintended consequences (positive or negative) or impacts that may arise from implementation of each public work activity. Consider the social dynamics of targeted woredas and mitigate elite and political capture;
- Sequence and layer planned public works activities with other PSNP interventions (e.g. taking a holistic watershed approach), guided by a long-term strategic plan that defines a roadmap for when and where each intervention will be implemented; and
- Develop private sector linkages to support operations and repairs and technical capacity enhancement of water users and local government staff to operate, finance, and maintain potable water systems.

In many of the DFSA target areas, productive and potable water scarcity is a key constraint for household and community health and livelihoods. Applicants are encouraged to consider an Integrated Watershed Management approach, where appropriate and feasible. FFP envisions efforts that focus on specific and strategically targeted sub-catchments, rather than entire watersheds. Focus should also be on management of recharge areas (upper catchment areas).

Such an approach will be more likely to provide a path to broad-based, inclusive, and sustainable rural growth. FFP encourages applicants to review USAID's Nature, Wealth, & Power 2.0. Given the limited resources of target communities, applicants may need to support processes of interaction for cross-watershed learning and governance. FFP envisions that applicants will design activities that promote critical watershed management skills and policies to maximize and sustain vital ecosystem services of targeted areas.

Where possible, development and expansion of potable water systems to improve access to, and utilization of, clean water for domestic uses should be considered in public works planning. A targeted approach should be used to ensure water points have sufficient quantity to match or exceed the demand for the intended service life of the scheme.

### IR 3.2 Referral and Linkages to Essential Services and Institutions Improved

USAID anticipates that its DFSAs will make direct and intentional linkages to other activities and programs that provide essential services to PSNP households at the woreda and kebele level. Applicants should develop a strategy for connecting PSNP households to other services available. Additional services applicants may consider include:

- National Nutrition Program[15] - particularly maternal, infant, and young child nutrition (MIYCN) services[16];
- Health Sector Transformation Plan (HSTP) Strategic Initiatives[17];
- National Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture Strategy[18];
- One WASH National Program (OWNP)[19];
- National Education Sector Development Programme [20](ESDP V); and
- National Community-Based Health Insurance (CBHI) program[21].

### IR 3.3 Systems for PSNP Service Delivery Improved

The PSNP suffers from chronic challenges related to the timeliness and predictability of transfers. There are myriad reasons for these delays, but many are associated with updating and management of the Payroll and Attendance Sheet System (PASS), weak coordination among stakeholders, and delays in food transfers from the national to the woreda level. A recent USAID assessment found that transfers were an average of 44 days late in DFSA kebeles during transfer months. As a result, DFSA clients adopted negative coping strategies such as taking on high-interest cash and/or food loans, skipping meals, and skipping PSNP-required work to take on casual labor opportunities. These delays, regardless of their underlying causes, are unacceptable and undermine PSNP results.

USAID emphasizes that DFSA partners support both the primacy and timeliness of resource transfers. As linked to SOs 1 and 2, the predictable nature of the transfer allows riskable steps by PSNP beneficiaries toward graduation. USAID is advocating for changes to the PSNP PIM

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[15] https://www.ephi.gov.et/images/pictures/National%20Nutrition%20Program%20Overview%20.pdf

[16] https://www.aliveandthrive.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Country-brief-Ethiopia.pdf

[17] https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/sites/gff_new/files/Ethiopia-health-system-transformation-plan.pdf

[18] https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/nsa_strategy.docx

[19]https://www.cmpethiopia.org/media/ownp_phase_ii_final_version_2019

[20]https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/media/1396/file/Education%20Sector%20Development%20Programme%20V%20(ESDP%20V).pdf

[21] https://participedia.net/case/4958

that would support increased partner engagement in the transfer process, leading to improved transfer reliability among USAID-supported PSNP woredas.

Applicants should propose approaches that improve the accountability and reliability of transfers, including but not limited to:

- Piloting new PASS verification procedures within woredas that reduce transfer delays;
- Supporting timely retargeting, approval, and submission of beneficiary lists; and
- Assisting coordination between the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED), the Bureau of Finance and Economic Development (BoFED), and the Woreda Office of Finance and Economic Development (WoFED) in the planning for and delivery of transfers.

In addition to the issues around transfers, Applicants should address accountability and reliability of overall core PSNP services to its clients by identifying the bottlenecks impacting the quality of core PSNP services in their respective areas, and provide action plans for how the respective bottlenecks will be overcome. Potential solutions could include, but are not limited to:

- Creating awareness and strengthening coordination between PSNP stakeholders at the sub-woreda level through continuous technical support and coordination mechanisms; and
- Proposing a systematic PSNP client feedback mechanism that allows clients to evaluate the quality of PSNP service delivery and then informs a resolution process. This should articulate not only how the feedback will be gathered but more importantly how it will be utilized to effect change.

*IR 3.4 Early Warning, Preparedness, and Shock Response Capacities Improved*

There has been considerable work done to strengthen the overall early warning and assessment systems and to strengthen local level early warning systems (EWS). FFP expects applicants to utilize existing Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and EWS to improve development, emergency, and GoE actors' capacity to anticipate and respond to shocks through contingency planning and funding. However, there is still work to be done by the PSNP to clearly articulate the triggers that will release PSNP contingency funds and to ensure the DFSA's responses are coherent and coordinated with efforts undertaken to build a shock-responsive safety net system.

To date, separate, parallel Humanitarian Assistance and Development Food Assistance systems exist in Ethiopia with duplicative geography, mandates, and purposes. The current scaleable safety net is not effectively shock responsive as the response is late and fails to recognize variations in livelihood zones. FFP seeks to harmonize and integrate several discrete elements between the Joint Emergency Operation (JEOP) and this activity to develop a continuum of response. Initial efforts towards harmonization will occur in a joint Emergency and Development pre-award co-creation workshop (see Appendix III: Co-Creation, Refine and Implement, and DFSA Handover Guidance). DFSA and JEOP partners will be expected to continue working towards an integrated delivery system with USAID and GoE throughout the life of their awards. Technical spheres for increased efficiency may include:

- Integrating resource transfer pipelines and administration in geographic areas where USAID has both HA and DA investments. USAID seeks to only have a single pipeline partner (regardless of modality) per geographic area. Given the supporting infrastructure landscape, use of multiple delivery mechanisms might be needed; and
- Planning for a single beneficiary registration and management platform for both USAID HA and DA investments in a given geographic area (woreda). Partners should also plan to explore interoperability across platforms. The platform should leverage and reinforce existing national or local identity registers and documents as far as possible.

## CROSS CUTTING CONSIDERATIONS FOR INTEGRATION INTO ACTIVITY DESIGN

Applicants' overall design approach should reflect understanding and incorporation of the Ethiopia-specific Programming Principles (see Section I - Program Description, 5. Programming Principles). The following cross-cutting issues are fundamental to FFP programming globally and should also be reflected in the application.

*Women and Youth Empowerment*

Women and youth in targeted areas of Ethiopia have limited influence over decision making and access to land and livelihoods. FFP will prioritize efforts to ensure that there are enabling factors and leadership opportunities for women and youth, and that they are supported as agents of change. Gender and youth empowerment should be considered both separately (i.e., issues that affect women and girls and issues that affect all young people) and as an intersectional issue (i.e., a multiplier effect of being young and a woman). Applicants must consider gender and youth empowerment throughout each section of the application.

*Gender Equity and Integration*

While Ethiopia has made steady progress, gender inequality persists in Ethiopian society, and women and girls face significant barriers in accessing education, resources, and livelihoods opportunities. Although women in Ethiopia participate in joint household decision-making, and the government has sought to increase women's access to land and productive resources, significant gaps remain. Integration of a gender-responsive approach must be context-appropriate and reflected throughout the activity. Women's empowerment—promoting women and girls' self-determination and transforming gender relations for the better are equally vital for attaining equitable food security that will be sustained over time.

Factors demonstrating gender integration include, but are not necessarily limited to:
- Examples of how gender and age dynamics and roles could affect interventions and outcomes at key steps in the proposed high-level ToC;
- Recognition of the potential impact - positive or negative - of interventions on access to and control over resources and benefits for girls, boys, women, or men, and how any negative consequences will be avoided or mitigated;
- Consideration of how proposed interventions could affect women's time use and how this will be taken into account in planning interventions (e.g., mothers' participation resulting in less time for childcare and other familial activities);

- Plans for how the activity will ensure equitable participation and input from women and men from different age and socio-economic groups, with examples for different technical interventions;
- Anticipation of how interventions could lead to, exacerbate, or affect gender-based violence at the household and community level, and the steps the activity will take to prevent or mitigate its occurrence should it occur; and
- How interventions will be tracked over time to ascertain any unintended consequences related to gender and gender-based violence.

The applicant must describe how the gender analysis results will be integrated into interventions and how gender changes, including unanticipated outcomes, will be tracked over time. For more information, see the Technical Reference on Gender.

### *Youth Empowerment*

Investing in youth is a key pathway toward sustainably reducing poverty, improving food security, and building resilience, as skills and capabilities learned during these formative years are transformative life-long capabilities that can be drawn upon to recover from future shocks. Given the youth bulge in Ethiopia, investing in youth can help Ethiopia reap the long-term sustainable benefit of the demographic dividend. Additionally, youth can play a transformative role in helping Ethiopia achieve its Growth and Transformation Plan II by 2025.

Investing in youth, however, will need to consider multiple pathways to achieve sustainable results, given the current country context and challenges youth face. It is important to consider the unique vulnerabilities of different types of youths, such as early marriage for girls or migration in search of better opportunities for boys. Engaging adolescent girls in many development activities can prove extremely challenging given social norms that restrict girls' mobility out of concern for their safety and security and to protect family honor, and social expectations that girls be married early to begin childbearing. Approaches that seek to work with youth therefore also need to engage communities, households, and families to create the social acceptance for girls and boys and young men and women to participate in these activities.

Applicants should pursue positive youth development strategies[22] that view young people as key partners in all development efforts. Programming should take into account the disparities and constraints faced by different youth cohorts related to participation in the three livelihood pathways outlined in the PIM, particularly off-farm and employment. Please see USAID's Youth Policy for more information.

In particular, applicants should consider approaches that aim to:
- Promote active and effective engagement of young people where possible in PSNP activities;
- Empower young women without disenfranchising young men; and consider carefully tailored opportunities for young women and young men, given the prevailing social norms and gendered roles and responsibilities assigned to their age and life-stage;

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[22] For more details on Positive Youth Development see: https://www.youthpower.org/positive-youth-development

- Strengthen relations and build ties among youth across identities and socio-economic distinctions;
- Recognize that youth are not all the same; life context and differences such as gender, marital status, societal place, ethnicity, economic class, livelihood, and other identity factors should be taken into account in all programming. How youth are affected by conflict (displaced, reintegrated, returnees, victims of violence, etc.) should be taken into account in all programming;
- Consider the specific needs of different types of youth by age and life-stage, particularly adolescent girls, as tailoring programming to their specific needs and constraints will be critically important to achieving the intended programming objectives;
- Promote inter-generational dialogue and encourage improved standing and better relations for youth and young adults within their families and their communities;
- Respect the agency and aspirations of youth and young adults;
- Give thought to the increased risk of exploitation for the young, and advocate for their fair compensation and safe working conditions; and
- In the context of maternal and child health and nutrition in particular, tailor program efforts to meet the unique needs of married and unmarried adolescent girls, given nearly 30 percent of adolescent girls have begun childbearing by age 19.

