

# **AQUACULTURE BUSINESS PROMOTION ANNOUNCEMENT APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Feed the Future Bangladesh Aquaculture and Nutrition Activity is a five-year investment by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to WorldFish to sustain positive aquaculture sector growth through an inclusive market systems approach. The Activity aims to improve the sustainable livelihoods for a large number of smallholder farmers and other stakeholders linked to aquaculture value chains in USAID's Feed the Future Zone of Influence (ZOI) and Resilience Focus Area (RFA).<sup>1</sup>

The Activity will stimulate aquaculture sector growth, increase employment and income, and improve food and nutrition security for households. It will serve a facilitating role by coordinating linkages among the value chain actors in the private, public and civil society sector of Bangladesh.

## **GOAL AND OBJECTIVES**

The goal of the Activity is to achieve inclusive aquaculture sector growth through a market systems approach. Specific objectives are:

- increased productivity of aquaculture production systems
- strengthened aquaculture market systems, with particular attention to expanding opportunities for women and youth
- increased awareness and adoption of nutrition-related behaviors, with a particular focus on women and youth.

## **TARGETS**

- 400,000 men, women and youth in the Feed the Future ZOI and RFA have improved access to better quality aquaculture inputs, services and/or market channels
- 30 percent expansion of investment by the private sector in the Feed the Future ZOI and RFA in aquaculture production and market related to inputs and services (e.g. seed, feed, production/market-related information, technologies etc.)
- 30 percent increase in productivity from ponds and ghers in the Feed the Future ZOI and RFA
- 20 percent increase in the number of households adopting improved nutritional practices (consumption of nutritious food, dietary diversity and hygiene practices).

## **INTERMEDIATE RESULTS (IR)**

IR 1: Increased aquaculture productivity

Sub-IR 1.1: Increased availability of quality fish seed

Sub-IR 1.2: Increased availability of affordable quality fish feed

Sub-IR 1.3: Increased adoption of improved pond aquaculture management practices

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<sup>1</sup> The Feed the Future ZOI includes 21 southern districts in Barisal Division (Barisal, Bhola, Jhalokati, Pirojpur, Barguna and Patuakhali), Dhaka Division (Faridpur, Gopalganj, Madaripur, Rajbari and Shariatpur) and Khulna Division (Jashore, Jhenaidah, Magura, Narail, Bagerhat, Khulna, Satkhira, Chuadanga, Meherpur and Khustia). The Resilience Focus Area (RFA) includes two districts in Chattogram Division (Cox's Bazar and Bandarban).

IR 2: Strengthened aquaculture value chain

Sub-IR 2.1: Increased market linkages

Sub-IR 2.2: Increased engagement of private sector in aquaculture markets

Sub-IR 2.3: Improved enabling environment for inclusive growth in aquaculture

IR 3: Improved nutrition-related behaviors of rural households

Sub-IR 3.1: Improved nutrition awareness and practices

Sub-IR 3.2: Improved access to diverse and nutritious food

## **APPROACH**

The Activity will apply an inclusive market systems approach to implement interventions through private sector companies and organizations to reach smallholder farmers. It will facilitate rather than directly delivering aquaculture interventions, hence transferring ownership to the private sector companies and organizations. The approach will be to analyze the present context, identify the problems and underlying root causes of poorly functioning markets, seek solutions with and by the private sector and organizations. The Activity will identify rationales for investment, and use partnerships and grants to leverage co-investment by the private sector. It will focus on seeking sustainability from the beginning by building the capacity and resilience of local systems so that the interventions continue beyond the Activity lifecycle. It will adapt to changing contexts through collaboration, review, learning and reflection. The Activity will stimulate innovations, competitiveness and transformative changes.

## **AQUACULTURE BUSINESS PROMOTION ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Aquaculture Business Promotion Announcement (ABPA) is a customization and adaptation of the **Federal Broad Agency Announcement as described in FAR 35.016**.

The Activity is launching a second ABPA to private sector companies and organizations interested in submitting an application on business ideas/concepts that would address key constraints associated with aquaculture businesses in the Feed the Future ZOI and/or RFA that help to achieve the Activity's objectives of inclusive business and economic growth.

The ABPA is a call for proposals and does not constitute a commitment to any private sector company and organization to make any award or to pay for any cost incurred during the business proposal preparation. Following the ABPA launch and the receipt of applications on business ideas/concepts from private sector companies and organizations, the applications will be reviewed by the Review and Evaluation Committee of the Activity against the selection criteria outlined in Table A. Business ideas/concepts that pass the review will be further developed into detailed business proposals with the assistance of the Activity team. This will allow the Activity and private sector companies and organizations to enter into partnership through a sub-grant agreement.

