

AGREEMENT
Leader with Associate
Cooperative Agreement
AID-OAA-A-10-00006

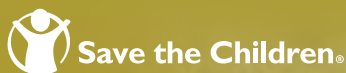
AGREEMENT AMOUNT:
\$20 million

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE
August 13, 2010-
August 12, 2015

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TOPS PROGRAM PARTNERS



TOPS is committed to
inclusiveness, participation and
broad stakeholder engagement.



Targeted Technical Assistance through TOPS Associate Awards

Improving the quality of food security and nutrition programming is fundamental to achieving improved food security outcomes. Technical and Operational Performance Support (TOPS) is a Leader with Associates (LWA) Cooperative Agreement intended to improve the quality of food aid and food security program implementation through capacity building, direct technical assistance, and the identification, adaptation, and sharing of best practices for widespread adoption.

The TOPS LWA mechanism provides direct access to the expertise of leading practitioners in food security and nutrition implementation and support, including TOPS program consortium partners Save the Children, Food for the Hungry, Mercy Corps, TANGO International, and CORE Group, as well as a host of collaborating and resource partners.

With a focus on building cross-organizational collaboration and information sharing, TOPS, through its Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) Network, is also able to solicit real-time input on the needs, perspectives and experience of hundreds of leading food security and nutrition practitioners.

TOPS' key areas of technical expertise include:

- Nutrition and food technology
- Agriculture
- Social and behavior change
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Gender
- Emergency programming
- Knowledge management and program learning
- Commodity management

WHY use an Associate Award?

As pre-competed mechanisms, TOPS Associate Awards are a fast, flexible, efficient means of accessing high-quality targeted technical support. Awards can be designed directly by USAID Missions, Bureaus, and Offices as well as other USG Agencies, in response to their specific needs and local operating environments.

WHO can issue/who can be on an Associate Award?

Associate Awards allow direct access for any U.S. Government Agency or funding source to any combination of TOPS program consortium, collaborating, or resource partners on a pre-competed basis.

TOPS Objective: Highest quality information, knowledge, and best practices for improved methodologies in food aid and food security program performance identified, established, shared and adapted.

WHAT can Associate Awards be used to accomplish?

Associate Awards can be used to meet a broad array of agency purposes, including:

- Building skills of USG implementing partners with context-specific training to roll-out new initiatives, methods or approaches, or close critical technical gaps.
- Strengthening the local operating environment by building skills of national partners and implementers in best practices in technical basics and best practices.
- Reviewing local context and implementation barriers and providing targeted technical assistance in response.
- Developing or strengthening local food security networks for better multi-donor, cross-organizational and cross-sectoral collaboration, coordination and information sharing.
- Field testing new or adapted methods, tools or approaches.

WHEN can Associate Awards be issued?

Associate Awards can be issued at any time during TOPS period of performance (ending August 12, 2015). They can extend for up to five years, including beyond the expiration of the TOPS' Leader Award (i.e., up to August 12, 2020 for those awarded in 2015).

HOW can Associate Awards be acquired?

The process for accessing Associate Awards is simple and fast:

1. The USG Agency, Office or Operating Unit requesting the assistance develops a Program Description, identifies funds, and assigns an Associate Award Activity Manager. TOPS program specialists can advise on the scope of work as needed and provide information on TOPS partner expertise.
2. The Associate Award Activity Manager submits the Program Description to the Leader Award AOR for review to ensure alignment with TOPS Strategic Objective.
3. Upon approval, the Associate Award Agreement Officer sends the Program Description to TOPS who submit an application, including a description of activities, a detailed budget and other documents as requested.
4. Following any necessary discussions or negotiations, the Associate Award Agreement Officer will issue an Associate Award and identify an AOR for the Associate Award. All Associate Award progress and financial reporting will follow from TOPS directly to the Associate Award AOR.

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