FFP encourages applicants to use Participatory Learning and Action tools to guide youth participation for positive community change. Youth have roles to play in assessment, design, implementation, and learning of this activity. For instance, consultation with youth or youth-led or serving organizations at co-creation and refinement phases should be considered as options for meaningful youth engagement during design and implementation. Approaches that engage youth in community problem-solving; create leadership opportunities for youth, especially in initiating community dialogue; and strengthen social ties between youth, their families, and communities are highly encouraged. Importantly, this investment in youth also meets USAID's objectives for sustainable development and the Journey to Self-Reliance.

Social dynamics and social cohesion are a key consideration in this context. The applicant must incorporate considerations for how communities interact among themselves and with other communities and how activities may impact these dynamics.

### Social and Behavior Change (SBC)

SBC is the systematic application of iterative, theory-based, and research-driven processes and strategies for change at the individual, household, community, and social levels. FFP recognizes that social and behavior change is critical to achieving the overall goals of the DFSAs. SBC programming should be developed through an evidence-based, participant-centered process. This process will include, at a minimum, a behavior-focused element and a social change element. The behavior element should include the identification of a manageable number of key behaviors and audiences, selection of a behavior change framework to guide programming, discernment of the behavioral factors that influence each behavior, and development of a variety of evidence-based interventions. The social change element should build on local knowledge and facilitate community problem-solving. SBC interventions should leverage existing community networks, and resources should move beyond messaging to

catalyze lasting change. Applicants are strongly encouraged to take into consideration the findings and recommendations of the FFP-funded FANTA Project (2018)[23] Report on a Review of Social and Behavior Change Methods and Approaches within Food for Peace Development Food Security Activities.[24]

### Systems and Sustainability

The PSNP is a key element of the GoE's Food Security Program and plays a critical role in building the resilience of chronically food insecure households and communities through consumption smoothing transfers, community asset building to restore natural resources and improve land productivity, and improved nutrition and livelihoods support. Applicants are expected to follow the guidance outlined in the PSNP 5 PIM at a minimum.

In addition to implementing the PIM, applicants should propose additional interventions that go beyond PSNP 5 core components to enhance resilience, transform livelihoods, and strengthen local systems. Innovative approaches should be designed within the PSNP framework or through other local systems to ensure sustainability. Applicants are requested to integrate the sustainability strategy within the design approach instead of a separate, stand-alone strategy. The sustainability strategy should identify the outcomes to be sustained, critical services and resources that are necessary to sustain them, and strategies to strengthen PSNP service delivery systems.

These strategies should ensure that GoE partners—especially those responsible for implementing the PSNP, as well as the private sector, local government, and participants—are partners in implementing the PSNP and innovating new approaches. Critical to this is ensuring that adequate feedback loops are in place to help synthesize innovations and lessons learned between the DFSA implementers and GoE, and to ensure they are systematically brought forward within the wider PSNP process.

FFP encourages applicants to review the Sustaining Development: A Synthesis of Results from a Four-Country Study of Sustainability and Exit Strategies among Development Food Assistance Projects[25] paper and the four case studies to develop an activity sustainability strategy. The study identified four factors that are critical to sustain service delivery, access to services, and demand for services that contribute to sustained behavioral outcomes. The four factors include resources, capacities, motivation, and linkages. The study highlights the importance of the linkage between community-based organizations and existing public or private institutions to access capacity strengthening support.

The sustainability strategy should address all issues pertaining to phase down, handover, and termination of FFP-resourced interventions. Considering that not all strategies, interventions, and partnerships may be identified until after implementation is underway, applicants should identify how R&I and adaptive management strategies will be used to refine the activity design over the life of the award.

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[23] https://www.fantaproject.org/
[24] https://www.fantaproject.org/countries/ethiopia
[25] https://www.fantaproject.org/research/exit-strategies-ffp

If volunteers are included as service providers, applicants must understand and outline how to address the motivation of volunteers to deliver and continue to deliver high quality services to the target communities or households. The use of volunteers should also address gender concerns, understanding that women volunteers may already be marginalized, the impact of any additional unpaid work, and that women's time burden can be negatively impacted by reliance on volunteer labor for crucial service delivery. Additionally, consideration should be given to sustainability of volunteers after the end of the activity.

### Learning and Refinement

As stated in the Principles section on Adaptive Management, FFP does not expect ToC and activity designs to remain static throughout the life of the activity. FFP activities must purposefully integrate an adaptive management approach throughout their design. In doing so, applicants should identify key knowledge gaps and research approaches. They should also address how the results of their analyses will be used to inform change management.

FFP encourages evidence-based approaches that will move highly vulnerable communities on a path toward sustainable change and out of the existing poverty traps in the targeted areas. As related to improved sustainability above, systems building, innovation and learning must be more systematically brought into the PSNP to improve the overall system.

For areas where evidence gaps exist, a research and learning agenda will be developed that leverages the R&I period to test innovative approaches and refine activities. While the R&I period should be utilized as the launchpad for iterative learning and testing, it is expected that adaptive management will continue through the life of the award(s). Applicants should propose learning and refinement approaches that will ensure more effective implementation, quick problem identification, and timely course corrections through feedback loops from the field to the top that examine quality issues, unintended consequences, and incremental change.

This design incorporates three elements to facilitate on-the-ground coordination and programming: a pre-award, co-creation workshop; a steering committee/technical working group; and a third-party Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA) platform.

1. The pre-award co-creation workshop will align technical approaches across discrete technical spheres that impact both emergency and development partners and develop a framework for collaboration across activity ASA(s) and the USAID CLA platform (see Appendix III: Co-Creation, Refine and Implement, and DFSA Handover Guidance).
2. ASA(s) are expected to participate in steering committee/technical working group meetings, organize learning visits, and use findings to inform implementation.
3. The CLA platform may assist with convening activity partners and additional USAID partners and stakeholders to ensure linkages and synergistic learning across the USAID Mission portfolio. The goal of this platform is to support and strengthen partners' adaptive management strategies.

**Livelihood Layering**

The activity design combines implementation of the PSNP with additional interventions to deepen livelihoods. In order to achieve PSNP 5 poverty alleviation outcomes, a broader toolkit than that traditionally used in PSNP is required. Regardless of the extra tools or resources FFP may be able to mobilize, it will not be enough to comprehensively address each sector under the PSNP in each DFSA woreda.

FFP is committed to layering its resources with other complementary USAID programs, including those in health, nutrition, education, and resilience. Specific to the latter, FFP has identified Livelihoods for Resilience (L4R) and Livelihoods for Oromia (LRO) as key USAID programs that applicants must layer with both geographically and technically. Based on lessons learned from previous efforts to layer, FFP envisions three approaches for targeting woredas to maximize livelihood activity investments. DFSA partners are not expected to program livelihoods activities in all woredas, but livelihoods activities should reach 20% of the client caseload.

1. In woredas where only DFSAs are being implemented, the DFSA will implement core PSNP components (i.e., consumption transfers and public works) plus a set of deepened livelihood interventions most likely to foster graduation.
2. In woredas where L4R or LRO are present, DFSA partners will implement core PSNP components (i.e., consumption transfers and public works), and L4R/LRO will continue their livelihood programming.
3. In woredas where deepened livelihood programming is not appropriate, DFSA partners should implement core PSNP components (i.e., consumption transfers and public works).

|  | **Approach 1 (DFSA woredas where livelihood deepening interventions are appropriate)** | **Approach 2 (DFSA + L4R/LRO woredas)** | **Approach 3 DFSA woredas where livelihood deepening interventions are not appropriate** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Core PSNP Components** | DFSA | DFSA | DFSA |
| **Deepened Livelihood Components** | DFSA | L4R/LRO | N/A or GoE |

**Collaboration, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) During the Refinement Period**
As part of the initial application, applicants must describe a concept for how they will effectively tailor and use the refinement approach of the R&I model for Ethiopia to better understand:

- Needs, priorities, and opportunities through community engagement and initial implementation;
- The nature of shocks and stressors and their potential to impact household and community level food security;
- Capacities and gaps in local formal and informal institutions;
- The viability and local contextualization of specific approaches;
- Opportunities for complementarities with other actors working toward sustainable improvements in food security for the most vulnerable; and
- Lessons learned from related programming, both prior and ongoing, including key successes, challenges, and needed adaptations or innovations to improve impact and sustainability going forward.

Applicants should include evidence gaps and uncertainties in their initial activity conceptual framework and proposed technical approaches that can serve as the foundation for lines of inquiry and other activities planned for the refinement period. Refinement period questions and activities should link to the activity's conceptual framework and have the potential to influence changes to targeting and the overall technical approach. The refinement approach should be woven into the applicant's technical approach, and applicants are strongly encouraged to review lessons learned from participant engagement strategies from R&I pilots (i.e.., ensuring that activity participants are empowered as collaborators and active participants; balancing refinement and implementation timelines and methods). Management processes that support R&I should be detailed under Section D: Management and Staffing, while further detail on learning questions and refinement year activities and milestones should be expanded on in Annex 11: Activity Learning Plan (Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting).

Applicants should consider including a political economy analysis and conflict assessment during the refinement period, as relevant and appropriate to the outcomes and objectives of the activity.

### d. Management and Staffing (10 pages maximum)

The management section of applications must include the following:

*1. Management Structure and Institutional Capacity*
The application must detail a management structure that ensures the efficient use of resources, as well as effective and adaptive management, strong technical implementation, and administrative support. The management structure must demonstrate the necessary technical competencies to implement the interventions proposed. The applicant must explain the management structure presented in the organizational chart; personnel management of expatriate and local staff; and lines of authority and communication between organizations and staff.

If proposing a sub-awardees/consortium management model, applicants must describe how the partnerships will be organized and managed to use complementary capabilities most effectively. Applicants must specify the responsibilities of all consortium members and the rationale for their selection (i.e., organizational strengths and weaknesses, technical expertise, etc.); proposed staff and reporting relationships within and between each of these organizations; and how the consortium will be structured to ensure effective oversight, cohesive and coordinated knowledge sharing, planning, decision-making, and implementation across roles and organizational boundaries. Note that sub-awardees may be on more than one application. USAID encourages innovative collaboration models across DFSA consortia that foster the highest technical rigor in implementing core elements of the program. Applicants may sign non-exclusive letters of commitment with sub-awardees (international and local partners), if applicable.