## **WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?**

The ABPA is open to all private sector companies and organizations legally registered in Bangladesh and supplying goods and services to aquaculture value chain participants in the

Feed the Future ZOI and RFA. Women and youth-focused private sector companies and organizations are highly encouraged to apply.

### **POTENTIAL BUSINESS AREAS**

In this second call, the Activity invites applications from interested private sector companies and organizations on innovative business ideas/concepts in the Feed the Future ZOI and RFA that respond to one or more of the following challenges. The innovative business ideas/concepts targeting the RFA will get priority.

- Improve accessibility and availability of quality fish and tilapia seed at the smallholder farmer level, including women and youth, along with technical services on best management practices (BMP).
- Improve the availability of brood fish by establishing a brood bank.
- Improve accessibility and availability of affordable quality fish feed at the farmer level, including women and youth, along with technical services on BMP.
- Improve availability of quality aquaculture medicinal products (AMPs) and services for smallholder farmers along with BMP and fish health management.
- Scale up the mechanization of the aquaculture sector through the introduction of machinery (pumps, feed dispensers, aerators, blowers, gas removers, machinery use in feed mills etc.).
- Strengthen small-scale business enterprises like fish hatcheries, nurseries and local service providers (LSP)/associations so that entrepreneurs can provide services to smallholder men, women and young fish farmers.
- Develop a training package/curriculum and offer technical training for hatchery technicians and technical persons involved in the aquaculture sector or interested in entering the sector.
- Introduce a customized financial package for smallholder men and women fish farmers and aquaculture market actors.
- Support policy issues on the application of aqua inputs/medicine and licensing process.
- Introduction of integrated Artemia cum salt production systems in Cox's Bazar.
- Strengthen supply channels for safe dried and salted fish production in the RFA.
- Create innovative and equitable employment opportunities, particularly for women and youth, in the aquaculture sector. This may include piloting business models that incentivize the private sector to be inclusive of women and youth.
- Increase gender-integrated nutrition awareness and practices (consumption of nutritious food, dietary diversity and hygiene practices) at the household level through social and behavior change communication (SBCC) programs.
- Improve access to diverse and nutritious foods through nutrition-sensitive fish production systems (carp-mola polyculture) along with pond dike cropping and homestead gardening.
- Develop and market affordable, nutritious, safe and ready to cook/eat fish and fish products both for the domestic and export market.

- Increase evidence-based consumer awareness on tilapia and farmed fish by creating a national mass media campaign in order to challenge negative consumer attitudes toward tilapia and other farmed fish and generally promote the benefits of fish consumption.
- Increase recognition of women's work in aquaculture and fight gender stereotypes around women's and men's roles through mass media campaigns.

### **DURATION OF PROPOSED BUSINESS IDEAS/CONCEPTS**

The duration of the proposed business ideas/concepts should be one year. The sub-grant can be extended depending on the performance of the private sector companies and organizations, and the prospects of the proposed ideas/concepts.

### **MAXIMUM FUND FOR EACH APPLICATION**

WorldFish fund contribution for each application is up to USD 200,000. The final agreement will be negotiated with selected, qualified private sector companies and organizations. This support must contribute to a significant investment that the private sector companies and organizations will make. The private sector companies and organizations should have either in-kind and/or cost share.

### **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

1. Private sector companies and organizations must be registered with relevant government licensing bodies. Non-governmental organization (NGO) applicants must have a valid registration with the NGO Affairs Bureau and or Department of Social Services and at least five years' experience in similar projects.
2. Sub-grantees must hold a bank account and should have valid TIN and VAT registration.
3. Business proposals by private sector companies and organizations must be relevant to the priority objectives and activities of the Activity, and fulfill specific areas of need at community level in the Feed the Future ZOI and RFA.
4. Business ideas/concepts must have clear and operational definitions of objectives or milestones, with specific linkages to the Activity.
5. Co-investment is encouraged, either in-kind and/or cost share. The source of investment CANNOT come from other US Government funding sources. The cost share percentage will be determined during the development of the detailed business proposal and budget.
6. Prior experience in aquaculture and supply chain management and demonstrated success in capacity building, providing support to smallholder farmers and market linkages of final beneficiaries are preferred.
7. Private sector companies and organizations should demonstrate capacity in their programming, financial management and organizational capability, e.g. functioning board, competent staff.
8. Private sector companies and organizations must be willing to provide annual reports including (but not limited to) audited financial reports, human resource and financial manuals/policies, implementation plans, procurement policies, security plans, client lists, staff timesheets etc.
9. Private sector companies and organizations must be willing and able to enter into a sub-grant arrangement with WorldFish.