The applicant must demonstrate the degree to which the applicant and all proposed consortium members or sub-awardees possess the depth and breadth of institutional capacity, technical expertise, and management systems to plan, implement, and support the complex pathways and interventions described in the Design Approach, as reflected earlier in Section IV. Applicants should also outline how proposed partnerships will support R&I, including the role of any research partners, if applicable. As the ToC will be further refined and finalized during a Refinement Period, applicants should describe how partnership structures and roles may be managed to better address institutional capacity needs under a revised design approach. With shifting dynamics in the target regions, applicants should demonstrate their competency to work adaptively.

   *2. Management Approach*
In addition to the management structure and institutional capacity, applicants must explain how their management approach will ensure holistic, integrated, and adaptive management.

This must include a description of:
   ● A dynamic management approach that clearly links Ethiopia country office leadership with field-level implementation and is responsive to local circumstances;
   ● Planned consortium management approaches and processes that will foster integrated activity planning, implementation, and coordination within the proposed award. The applicant should describe approaches to collaborate with other FFP- or USAID Mission-funded activities, particularly those as described in the Design Approach in Section IV. Additionally, applicants should identify approaches to collaborate with other external stakeholders, including government partners, other donor-funded activities, private sector actors, local partners, and other change agents;
   ● Steps to ensure appropriate line management of sub-awardees in the field;
   ● Adaptive management approaches that will enable feedback cycles that foster applied learning and analysis of data from assessments, surveys, research, and routine monitoring, as well as scenario planning around activity responses to anticipated shocks and/or changes in the political, social, environmental, or market context. The applicant should describe the management processes that will enable the application of analysis and learning in adjustments to the ToC and other design elements, adaptations to ongoing implementation and management strategies, and updates to learning strategies

and plans. See Annex 11. Activity Collaboration, Learning, and Adapting Plan Concept;

- Plan to maintain flexibility and agility in a dynamic context, including approaches to incorporating shifts in program strategy/ToC into operations, logistics, partnerships/consortium arrangements, and staff training;
- Plan for adaptive management skills needed for field-level staff related to recruitment and training, as well as how field staff feedback will be incorporated into adaptive management;
- Performance management strategies that measure the effectiveness of proposed interventions, and how these interventions contribute to achieve the intended outcomes in a sustainable fashion. Understanding that the best designed activities will have very limited impact without quality implementation, performance management strategies should include a description of how the applicant will monitor for, identify, and, through linkages with adaptive management strategies, address implementation quality issues throughout the life of the award; and
- Plan for potential shifts from development to more humanitarian-focused approaches, including in management, staffing, etc.

### 3. *Staffing and Key Personnel*

Applicants must provide a comprehensive staffing plan that demonstrates the ability to recruit highly qualified staff that are able to implement the proposed interventions outlined in the Design Approach and Management Approach in Section IV of the application. The staffing plan should demonstrate:

- Staff with substantive development food security experience who demonstrate a clear understanding of country specific requirements for proposed use of food assistance, are able to translate theory into context-specific programming and are able to move vision to interventions. Necessary staff skills should include adaptive management, integration and coordination, stakeholder engagement, community level governance and planning, SBC, facilitation, and conflict mitigation;
- How staff and consultants will be encouraged to work collaboratively across teams and engage in field-level implementation, including strengthening of local organization capacity; and
- How the staffing adaptations from the pre-award co-creation and post award R&I process will be supported. For example, additional technical skills may be required to do planned research and assessments during the refinement period.

### 4. *Key Personnel*

Seven Key Personnel for Ethiopia are envisioned under the RFA. Specified Key Personnel include: Chief of Party (COP), Environmental Lead, Monitoring and Evaluation Lead, Collaboration, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) Lead, and Gender, Youth, and Social Dynamics (GYSD) Lead. Applicants are expected to identify and propose two additional key personnel at the Initial Application stage that reflect the proposed design, activity objectives, and approach (i.e., Local Capacity/Systems Strengthening; Food Security; Operations; Resource Management; Livelihoods; Commodity Management;and  Social and Behavior Change). The two additional key personnel positions will be evaluated based on demonstration of core competencies and clear experience that relates directly to the proposed Activity Design and

Management and Staffing Approach. Applicants must include CVs for all seven Key Personnel as part of the Application.

Each key personnel position requires USAID approval, as noted in the substantial involvement provision in Section II – Federal Award Information, 5. Substantial Involvement. All key personnel should be full-time positions (40-hour workweek) throughout the life of the award; however, if applicants anticipate all positions are not necessary at 100 percent level of effort (LoE) for the life of the award, applicants may propose and justify a key personnel plan with varying LoE for applicable positions. Required attributes for all key personnel include strong management and interpersonal skills; excellent oral and written communication skills in English and other language(s), as required; mentoring and facilitation skills; the ability to network and communicate with a wide range of stakeholders; and experience working overseas in low-resource environments.

- Chief of Party: The COP is responsible for the overall management and representation of the activity. For management, the COP must have proven leadership skills managing projects of a similar size and scope in developing countries. The COP must have prior experience effectively managing development activities. The COP should have demonstrated experience recruiting, developing, and managing staff, as well as experience managing programmatic and financial reporting. As the person responsible for the representation of the activity, the COP must have demonstrated ability to build and maintain relationships with host governments, donors, other donor-funded projects and stakeholders, local organizations, and partners. Demonstrated experience in leading activities in an adaptive learning-based manner is highly encouraged. A master's degree in development studies, international relations, agriculture, nutrition, public health, business administration, or a related field combined with a minimum of 10 years of progressively increasing management responsibility in international development projects is required. Two years of applicable experience can substitute for a master's degree.

- Environmental Lead: The Environmental Lead is dedicated to overseeing compliance for environmental safeguards and hydro-meteorological risks, as well as natural resource and watershed management activities. This person is to regard such environmental safeguards as an integral cross-cutting issue across all project activities (e.g., WASH, health, nutrition, agriculture, etc.). A bachelor's degree in a relevant academic area, such as water; hydrological; agricultural; soil and water; or environmental engineering, plus seven years of relevant work experience at the field level is required.

- Gender, Youth, and Social Dynamics Lead: The GYSD Lead will ensure that inclusive, as well as social dimensions of food security and community resilience are effectively addressed across all activity components, at all levels, throughout the entire award period. Demonstrated capacity in Positive Youth Development, including youth as key partners in all development efforts, and attention to social dynamics—in particular, gender and youth integration—is critical to realizing FFP intended outcomes. The GYSD Lead should have an in-depth understanding of gender, age, and other locally

significant socio-cultural factors in the context of food security programming and a demonstrated capacity to lead the collection, analysis, and utilization of information from a broad range of sources. The GYSD Lead should also have skills in participatory learning and action and facilitating collaborative problem solving; the ability to foster commitment and build capacity among activity staff and in-country actors to ensure gender and youth integration and empowerment; and an in-depth understanding of food security programming. A bachelor's degree in a relevant academic area, such as a social science discipline, plus seven years of field experience at the community level is required.

- Monitoring and Evaluation Lead: The M&E Lead will provide technical expertise and leadership to generate and analyze quality evidence and data through monitoring, assessments, and evaluations. The M&E Lead is a technician with demonstrated experience in building or strengthening monitoring systems, quantitative and qualitative analysis, survey and sample design, and effectively promoting evidence-based program management. A master's degree or above in a quantitative field such as economics, agricultural/development economics, statistics, biostatistics, nutrition, applied sociology, anthropology, or other relevant subjects with significant training in quantitative methods, plus seven years relevant experience is required. Additional qualifications are required, including demonstrated experience in leading the M&E of a large award; knowledge about ToCs, logic models, food and nutrition security indicators, M&E plans, data quality assurance, data utilization, and gender and youth integration into M&E; and experience and expertise in developing and operationalizing a comprehensive M&E plan (see the [FFP Policy and Guidance on Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting](#) for the components of an M&E plan).

- Collaboration, Learning and Adaptation Lead: The CLA Lead will work closely with all staff to ensure collaboration and learning with other activities in the applicant's selected implementation area. This person will ensure the activity includes active, intentional and adaptive learning within and across interventions, and will play a critical role in incorporating refinement activities and learning into implementation. This includes but is not limited to U.S. Government, host country government, international donors, multilateral organizations, and private sector investments. Additionally, the CLA Lead will improve peer-to-peer learning, knowledge sharing and application, activity-based capacity strengthening, and evidence and data utilization in support of adaptive management both within and beyond initial refinement. The CLA Lead will also be expected to ensure appropriate and continued coordination and joint-planning with other USAID and other donor activities (specifically the USAID food security and resilience portfolio), host-government initiatives, and private sector engagement. Given the significant number of humanitarian and development activities planned and ongoing in the targeted geographic area, USAID expects significant time and expertise to be dedicated to coordination of activities. Demonstrated experience in facilitating learning and knowledge sharing processes, in establishing and managing dynamic feedback systems to capture experiential learning and unintended consequences and fostering collaboration across teams or organizations is required. An advanced degree (PhD or Master's) plus a minimum of three years relevant work

experience or a Bachelor's degree and a minimum of five years relevant experience is required. Two years of relevant experience can substitute for a master's degree.

**Additional two Applicant(s) proposed Key Personnel:** Applicants should submit short (one paragraph) position descriptions for the additional two key personnel proposed. Applicants must submit CVs for the additional key personnel that demonstrate academic qualifications and experience that reflects the specific position description. An advanced degree (PhD or Master's) plus a minimum of three years relevant work experience or a Bachelor's degree and a minimum of five years relevant experience are highly preferred.

ASA(s) may also be requested to provide Curriculum Vitaes (CVs) for other key technical staff in later phases.

### 5. *Resource Management*

Applicants must include a logistical management overview of the proposed resource transfers.

<u>In-kind resource transfers:</u> Applicants proposing in-kind commodities must provide a detailed plan for how they intend to manage the entire supply chain, including demonstrating feasibility of the approach relative to the scale. Specific consideration should be given to:
- Detailed plan for commodity supply chain management from start to final distribution point. This includes commodity requests, commodity substitutions (if select planned commodities are not available from the U.S.), port/warehouse/road/rail infrastructure, commodity management, and commodity transportation (including inland and internal transport). Applicants are also required to demonstrate their capacities in terms of warehousing, including Primary Destined Points (PDPs); secondary warehouses; and Food Distribution Points (FDPs) with the map of warehouses in the proposed/targeted geographic areas;
- Demonstrated processes and ability to ensure commodity safety and quality assurance.
- Supply chain accountability, including security and risk management; and
- Staffing plan and structure reflecting adequate logistical and technical support for delivery of resource transfers.

<u>Cash or Vouchers:</u> Applicants proposing cash and/or vouchers for livelihoods transfers and other activities must provide details on the transfer amount, how this amount was derived, delivery mechanisms demonstrating appropriateness to market conditions, and feasibility of the approach relative to the scale. Specific consideration should be given to proximity of outlets (cash or retailers), liquidity, security, and risk management. *Staffing should reflect adequate support for technical delivery of resource transfers.*

### 5. *Risk Management*
Applicants must discuss the local market factors and potential risks that may result from distribution of U.S. in kind commodities and/or cash/vouchers. Additionally, applicants must complete an assessment of risk as it relates to the proposed modalities and physical security of participants and relevant mitigation measures. Specifically, the assessment should examine potential risk related to fraud, corruption, and mismanagement. Applicants should demonstrate that due consideration has been given to ensuring the security and protection of all participants,

especially with respect to: timing and location of distributions; amount of food or cash transfers or value of food vouchers of which participants will take possession; person(s) responsible for pickup; distance to distribution sites, etc. This assessment will be included as an annex. A sample risk matrix from The Remote Cash Project can be found on the CALP website. Additionally, the USAID Office of Inspector General has a fraud prevention and compliance guide.

### e. Cost Application (no page limit)

The cost application must be emailed to FY20-DFSA-RFA-Ethiopia@usaid.gov with the technical application. While no page limit exists for the full cost application, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible while still providing the necessary details. The cost application must illustrate the entire period of performance, using the budget format shown in the SF-424A and include a comprehensive budget and narrative (in Phase I) and detailed budget and narrative (in the Final Application Phase). Standard Forms, including the SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B can be accessed electronically at www.grants.gov. Failure to accurately complete these forms could result in the rejection of the application. Applicants are not required to identify all local sub-awardees at the time of initial application. For more information on the cost application, please see Section V. Application Review, Review of Cost Application. Cost applications include general budgets such as the SF-424, SF424A, SF-424B; a comprehensive budget; and a budget narrative. Cost applications (i.e., budget components) are not subject to the page limitation of the application and will not be evaluated alongside the technical 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. While maintaining activity quality, applicants should seek to minimize their administrative and support costs for managing the activity to maximize the funding available for interventions. More details on the budget annexes can be found in Section IV. Application and Submission Information paragraph (9) Initial Application Annexes.

### f. Environmental Compliance (Including Climate Risk Management)

USAID requires both an environmental impact assessment procedure (as codified in 22 CFR 216, Agency Environmental Procedures) and Climate Risk Management for USAID Projects and Activities (as required by ADS 201mal) for the protection of fragile natural resources and resilience against climate variability and change natural hazards. FFP requirements for this solicitation are defined in the FY20 FFP RFA-level Initial Environmental Examination (RFA-IEE) which describes the overall compliance strategy for both pre-award (i.e., during applicant activity design) and post-award for the development food security activities.

At the pre-award stage, all applicants must submit a brief summary of how their proposed activity will meet these requirements in a four-page Environmental Safeguards Plan, as elaborated in Annex 9 of this RFA. At the post-award stage only, a Supplemental IEE with Climate Risk Management screening will be developed by successful applicants.

Please ensure that all environmental compliance and climate risk management costs, including personnel and non-personnel costs, are identified and described in the detailed budget, Annex 3, and budget narrative, Annex 4.

### g. Phase I - Initial Application Annexes

The following is a list of annexes that must be included with the application. Any additional information provided in an annex will be considered supplemental and not considered in the scoring of the application. Please note, applicants may submit additional annexes as supporting documentation. Annexes, beyond those required below, do not replace the required elements listed under activity description.

| Required Annexes |
| --- |
| 1. Executive Summary Table and Annual Estimate of Requirements for the Award |
| 2. Comprehensive Budget (no page limit) |
| 3. Comprehensive Budget Narrative<br>  - Motor Vehicle Procurement Table |
| 4. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) |
| 5. A Beneficiaries and Commodity Tracking Table |
| 6. Commodity Pipeline Calculator for LoA |
| 7. Abbreviated Log Frame with high-level results and High-level ToC graphic/narrative, three pages maximum for ToC narrative at Initial Application. There is no page limit for the abbreviated log frame and high-level ToC graphic. |
| 8. Gender Analysis Summary four pages maximum |
| 9. Environmental Safeguards Plan four pages maximum |
| 10. Monitoring & Evaluation Plan five pages maximum |
| 11. Activity Collaboration, Learning, Adapting Plan Concept five pages maximum |
| 12. Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plan (no page limit) |
| 13. Intervention Area Map(s) (no page limit) |
| 14. Applicant Organizational Chart (and information on consortium or sub-awardee structure, if applicable) (no page limit) |
| 15. CVs for Key Personnel |
| 16. Letter(s) of Commitment, if applicable |
| 17. Glossary and List of Acronyms |

**Annex 1. Executive Summary Table and Annual Estimate of Requirements**: Separate from the Executive Summary, an Executive Summary Table and Annual Estimate of Requirements must be included in the submission of the application. These capture U.S. dollar amounts of the proposed Title II commodity resources, if any, and various funding for the life of the award. ASA(s) or applicants that receive issues letters may be required to

submit a Resource Pipeline. Please see the Executive Summary Table and Annual Estimate of Requirements format available on the FFP website.

**Annex 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 activity. Object class categories are logical groupings of costs, such as staff salaries, fringe benefits, non-employee labor, travel and transportation, overseas allowances, supplies, staff training, equipment, USAID branding and marking, subawards, contracts, audits, construction, other direct costs, and total direct costs and indirect costs. Please see the suggested budget format available on the FFP website. The comprehensive budget must list funding types for each program area or element the partner proposes interventions within (see Appendix I for definitions). All costs must also be associated with an applicable funding source.

**Annex 3. Comprehensive 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. The budget narrative should include the motor vehicle procurement table, which should cover the information listed in Section VIII, paragraph 3.

**Annex 4. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA):** If applicable, please include the most recent U.S. Government-issued NICRA.

**Annex 5. Beneficiary and Commodity Tracking Table**: Applicants should use the template to include proposed beneficiary numbers, transfer months and ration calculations, and transfer schedules for the second year of the award.

**Annex 6. Commodity Pipeline Calculator for LoA**. Consistent with FFP's call forward process, partners should include a life of award five-year commodity calculator. The commodity calculator is updated quarterly with the latest USDA price list information and is located here https://www.usaid.gov/food-assistance/resources/implementation-tools

**Annex 7. Abbreviated Log Frame, High-level ToC Graphic, and High-level ToC narrative (three pages for ToC narrative and no page limit for the abbreviated logframe and high-level TOC graphic.):** In their Initial Application, all applicants must submit a brief Logical Framework (LogFrame) with anticipated high-level results, indicators, and assumptions. FFP anticipates working with the ASA(s) during co-creation to develop a mutually agreed upon M&E strategy for the Ethiopia DFSA that will also integrate with the DFSA GFSS Results Framework and fit within the Mission M&E strategy. This will include the selection of impact- and outcome-level indicators and indicator targets that still enable meaningful program evaluation in the event of programmatic shifts because of the operating environment. During and after co-creation, the ASA will develop a full log frame with all associated indicators based on the ToC. The ASA will then be expected to submit a full logframe with the final application that is in

accordance with the FFP Policy and Guidance on Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting. For more information, please see the FFP Policy and Guidance on Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting.

The LogFrame consists of a matrix, often with five columns (identified below) and many rows, summarizing the key elements of the activity, namely:

- Narrative summary: The activity's hierarchy of objectives, where each row corresponds to an activity Goal, Purpose, and Sub-purpose;
- Assumptions: Any conditions external to the proposed activity that must be accounted for to achieve results; the contextual environment and key external factors that are critical to success and must reflect the reality on the ground;
- Indicators: How the activity's high-level achievements will be monitored and evaluated. In identifying indicators, applicants must review the FFP Indicators. Only Goal, Purpose, and Sub-Purpose indicators are required for the LogFrame with the Initial Application;
- Indicators Targets: Applicants must provide quantitative targets (in percentage point change from the reference point) for baseline/evaluation indicators. These targets must be linked to the context, food security and nutritional analyses, and the ToC. For all other indicators, targets must be ambitious yet achievable; and
- Data sources: Where the indicator data will come from, and how/when it will be collected. An applicant's Abbreviated LogFrame will include high-level indicators to monitor and evaluate the performance of the activity.

Applicants should keep in mind that FFP has a list of required and required if applicable performance indicators. These should be reviewed carefully during the development of an applicant's LogFrame. Only Goal, Purpose, and Sub-purpose indicators are required for the LogFrame with the Initial Application. FFP anticipates working with the ASA to develop a comprehensive LogFrame with all relevant indicators as outlined in the FFP Policy and Guidance on Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting with the M&E Plan.

At the Initial Application stage, partners are expected to propose indicators and life-of-award targets for high-level impacts that reflect the goal, objectives, and approach of the Ethiopia DFSA. These indicators may be derived from key FFP baseline indicators. Note that FFP typically uses population-based surveys to measure the performance of an activity. Therefore, the impact-level indicator targets will be measured at the significance level of the target population, rather than only at the level of activity participants. The targets for goal- and objective-level indicators should be achievable yet meaningful and should reflect the operating environment for M&E in Ethiopia's highlands.

The Co-Creation Workshop will be used, in part, to ensure mutual agreement and understanding of key activity indicators and targets, with final impact- and objective-level indicators and life-of-award targets incorporated into the Final Application. For key resources on FFP indicator selection and target setting, applicants can refer to the USAID/FFP List of Indicators, and, for recent updates to the list, the USAID/FFP Indicator Handbook I for Baseline/Final Evaluations, and key, accompanying guidance to assist with indicator challenges such as qualitative and subjective indicators. Applicants may also select

custom indicators based on context or specific approaches and expected needs for activity management.

Note: FFP does not require applicants to submit an Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT) as part of their application; successful applicants develop this tool during and after the M&E workshop. The M&E workshop typically takes place within three months of the start date of an award.

**Annex 8. Gender Analysis Summary:** Consistent with USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (USAID 2012), all FFP multi-year development food security activities are required to complete a gender analysis within the first year, to inform design and strengthen programming. In this summary, the applicant should discuss illustrative points (three to four) along the proposed ToC where the applicant anticipates existing gender norms or gender relations could facilitate or impede progress toward results and provide examples of information that would be collected in order to clarify the issues identified. Applicants are encouraged to take into consideration the interplay of gender and other social dimensions such as age, ethnicity, and origin that play a role in determining both opportunities and constraints for women, men, girls, and boys. The summary should also include the makeup of the team the applicant anticipates would conduct the gender analysis, a discussion of the tools likely to be used for data collection, an estimated budget, and the process the applicant would use to incorporate analysis findings into the ToC and implementation plan.

Applicants will not be restricted to the specific details discussed in the summary should their application be awarded, but it should be evident from the summary that the applicant has:
- an understanding of what a gender analysis entails within the context of an FFP activity,
- the capacity to carry out the gender analysis, and
- the intention to incorporate the analysis findings into the activity, and a practical means to do so.

Applicants should refer to *ADS 205: Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle* and the *Technical References on Gender* for more information.

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 issues related to the food insecurity and malnutrition of the selected geographic area and intended targeted participants. The consultation will lay the groundwork for the Year 1 Gender Analysis and for continuing collaboration between partner staff and local leaders in ensuring gender issues are addressed effectively and inclusively in all activity interventions. Partners will be asked to bring a field team that includes their activity's GYSD Lead(s), technical staff who understand the technical areas of the award, and at least one senior manager.