10. Private sector companies and organizations owned by or consisting of women, minority groups and people with disabilities are encouraged to apply and will be given priority.
11. Business ideas/concepts must comply with environmental mitigation measures required by USAID and the Government of Bangladesh (GoB).
12. Business ideas/concepts should be gender and youth responsive and nutrition sensitive.
13. Innovative business ideas/concepts targeting the RFA will get priority.

## **SELECTION AND AWARD PROCESS**

The Review and Evaluation Committee (REC) will have the primary responsibility for reviewing and selecting grant applications in accordance with the evaluation criteria set by the Activity team. Major steps in the review selection process are as follows:

1. The Finance and Grants teams will receive all applications along with business ideas/concepts, maintain a database and submit to the REC.
2. All applications received will be reviewed and scored for completeness and compatibility with the Activity objectives by the REC using the business idea/concept appraisal checklist presented in Table A. The REC comprises representatives from the Activity senior technical and managerial staff and is chaired by the Chief of Party (COP).
3. Applicants whose business idea/concept is accepted may undergo a field appraisal, using the checklist presented in Table B. During the field appraisal, the Activity Market Systems and Grants teams will assess each applicant's technical capacity, financial, HR and procurement management practices. Applicants who require targeted coaching and specific technical or managerial oversight will be given assistance by the Activity's Market Systems and Grants teams.
4. Results of field appraisals will be reviewed by the REC. All documents related to the selection, evaluation and decisions regarding sub-grantees will be compiled and preserved by the Grants team.

Applications will be reviewed on responsiveness to the ABPA, appropriateness of subject matter and innovation. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how their proposed business ideas/concepts will contribute to the goal and objectives of the Activity. The technical approach should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and within the given time frame with the proposed resources. The proposal should clearly show that the technical approach is innovative and can facilitate market-driven solutions.

Business ideas/concepts will be evaluated based on the following specific criteria:

### **A. Business idea/concept appraisal checklist**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Evaluation criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Organizational profile</b>	
1.1	Organizational background, management and governance	10
1.2	Organizational network, reputation, experience working in relevant areas	15
<b>2</b>	<b>Clarity of alignment with the goal and objectives of this Activity</b>	10
<b>3</b>	<b>Proposed ideas/concepts detail</b>	

3.1	Market challenges/opportunities	5
3.2	Business ideas/concept and innovations	15
3.3	Target groups, geographic areas	10
3.4	Key activities	10
3.5	Expected results	5
<b>4</b>	<b>Finance</b>	
4.1	Cost-effective budget	10
4.2	Co-investment (share from the organization)	10
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

#### B. Field appraisal (Grants, Finance and Admin)

No.	Evaluation criteria	Score
1	<b>Evidence of organizational soundness and sustainability</b> (systems and policies in place for planning and management)	
1.1	Human resources management (gender balance)	10
1.2	Finance, budget and accountin	20
1.3	Administrative and procurement	15
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>

#### C. Field appraisal (Program)

No.	Evaluation criteria	Score
1	Reputation and credibility among private sector, industry and community stakeholders in area of proposed geographic focus	10
2	Evidence of experience and technical capacity required to undertake proposed activities	25
3	Past performance on similar projects/activities	10
4	Environmental mitigation compliance for those activities that will have direct effect in the environment	10
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>55</b>

### ANNOUNCEMENT OF CALLS FOR PROPOSALS

Aquaculture Business Promotion Announcements (ABPAs) are prepared by Activity staff (Market Systems, Finance and Grants team and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning team) and approved by the COP. ABPAs will be published through printed and electronic media such as national newspapers, Bdjobs and other online job portals, and the WorldFish website.

### SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION INCLUDING BUSINESS IDEA/CONCEPT

Interested private sector companies and organizations can submit an application either individually or in a consortium. The business idea/concept must be submitted with sufficient information for the REC to understand and make decisions and move forward to co-develop detailed business proposals including budget. Applications should be submitted electronically

via email ([wfbana@cgjar.org](mailto:wfbana@cgjar.org)). In order for applications to be considered for review, applicants must follow the below instructions accurately and completely:

- Application forms including business ideas/concepts should be submitted as e-mail attachments in **PDF/Word format** indicating '**WorldFish ABPA**' in the subject line.
- The application must be submitted using the supplied templates in **English in size 11 Arial Font with 1.15 line spacing and must include page numbers**. Completed application forms should not exceed **five (5) pages**. *Additional documents such as legal documents should be attached.*
- Only the applications that pass the business ideas/concepts review will be invited to be developed into detailed business proposals.
- Applicants must use the WorldFish templates and answer all questions.
- Deadline for application submission is **31 December 2018 at 5:00 pm (Bangladesh time)**

***Issuance of this ABPA does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of WorldFish, nor does it commit WorldFish to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. WorldFish reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.***