**Annex 9. Environmental Safeguards Plan:** Consistent with USAID's [Agency Environmental Procedures (22 CFR 216)](#) and [Climate Risk Management for USAID Projects and Activities (ADS 201mal)](#), USAID programming must properly consider and minimize the potential for environmental impacts and susceptibility to climate risks. For this RFA, applicants are expected to design innovative approaches which promote environmental and climate risk management to improve and sustain food and nutrition security of vulnerable populations, as articulated in the IRs under both SO1 and SO2 of the [FFP 2016-2025 Food Assistance and Food Security Strategy](#).

The Environmental Safeguards Plan must thus summarize:
1. How strategies that reduce climate risks *to* the activity and environmental impacts *of* the activity have been integrated into program design to promote more resilient natural resources;
2. How funds for environmental risk management have been allocated in the detailed/comprehensive budgets and described in the budget narrative;
3. How outcomes of the Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) will inform the performance monitored through the Log Frame and IPTT in M&E systems;[26]
4. How staffing capacity for oversight of environmental compliance and climate risk management requirements will be ensured over the life of the activity and how those staff will coordinate and integrate with broader project management.

The [FY20 FFP RFA-level Initial Environmental Examination (RFA-IEE)](#) provides direction on environmental compliance and climate risk management procedures for both pre-award (i.e., Environmental Safeguards Plan) and post-award (ie.., Supplemental IEE, Climate Risk Management screening, PERSUAPs, Environmental Status Reports, etc.) requirements. This RFA-IEE is a mandatory reference for environmental compliance and climate risk management of FFP development activities.

For successful applicants, a series of carefully thought out requirements ("Conditions" in the RFA-IEE) will be the responsibility of the awardee to ensure sufficient capacity to meet the demands. Especially for applicants that are new to FFP, in order to understand the full suite of responsibilities upon award, careful attention should be given to review the various Conditions of the RFA-IEE.

One of the requirements described in the RFA-IEE will be to conduct a Supplemental IEE that assesses environmental impacts and opportunities that are specific to the particular geographical zone of influence of the food security activity. An element of the Supplemental IEE will be a CRM screening, in accordance with ADS 201mal. These analyses are only required for successful applicants.

Climate risks across water, health, agriculture, and ecosystems in the FFP geographies are described in the Climate Risk Profile (CRP) that USAID conducted for Ethiopia programming. Information contained within this FFP Ethiopia CRP will help inform more

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[26] [USAID FFP Policy and Guidance for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting for Development Food Security Activities](#), Section 2.4, Performance Indicator Reference Sheets, Page 36.

climate resilient programming and Climate Risk Management (CRM) for successful applicants. CRP may be found on the USAID food assistance Ethiopia country page and on Climatelinks.org at: https://www.climatelinks.org/countries/ethiopia.

In all cases, the Supplemental IEE and CRM must take into consideration the PSNP PIM framework for the PSNP Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF).

**Annex 10. M&E Plan:** Applicants must submit an abridged Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan that describes the applicant's planned approach for monitoring and anticipated engagement with both the external evaluation contract and the mid-term evaluation. Building upon the ToC and LogFrame included earlier in the activity design, the M&E plan should illustrate the applicant's approach to:

1. annual monitoring;
2. intervention and quality monitoring;
3. M&E staffing, including the strategy to strengthen the monitoring and evaluative capacity of activity staff; (with M&E staff included in the organizational chart - see "Management and Staffing" section);
4. anticipated engagement with the external evaluation team for the design and management of a potential randomized control trial (RCT);
5. demonstrated willingness to participate in and collaborate with the research firm to design an RCT, identify research questions, accommodate the evaluation design in selecting target communities and/or intervention package treatment arms, and make adjustments to project implementation plans to support an RCT in the Ethiopia DFSA and PSNP context; and
6. a summary budget that includes staffing, monitoring, anticipated costs related to the management of the RCT, data quality assurance, participant registration, and database design/maintenance.

FFP strongly encourages applicants to develop a database that will allow the activity to identify each participant and link the participant to the household. FFP requests that the applicant use cost-effective and existing open source or widely available platforms (such as Google or Microsoft) to develop such a database. FFP will not approve developing a database/MIS using proprietary codes.

USAID will fund an independent firm to conduct the baseline and final evaluation, which will likely be designed as a RCT study design. This will necessitate a strong collaborative relationship between the evaluation team, FFP, and the successful applicant to design and implement the study in adherence to an agreed-upon plan to minimize risk to both the validity of the evaluation and the smooth implementation of the activity. By submitting an application for this RFA, applicants agree to collaborate with and assist the evaluation team of USAID's choice in the design and implementation of baseline and final evaluation and collaborate to design meaningful evaluation questions of interest to the successful applicant, Ethiopia Mission, and FFP. The evaluation team will work with the successful applicant and USAID to randomly select treatment and control communities and collaborate on other methodological decisions. FFP stresses that engaging in an RCT design and implementation is an engaging and highly collaborative process between all parties. Generally, the successful applicant will be

responsible for collaborating on the following aspects necessary to facilitate a successful RCT, which will be further detailed through an MOU at the start of the award:

1. Agreeing to collaborate on the following regarding planning:
   a. Defining eligibility criteria for participation.
   b. Defining and agreeing upon a package of interventions for each study arm.
   c. Over-targeting communities and/or eligible households for interventions based on the agreed-upon process of randomization in order to assign different treatment arm(s) or control arm.
   d. Providing feedback and input on evaluation questions and study tools.
   e. Agreeing to adhere to intervention roll-out plans, and adhering to treatment plan with flexibility for adaptive management.
2. Sharing costing data with the evaluation team as a part of the study.
3. Agreeing to adhere to the following:
   a. Offer the agreed-upon treatment to all households or communities assigned to treatment arms and not to those assigned to the control arm.
   b. Obtain USAID approval for, and notify the evaluation team about, any intended changes to geography, interventions, or other aspects of programming that may impact the RCT.
   c. Coordinate with other implementers in the target areas and communicate with FFP and the evaluation team about possible interventions that may affect the evaluation design.

The applicant should budget for a midterm evaluation. A full description of required elements related to the M&E Plan can be found in the USAID FFP Policy and Guidance for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting for Development Food Security Activities.

**Annex 11. Activity Collaboration, Learning, and Adapting Plan Concept:** Applicants must develop an activity CLA plan concept to bring into the pre-award co-creation workshop. The plan should identify how the applicant will ensure robust cycles of learning, both during the refinement period as well as throughout the period of award in the activity, with other DFSA implementing partners, and with the CLA Platform. The plan should seek to link evidence gaps and new knowledge to improved activity design, strengthened implementation planning and quality, and better preparedness and responsiveness to local context. The plan should elaborate on management approaches to support CLA management. This annex should provide suggested planning for:

1. Robust partner engagement and consultative processes with communities, local government, civil society, other donor funded projects, and local researchers and academics;
2. Identifying and filling knowledge gaps, including ongoing efforts to understand and assess local context, and community needs and capacities; as well as small-scale operational research and pilots of new approaches and interventions;
3. Capturing and sharing results, lessons learned, reflections, scenario planning, and promising practices;

4. Ensuring analysis and application of new evidence, findings from reflection and scenario planning practices, and knowledge sharing to improve activity processes, approaches, and overall effectiveness;
5. Strengthening capacity of staff, partners, and communities based on best practices and program learning.

The activity learning plan should also provide a timetable of key milestones during the refinement year.

**Annex 12. Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plan:** Applicants must examine any potential risk related to fraud, corruption, and/or mismanagement. This assessment should demonstrate that due consideration has been given to ensuring the security and protection of all participants, dependent on the intervention proposed.

**Annex 13. Intervention Area Maps:** These maps should show any proposed areas of implementation and ongoing activity areas at the woreda level by the applicant, consortium members, or others if applicable. They should clarify who is expected to implement in the areas. The implementation area identification should take into account other USAID resilience investments such as the Joint Emergency Operation (JEOP), Livelihoods for Resilience, or Growth through Nutrition, and others, and as best as possible note opportunities for layered activities.

**Annex 14. Organizational Chart:** The organizational chart should include the structure of the prime, all members of the consortium, and sub-awardees. If possible, it should include locations, supervisory hierarchies, and relationships between all participants.

**Annex 15. CVs of Key Personnel:** The application should include CVs of all key personnel, including the COP, Environmental Lead, M&E Lead, Strategic Learning Lead, GYSD Lead, and others designated by the applicant.

**Annex 16. Letters of Commitment:** FFP encourages letters of commitment from partners and staff, if applicable.

**Annex 17. Glossary and Acronyms:** Please include a glossary of any application-specific terms and acronyms with definitions, as needed.

### h) Phase II - Oral Presentation

The Phase II Oral Presentation will follow Phase I Initial Application process and will be scored separately from Phase I. The Applicant should assume USAID staff present at the presentation have reviewed their Initial Applications, and therefore the presentation should build on the concepts introduced in the Initial Application.

*USAID will not be responsible for costs associated with travel or presentation costs.*

Combined Oral Presentation and time for questions and answers is expected to be approximately two (2) hours. Applicants will be notified of the location, date, and time of the presentation after review of the written application. Oral Presentations may be conducted remotely. There is no specified order by which the information must be presented, although Applicants should be cognizant of the weighted importance of each of the Application Review criteria described for Phase II Oral Presentations and set forth in Section V.

Applicants will be selected from the Phase II Oral Presentation as ASA(s).[27] The ASA(s) will be notified by letter within two weeks after the completion of all oral presentations to establish a date and time to begin scheduling for the Co-Creation Workshop.

*(1) Oral Presentation - Activity Design*

Each Selected Applicant must present an explanation of their approach to achieving the goals and objectives of each of the components set forth in the Program Description. In describing this activity design, the Applicant must:

- Clearly articulate why the Applicant's high-level ToC and the proposed design approach are feasible conceptually and operationally to achieve the Goal and Objectives;
- Demonstrate how the Applicant will integrate youth and gender perspectives discussed in the Design Approach;
- Clearly articulate its approach to incorporating adaptation and learning, including the co-creation and R&I Approach.

*(2) Oral Presentation - Management & Staffing*

Applicants should expound from the written Initial Application to explain, within the context of the design approach, the proposed organizational management, staffing, and capacity to operate efficiently and effectively in the target geographic zone of Ethiopia.

## Notification of Apparently Successful Applicant (ASA)

Soon after the last Phase II Oral Presentation, USAID plans to inform the ASA(s) if its application has been selected to proceed to Co-Creation Phase and begin scheduling and arrangements for the Co-Creation Workshop. FFP will share an Issues Letter with the ASA(s), along with the invitation to proceed to the Co-Creation Phase. Some issues may be addressed during the Co-Creation Workshop, but all identified issues must be addressed at the time of Final Application submission.

### i. Final Application Phase

No funding will be made available prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement. Applicants, including the organization(s) selected to collaboratively develop the Program

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[27] Per 2 CFR 700.1, Apparently Successful Applicant is defined as the applicant for USAID funding recommended for an award after the merit review, but who has not yet been awarded cooperative agreement award by the Agreement Officer. Apparently Successful Applicant status confers no right and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award, which still must be obligated by the Agreement Officer.

Description, are responsible for all costs incurred prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement, including travel and all other costs related to the oral presentation phase and Co-Creation Workshop. Once the award is signed, the implementing partner may start incurring costs.

### (1) Co-Creation Workshop

After the ASA(s) notification, a collaborative workshop will be hosted by USAID in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in another location, or virtually. This workshop will be attended by the ASA(s) (including consortium partners as applicable), USAID, and potentially other stakeholders.

See Appendix III: Co-Creation, Refine and Implement, and DFSA Handover Guidance for the purpose of the co-creation workshop.

Additional information regarding the logistics and content of the workshop will be provided as part of the ASA(s) Notification Letter.

### (2) Final Application

Following the Co-Creation Workshop, the ASA(s) will have approximately one month to continue to work remotely to refine its approach and finalize the Application and accompanying Annexes. The Final Application will include additional detail to the Initial Application as described below and necessary Issues Letter revisions. USAID will review these documents and may provide additional clarification questions. The ASA(s) will have one week to respond and submit its final application. Per USAID's requirements, the final technical and cost/business applications will be reviewed, and an award will be drafted and submitted to the ASA(s) for review.

Please note below that the Final Application allows for additional pages to give the ASA(s) space to provide a more detailed approach based on co-creation workshop and engagement with USAID. The general content for each section will not change. ASA(s) should respond to the instructions in this section and reflect the discussion and decisions made during the pre-award Co-Creation Workshop. Furthermore, additional Annexes described above in this Section *(e) Annexes* will be reviewed as supplemental information for final review.

a.  Cover Page (one page, see requirement in paragraph a)
b.  Executive Summary (one page, see requirement in paragraph b)
c.  Activity Design (35 pages, see requirement in paragraph c)
d.  Adaptive Management and Staffing (10 pages, see requirement in paragraph d)
e.  Cost Application (no page limit, see requirements in paragraph e)
f.  Environmental Compliance (see requirements in paragraph f)
g.  Annexes

### (3) Final Application Annexes

The ASA(s) will incorporate the issues letter responses and refinement of key technical areas from the workshop into the final full Application. In addition, the ASA(s) will also make any other necessary revisions to the Annexes 1 - 17 submitted as part of Phase I Initial Application.

**In particular, the Collaborating Learning, and Adapting Plan will have an increased page limit of 10 pages.** Depending on the decisions made during the Co-Creation Workshop, other Annexes or additional detail may be required as part of the Final Application.

**<u>Documents Only required at the Final Application Phase for the ASA(s) to submit after the Co-Creation Workshop.</u>**

| |
|---|
| 18. Safety and Security Plan (no page limit) |
| 19. Past Performance Supporting Documentation, including the Past Performance Reference Questionnaire (Appendix II) (no page limit) |
| 20. Detailed Budget (no page limit) |
| 21. Detailed Budget Narrative (no page limit)<br>   ● Revised Motor Vehicle Procurement Table |
| 22. Final Log Frame, ToC graphic, and ToC narrative (email LogFrame and ToC graphic as separate attachments) (six page maximum for ToC narrative) |

## *SECTION V – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION*

1.  **Evaluation Criteria**

The Initial Application (Phase I) will be reviewed and evaluated according to the criteria detailed below. Highly scoring applicants from Phase I will be invited to Phase II Oral Presentations. Following Phase II Oral Presentations, ASA(s) will be selected. ASA(s) will receive an Issues Letter for further discussion and incorporation into the final Program Description of the award and will be invited to participate in a pre-award Co-Creation Workshop. Following the pre-award Co-Creation Workshop, the ASA(s) will have approximately four weeks to refine and finalize the Application and accompanying Annexes. USAID will review the submission and may have additional questions in a second Issues Letter. The ASA(s) will respond to any final issues and submit its Final Application, which FFP will evaluate as "acceptable" or "unacceptable".

**Phase I: Initial Application**

| Merit Review Criteria | Maximum Possible Points |
|---|---|
| **a) Technical Approach** | 70 |
| *Design Approach* | *35* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Innovation* | *10* | |
| *Sustainability and Local Systems Strengthening* | *10* | |
| *Gender Equity, Gender Integration, and Youth Empowerment* | *15* | |
| **b) Management & Staffing** | | 30 |
| *Staffing, Operations, and Logistics* | *20* | |
| *Adaptive Management and Learning* | *10* | |
| **Total Possible Points** | | **100** |

### a) Technical Approach

#### 1. Design Approach (35 points)

Applicants will be evaluated on their adherence to the criteria articulated in Section VI, including:

- A clear analysis of underlying causes of poverty and food insecurity in the target area, identifying the causes of food insecurity 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 poverty specific to the target area(s). It includes a high-level ToC that links with the provided conceptual framework and provides a clear road map showing how the proposed set of activities, in interaction with activities and/or outcome produced by other actors, will produce all necessary and sufficient outcomes to achieve the goal based on existing evidence and plausible logical reasoning.
- The applicant adheres to the components of the PSNP and PIM for core programming spheres.
- A package of prioritized technical interventions that aligns to the principles and design approach outlined earlier that will bring transformative change to the targeted population, ensure sustainability of the anticipated outcomes, and strengthen household and community capacity to withstand shocks. Evidence based with a clear description and rationale of how they are prioritized in the ToC and how they will be implemented, integrated, sequenced, and layered within the FFP activity and with USAID, other donors, and stakeholders' investments to achieve the goal.
- Identified knowledge gaps to be addressed in the co-creation workshop and R&I refinement period, and how closing these knowledge gaps could impact possible changes to the ToC, the package of technical interventions, and implementation planning.

#### 2. Innovation (10 points)

Past iterations of the PSNP have made progress in reducing food insecurity for PSNP clients. The GoE looks to DFSAs as "Innovation Hubs" to develop new approaches to key areas where development gains have not progressed as expected. This includes sustainably graduating clients from the PSNP; ensuring timely and accountable transfers; harmonizing emergency and

development client registries and targeting; and identifying alternative livelihood approaches, particularly those that may engage youth. FFP will evaluate Applicant(s) on their ability to identify key areas in their Refinement approach, suggest innovative methods, and explain how they will be rigorously evaluated and adapted.

While FFP expects applicants to utilize proven evidence-based approaches, there are significant opportunity areas to identify innovative approaches linked to research for activities where evidence is less robust. Applicants are encouraged to propose appropriate technological solutions and process improvements which solve identified problems (e.g., timeliness of transfers); piloting and testing promising initiatives and/or bringing proven innovative pilots to scale. Where possible, applicants should apply human-centered design principles and actively and continually engage community members. Approaches that will move highly vulnerable communities on a path towards sustainable change and out of the existing poverty traps in the targeted areas should be prioritized. FFP understands that a key part of innovating is testing (including failing), iterating, and refining; therefore, significant emphasis will be placed on how proposed innovations link to learning and adaptive management. Any innovations proposed should be contextually appropriate, evidence--based, and scalable within the PSNP or other local systems, including public or private. Applicants should demonstrate plans for partnerships that will lead to scalability.

### 3. *Sustainability and Local Systems Strengthening (10 points)*

Applicants will be evaluated on their sustainability plan (see Sustainability and Local System Strengthening section above), which reflects their high-level ToC and describes, based on realistic assumptions, the resources, technical and managerial capacities, motivation, and linkages that will sustain activity outcomes and/or interventions after the activity ends. FFP prioritizes efforts to strengthen local systems as a key component for ensuring sustainability and contextual relevance of outcomes.

### 4. *Gender Equity, Gender Integration, and Youth Empowerment (15 points)*

Applicants will be evaluated on the extent to which gender equity and integration and women and youth empowerment are addressed in all areas of the proposed activity. Integration of a gender-responsive approach must be context-appropriate and reflected at every phase of the activity. Applicants will also be evaluated on their plans for undertaking a gender analysis and integrating the gender analysis results into interventions and for tracking changes in gender and youth outcomes over time, including unanticipated outcomes. This includes consideration of how proposed activities could affect women's time and how this will be taken into account in planning activities (e.g., mothers' participation in project activities resulting in less time for childcare and other familial demands).  Applicants will be evaluated on the extent to which proposed activities could lead to or exacerbate gender-based violence at the household and community level and have considered ways to prevent or mitigate its occurrence, should it occur.  Applicants should pursue positive youth development strategies that view young people as key partners in all development efforts, from nutritional programming to strengthening agricultural markets and building food secure communities. Programming should take into account the disparities and constraints faced by the different youth cohorts.

*b. Management and Staffing (30 Points)*

    *1. Staffing, Operations and Logistics (20 Points)*

The management structure and staffing must ensure the efficient and appropriate use of resources, including adequate human resources to support the interventions and resource management, as well as effective and adaptive management. This includes ensuring that sector and resource management components have sufficient technical oversight. All relevant information on consortium members and sub-awardees must be included, and clear planning for refinement period activities and subsequent management and staffing adjustments must be addressed. In addition to the management structure and institutional capacity, applicants must explain how their management approach will ensure a holistic, integrated, and adaptive management.

The resource management section should be appropriate and sufficient for the resources requested. The applicant should have a clear understanding of country specific requirements (e.g., local, regional, national, international) for proposed use(s) of food assistance (e.g., in-kind, cash, or vouchers), and awareness of restrictions that may hinder operations or implementation. Applicants should justify how staffing and structure will allow for the effective and accountable implementation of any chosen resource transfer as an activity component.

    *2. Adaptive Management and Learning (10 Points)*

Applicants will be evaluated on how they propose an adaptive management approach throughout their design. In doing so, applicants should identify key knowledge gaps, research approaches, and how the results of their analysis will be used to inform change management. The applicant must describe the management processes that will enable the application of analysis and learning in adjustments to the ToC and other design elements, adaptations to ongoing implementation and management strategies, and updates to learning strategies and plans. These processes are expected to be carried out intensively during initial refinement and continue throughout the life of the award.

**Phase II: Oral Presentation**

Oral Presentations should respond to the submission information described in Section IV, paragraph (h) "Phase II Oral Presentations". Applicants should be prepared to respond to programmatic and/or technical questions from USAID on their Initial Application. Applicants will be reviewed on the basis of whether they successfully elaborate on the information provided in the Phase I Initial Application according to the following scores. Based on submission information described in Section IV, Applicants are encouraged to manage presentation time, per guidance provided at a later stage, to highlight important aspects of their Activity and engage in a question and answer period with USAID.

| Merit Review Criteria | Maximum Possible points |
|---|---:|
| Activity Design | 70 |
| Management and Staffing | 30 |
| **Total Possible Points** | **100** |

**Activity Design**
Applicants must present an explanation of their approach to achieving the goals and objectives of each of the components set forth in the Program Description.  In describing this activity design, the Applicant must:

- Clearly articulate why the Applicant's high-level ToC and the proposed design approach are feasible conceptually and operationally to achieve the goals and objectives.
- Demonstrate how the Applicant will integrate youth and gender perspective discussed in the Design Approach.
- Clearly articulate approach to incorporating adaptation and learning, including the co-creation and Refine and Implement Approach.

**Management and Staffing**
Applicants must present, within the context of the design approach, the proposed organizational management, staffing, and capacity to operate efficiently and effectively in the target geographic zone of Ethiopia.  The applicant should demonstrate effective coordination and collaboration with various partners as applicable, including GoE and other USAID activities.

**Final Application**
Following the Co-Creation Workshop, the ASA(s) will submit a Final Application, including additional Annexes described in Section IV.  USAID will evaluate the Final Application as "Pass/Acceptable" or "Fail/Unacceptable".  In the event negotiations fail to improve the ASA(s) Technical Application/Program Description, USAID may determine the application as "Fail/Unacceptable".

**Review of Cost Application**
The cost application will be reviewed separately from the technical 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 activity costs: if they are reasonable, are allowed under the cost principles according to FFPIBs, and allocable 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 activity according to costs of headquarters, regional, and/or country offices, as applicable;
- The breakdown of all costs according to each partner organization or sub-contractor/sub-awardee involved in the activity;
- 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 total activity costs, including a breakdown of the financial and in-kind contributions of all organizations involved in implementing the proposed activity;
- Potential contributions of non-USAID or private commercial donors to this proposed activity;
- A procurement plan for equipment and other restricted items as defined by 2 CFR 200.34 and ADS 312 (may be incorporated into an existing or new annex in the cost application);
- A woreda-specific capital and non salary administrative support budget as defined by the PSNP PIM.

Areas to be listed/discussed in detailed budget and budget notes may 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 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 U.S. and third-country national staff.

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

### b) Fringe Benefits

Applicants 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. Applicants must submit the most recent 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 comprising 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. The applicant should specify which fringe benefits for local employees are required by local law and which are applied in accordance with the applicant's compensation policy.

### c) *Non-Employee Labor*
Non-Employee Labor are short-term employees. Applicants should provide the following details for Non-Employee Labor: rate of pay (daily rate), hours worked in a day, and length of employment.

### d) *Travel and Transport*
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 is 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; and
- Provide supporting documentation, such as the applicant's travel policy, to justify these costs, as appropriate.

### e) *Overseas Allowances*
The applicant must indicate any overseas allowances provided to staff and the corresponding rate or fixed amount per staff.

### f) *Equipment*
In accordance with 2 CFR 200.33, in a brief description, "equipment" means tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $5,000.

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; and
- Provide the basis for the cost estimates, e.g., pro forma invoice or published price lists.

There are statutory constraints relating to the purchase of agricultural commodities, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals, pesticides, and more with USAID program funds. Applicants may obtain specific information on these regulations on USAID Website, particularly ADS 312. Additional information for motor vehicles is found in Section VIII. 3. Motor Vehicle Procurement Table.

### g) Supplies

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.94, "supplies" means all tangible personal property excluding equipment and intangible property. 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.

### h) Staff Training

The applicant should indicate any training and workshops provided to staff and the cost break out for each training provided.

### i) USAID Branding and Marking

In accordance with 2 CFR 700.1, "branding" means how the program, project, or activity is named and positioned, as well as how it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and cooperating country citizens; and "marking" means the public communications, commodities, and program materials and other items that will visibly bear the USAID Identity. If applicable, applicants must specify any costs associated with these requirements, showing the unit cost and units purchased.

### j) Subawards

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.92, "subaward" means an award provided by a pass-through entity to a subrecipient for the subrecipient to carry out part of a federal award received by the pass-through entity. It does not include payments to a contractor or payments to an individual that is a beneficiary of a federal program.

The applicant must:
- Identify any subawards (other than the purchase of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services) and provide this information in a chart that includes their total value;
- Provide subaward budgets and accompanying budget notes in the same format as submitted by the prime applicant and with the same exchange rate for all members of the consortium.

### k) Contracts (if any)

The applicant must:
- Identify any contracts (other than the purchase of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services) and provide this information in a chart that includes their total value;
- Provide contract budgets and accompanying budget notes in the same format as submitted by the prime applicant and with the same exchange rate for all members of the consortium.

### l) Audits

 The applicant should indicate any costs associated with the required "Single audit," as defined at 2 CFR 200.501(b), for a non-federal entity that expends $750,000 or more during the non-federal entity's fiscal year in federal awards.

### *m) Construction*

Per the USAID-wide policy set out in USAID ADS 303.3.30, construction activities may only be carried out under cooperative agreements if they meet certain criteria, absent a case-by-case waiver. Per the PSNP Project Implementation Manual, the scope, geographic targeting, and type of public works infrastructure are determined by the GoE.  FFP will encourage the Awardee, however, to discuss the scope and location of any GoE-selected public works with relevant government authorities and to advocate for public work sites and activities that will benefit majority PSNP clients .

For these reasons, FFP requests applicants to provide an explicit description within the technical narrative of construction activities to be funded directly for the purposes of food assistance, not including PSNP public works. This description should include the location of site(s), as well as an explicit construction section within their budget and budget narrative that detail:
1. the estimated cost of construction activities at each site; and
2. the total estimated cost of construction activities under the award.

In certain contexts, cost and location information for food assistance-related infrastructure may not be known at the time of application submission. In these cases, the Applicant must provide best estimates of costs, and include a clear justification for the proposed food assistance infrastructure budgets. If an application is accepted for funding, the Awardee must provide detailed estimates of location and cost information for each site before FFP will allow construction to begin.

For all construction activities (including PSNP public works), the Applicant must provide a detailed strategy for ensuring sustainability of completed infrastructure, including how operations and maintenance planning will be developed for community-level management of infrastructure, focusing on linkages to local systems for sustainability.

Awardees will be required to provide cost and geographic location information for all construction activities supported annually by the Awardee in the Annual Results Report, including construction funded under the capital budget and those activities funded to support direct food assistance. Reporting requirements will include:
1. Type of infrastructure constructed;
2. Cost of construction (or total cost of capital budget allocated to construction); and
3. Geographic location (either as GPS coordinates or at the village level) of completed infrastructure.

For the purpose of this policy, the term "construction" includes "construction, alteration, rehabilitation, or repair (including dredging and excavation) of buildings, structures, or other real property", including any infrastructure built or rehabilitated via conditional food assistance activities (e.g., cash-for-assets, food-for-assets). Activities considered as construction for the purpose of this program may include, but are not limited to: rehabilitation and/or development of natural resources and/or watershed management including but not limited to terraces, dam structures for gully reclamation, river diversions, water harvesting structures, tree nurseries, water points and spring development such as wells and ponds; community assets to be built under PSNP work plans including but not limited to feeder roads, bridges, culverts, school

structures, veterinary structures, health facilities, sanitation structures, community gardens, bee hives and storage facilities; commodity management infrastructure, including but not limited to warehouses, storehouses and related storage structures; and PSNP administration offices. A "single activity 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 water harvesting structure, a drinking water point or system, a power plant, a school, a clinic, and/or any continuous multiples of the same. For more information, see ADS 303maw, USAID Implementation of Construction Activities:  A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 303.

### n)  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; and
- Provide the basis for the cost estimates.

### o)  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 U.S. 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 on modified total direct cost (MTDC) as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.. Please note this is only for those applicants who have never received a NICRA.

### p) Budgeting for Climate Risk and Environmental Safeguards
All budgeting for climate and environmental safeguards can follow the framework established through the FSN consultation for the environmental budgeting toolkit.

**Note:** ASA(s) that have never received a cooperative agreement, grant, or contract from the U.S. Government are subject to the requirements of a pre-award survey described in ADS 303.3.9.

**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 AO is the only individual who may legally commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds.

## *SECTION VII – FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS*

Any questions concerning this RFA, its appendices, or Technical References must be submitted in writing within XXX days of the RFA's posting to FY20-DFSA-RFA-Ethiopia@usaid.gov and "FY 2020 Ethiopia RFA" in the subject line.

## *SECTION VIII – OTHER INFORMATION*

1.      **Host Country Agreement**

In lieu of a Host Country Agreement (HCA), USAID anticipates that this activity will be notified to the GoE through USAID's bilateral Development Objective Agreement (DOAG) process. As such, the DOAG and Bilateral Framework establish the terms and conditions by which an Applicant will be able to conduct a Title II activity in Ethiopia in accordance with the applicable requirements of USAID 22 CFR 211.

During the Collaboration Phase, the USAID Mission will work with the ASA(s) and GoE to finalize an approach that fulfills the necessary requirements of 22 CFR 211 for country notification. A final decision on approach will be communicated to the ASA(s) prior to award.

2. **Motor Vehicle Procurement Table**

a. If the prime members of a consortium and/or sub-awardees plan to procure any motor vehicles during the award, the applicant (i.e., the prime) must include information on why procuring the vehicle(s) is less expensive than leasing the vehicle(s). In addition, the prime must submit 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 (U.S. and non-U.S.) 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.

For all applications, describe the need and intended use for the vehicle. Identify the type of vehicle that will fulfill that need, why it is the best choice for the intended use, and if appropriate, include specifications.

For all applications, detail efforts made to determine if the type of vehicle is produced in the U.S.

For subsequent applications from previous or expiring FFP activities, 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 intervention; 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.

3.      **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 intergovernmental organizations. Special markings may be required in Feed the Future target countries.

Under special circumstances USAID-approved Marking Plans may be waived.

Agency branding and marking guidance can be found in ADS Chapter 320 and at the USAID branding site.

4.      **USAID Development Data Policy**

The U.S. Government Open Data Policy (ADS 579) establishes the requirements governing USAID's development data lifecycle from collecting data to making it accessible. Accordingly, the Ethiopia DFSAs will catalog and spatially map interventions and any construction activities at a village- and/or community-level. The purpose of this requirement is to facilitate purposeful activity monitoring, as well as to improve the use of such data/mapping efforts for learning, planning, and adaptation of DFSAs.

Applicants for the Ethiopia DFSAs are strongly encouraged to explore the suite of emerging tools that integrate geospatial data with data collection to better facilitate remote monitoring in insecure environments. Such tools would enable partners to highlight needs, progress, successes, and challenges along a spatial and linear path, and are a strong tool in communicating with FFP and other donors who may not be able to monitor or perform site visits due to security restrictions. Additionally, applicants should propose approaches to collect, manage, and share this data in a manner that maintains the security of participants and staff.

The following data collection and mapping standards apply to the geographic data associated with the Ethiopia DFSAs, including the three types of geographic data that the DFSA will be expected to provide to USAID. Applicants should ensure that they have the necessary technical resources and staffing to adhere to these standards, and to meaningfully incorporate geographic data into annual PREPs and M&E planning.

1.  **Activity and Intervention Location Data:** This refers to data that records the DFSA intervention locations, including village-level (formal or informal) GPS coordinates for individual sector-based interventions. Personally identifiable information (PII, i.e., identifying individuals in data submissions) should not be submitted. FFP will provide a data collection and reporting template to the Ethiopia DFSA awardees.
2.  **Thematic Data:** This applies to USAID awardees to create or acquire data sets on demographic and health indicators, land use and land cover, hydrology, and transportation infrastructure using USAID funds.
3.  **Activity Specific Geographic Data:** This refers to the outputs that are produced when the USAID partner conducts geospatial analysis while implementing an Activity (e.g., geographic analysis of school feeding status).

APPENDIX I: Definitions

**Definitions**

**Climate Risk:** The potential for negative consequences due to changing climatic conditions. Climate risk consists of individual climate risks—potentially severe adverse consequences for development activities (or for humans and social-ecological systems) resulting from the interaction of climate-related hazards with the vulnerability of societies and systems exposed to climate change. For purposes of USAID's climate risk management, risks are qualitatively categorized as high, moderate, or low.

**Climate Risk Management:** The process of assessing, addressing, and adaptively managing for climate risks that may impact the ability of awards to achieve development objectives.

**Direct Participants:** Those who come into direct contact with the set of interventions (goods or services) provided by the activity in each technical area. Individuals who receive training or benefit from activity-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 activity staff, and training and technical assistance provided by people who have been trained by activity staff (e.g., agricultural extension agents, village health workers). If cooperatives or organizations receive training or technical assistance from the activity, that will directly benefit all members, then all members of the cooperative/organization are considered direct participants.

In a Food for Training (FFT) intervention, the direct participants are those trained under the activity. In a Food for Work (FFW) or Food for Assets (FFA) intervention that is implemented as a stand-alone intervention (e.g., not as part of a wider set of interventions), direct participants are those who directly participate in the intervention (i.e., receive a ration), not all of those who use or benefit from the infrastructure/asset created (e.g., a road).

Occasionally, a FFW or FFA intervention forms part of a set of interventions in a program area or 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). If this happens, 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. Examples of *indirect* participants include:
- Members of the household of a participant farmer who received technical assistance, seeds and tools, other inputs, credit, or livestock;

- 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.

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

**Environmental Safeguards:** Components of an activity that are developed as part of the project design to deal with mitigating potentially foreseeable negative environmental impacts of activity interventions, 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 activities 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). Examples of indirect participants include:
- Members of the household of a participant farmer who received technical assistance, seeds and tools, other inputs, credit, or livestock;

- 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.

**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 program recipient should be counted once, regardless of the number of months they will receive food assistance. 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.

**Resilience:** The ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses to food security in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.

**APPENDIX II:  Past Performance Reference Questionnaire**

Only successful applicants must upload the completed section A of this questionnaire to the FFP Partner Portal. A successful applicant's history of performance is part of the pre-award risk assessment. The remaining sections will 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

Please describe and explain the below of the applicant, in regard to performance and/or management abilities:

- How well the applicant performed.
- The relevancy of the work performed under the previous award to food assistance programming.
- Instances of good performance.
- Instances of poor performance.
- Significant achievements.
- Significant problems.
- Any indications of excellent or exceptional performance in the most critical areas.

**APPENDIX III: Co-Creation, Refine and Implement, and DFSA Handover Guidance**

**Background on Activity Design within FFP Ethiopia Programming**

The unique challenges associated with long-term programming in a complex crisis necessitate new approaches to not only activity design, but also to approaches for collaboration, learning, and adapting. USAID defines co-creation as a design approach that brings people together to collectively produce a mutually valued outcome, using a participatory process that assumes some degree of shared power and decision-making.

To improve collaboration and respond to an uncertain environment, most long-term and/or multi-year activities supported by FFP in Ethiopia will utilize variations of co-creation both during the pre-award and post-award procurement phases. This includes both emergency and development investments, but the scope and intensity of activity designs under co-creation will vary as activity designs require. Given the dynamic landscape of humanitarian transfer systems in Ethiopia currently, FFP intends to co-create an all-of-activity approach for new multi-year emergency investments. DFSAs, aligned with the next investment phase of the GoE, will co-create around strengthening and building a strong CLA Plan. Activities already defined by the PSNP PIM will not be included in the co-creation process. Finally, FFP seeks to bring both emergency and development partners together to co-create around a discrete set of technical approaches common to both sets of partners.

Additionally, the Ethiopia DFSA will include a post-award R&I phase. R&I allows for appropriate handover of core PSNP activities and an opportunity to collaboratively develop activities beyond the PSNP that respond to the unique challenges and goals as suggested by the high level conceptual framework provided by FFP.  R&I establishes a process for collaboration, learning, and adapting required to succeed over the lifetime of the activity.

**Pre-Award Co-Creation**

USAID challenges applicants to identify opportunities for linking emergency and development assistance. During pre-award co-creation, USAID envisions hosting a combination of audiences during three sessions of the pre-award co-creation workshop (see table below). One audience is targeted more towards the all-of-activity co-creation design for multi-year emergency assistance, another audience is those who have joint emergency and development equities across discrete technical spheres, and finally the third audience is for DFSA-only issues most focused on USAID partner support to the PSNP collaboration frameworks and joint learning agendas.

| Co-creation Session | Principle Audience(s) | Objective | Duration / Workshop Logistics |
|---|---|---|---|
| Emergency | Multi-year emergency | Full scale, all of activity design of the JEOP via a | To be held in Addis Ababa, virtually, or another location, |

| | ASA(s) | pre-award co-creation workshop. Details of which are in the JEOP APS. | with a third-party facilitator to bring ASA(s), USAID, GoE and other related humanitarian partners together. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Joint | Multi-year emergency and DFSA ASA(s) | Alignment of technical approaches across discrete technical spheres that impact both emergency and development partners in the context of an integrated cash/food response plan, continuum of response framework. | To be held in Addis Ababa, virtually, or another location, with a third-party facilitator to bring JEOP and DFSA ASA(s), USAID, GoE and other related stakeholders together. |
| Development | DFSA ASA(s) | Agree upon frameworks for collaboration both among ASA(s) as well as between ASA(s) and the USAID CLA Platform and also a joint learning agenda (questions and preliminary methods) | To be held in Addis Ababa, virtually, or another location, with a third-party facilitator to bring DFSA ASA(s), USAID, CLA Platform, GoE and other related stakeholders together. |

The general goal of the joint Emergency and Development co-creation session will be to bring together the various technical approaches and innovations of each partner and further define activities across a discrete set of technical spheres which may be, but are not limited to:

- Targeting geography (USAID reserves the right to approve final implementation areas) (see Section VI: Targeting);
- Targeting criteria and methods for humanitarian identification of needs (see Section VI: Targeting);
- Transfer Values / Modalities;
- Conditionalities;
- Continuum of Response (see Section VI: Design Approach); and
- Other areas as defined in JEOP and DFSA ASA(s) applications as appropriate.

The Development Co-Creation Session will focus on agreeing to the framework for collaboration both among ASA(s) as well as between ASA(s) and the USAID CLA Platform. The Development Session will also scope out an initial joint learning agenda (questions and preliminary methods). Participants will also review programmatic budget levels to support the proposed learning agenda shared either by a DFSA ASA(s) or the CLA Platform. Other areas for co-creation as defined in the DFSA ASA(s) application may be included in the Development Session as appropriate and time allows.

**Handover and Refine and Implement**

Since FY 2016, FFP has awarded its DFSAs under a collaborative post-award model known as Refine and Implement (R&I). Intended to improve activity design, R&I establishes the groundwork and culture for strong adaptive management throughout the lifetime of the project. FFP plays a partnership role through substantial involvement in the R&I process. During an initial refinement period, new awardees may carry out a number of activities including traditional start-up tasks and additional applied learning activities.

FFP has supported the PSNP since its inception in 2005 through consecutive multi-year development investments. Previous awardees have been expected to implement traditional start-up activities, while also being immediately responsible for core PSNP implementation, to the detriment of time for refinement and learning. To account for this challenge, FFP has built into the R&I model a nine-month handover period where existing DFSAs will continue core PSNP activity implementation, while new DFSA investments begin R&I and plan for take-over of core-PSNP activities.

Handover Period

Handover activities include, but are not limited to:

- o Conditional transfers to core caseload and Temporary and Permanent Direct Support Beneficiaries;
- o Management of public works activities;
- o Related capital and non-salary administration budget support;
- o Savings groups; and
- o Nutrition and SBCC activities.

Additionally, new awardees will work with previous DFSA partners and GoE to coordinate the phase-out from geographic woredas that will no longer be supported with the new DFSA investment and entry into new woredas selected under the FY 2021 DFSAs. Following the nine-month handover, new awardees will be responsible for implementing PSNP 5 as designed in the PIM in their respective woredas.

Refinement Period

During an initial 'refinement period' of approximately 14-16 months post-award, new awardees are also expected to carry out additional activities intended to refine their ToC and programmatic approaches that are beyond those defined in the PSNP 5 PIM. These activities should respond to the preliminary joint learning agenda developed during co-creation. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Formative research and assessments that address evidence and knowledge gaps as well as strengthen understanding of local context;
- Implementation research (e.g., pilots) of innovative approaches and implementation strategies;
- Participatory stakeholder engagement and community consultation for strengthened local partnerships;
- Local capacity building;
- Community consultation to enhance visioning and local engagement;

- Refining and harmonizing the activity ToC and related documents across DFSA partners;
- Finalizing DFSA partner joint learning agenda;
- Participation in R&I Key Collaboration Events (detailed below);
- Adapting to changes in the PSNP 5 design; and
- Refining the staffing pattern to fit the programmatic needs.

At the conclusion of the refinement period, there will be a joint R&I workshop that brings together all awardees to review learning from the refinement phase and make decisions on programmatic changes and scaling to inform the Operating Year 2 PREP. It is expected that throughout the life of the award, as a matter of strong adaptive management and continued program quality improvement, awardees will continue with efforts to close knowledge gaps, refine planning, test and pilot innovative approaches, update the theory of change and continue stakeholder engagement and coordination with other relevant actors. This adaptive management will happen in close collaboration with FFP, other USAID Mission programs, and the CLA Platform.

After an external evaluation in year four, R&I may allow highly successful activities to be extended and continue for up to five years past the traditional five-year DFSA time frame.

**Refinement Period – Key Collaboration Events**

- Post-Award Conferences and Kickoff Meetings, including Gender Consultation, R&I Conception Workshop, M&E Workshop and Baseline/Endline Workshops, R&I Culmination Workshop, and Chief of Party Presentations
    - o Format: To be determined at a later date
    - o Attendees: Implementing partner (IP) headquarter (HQ) and possibly key field staff positions, USAID Mission and FFP HQ staff
    - o Location: TBD
    - o Timing: Immediately after award

## APPENDIX IV: Essential Supporting Documents

The resources within this Annex are intended to guide applicants to key technical and programmatic resources relevant to the design and objectives of this RFA.

1. 2019-2020 Ethiopia Bellmon Analysis
2. USAID/ Ethiopia's 2019- 2024 CDCS
3. Climate Smart Profile for Ethiopia
4. Public Consultation Notes from Design Meeting with Partners
5. PSNP 4 PIM
6. RFA – IEE
7. HEA-Based Graduation Analysis for 2018-2019
8. Maps of USAID Programming
9. Templates