



**Country Specific Information: Madagascar**  
U.S. Agency for International Development  
Office of Food for Peace

**Fiscal Year 2014: FFP Request for Applications (RFA)**  
**Development Food Assistance Programs**

**Summary**

The U.S. Agency for International Development’s Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) anticipates that funds and commodities will be available for Title II food assistance programming in Madagascar in fiscal year (FY) 2014. The anticipated funding for this program is approximately \$75 million for five years in support of up to two awards, with \$11.5 million available in FY 2014, subject to the availability of funds and commodities. Applications can include variable annual funding requests, but the total amount funded will not exceed \$75 million over the five year period. To be eligible for assistance under this Request for Applications (RFA), the program must use Title II food assistance resources, specifically commodities, for direct distribution in Madagascar. Given this eligibility requirement, FFP will not consider applications for 100 percent monetization or those without direct distribution activities. The direct distribution activities should be accompanied by complementary activities that increase availability, access, and utilization/consumption of food and reduce vulnerability to food insecurity. If Community Development funds (CDF) or other resources become available for Madagascar, then monetization levels should decrease accordingly. This country specific information (CSI) supplements FFP’s FY 2014 RFA. Both documents must be used for developing an application for submission.

**Current Food Security Situation in Madagascar**

Since the 2009 coup d’état, food security has worsened in Madagascar. Governance and state investment failures, broad economic deterioration, and the degradation of the natural resource base are undermining the Malagasy people’s ability to prevent, mitigate, adapt to, and recover from the shocks such as cyclones, droughts, floods, price and production shocks that they frequently face. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimates that the prevalence of undernourishment has increased in Madagascar from 28 percent in 2004–2006 to 33 percent in 2010–2012 (FAO 2013, *Madagascar Review*). Chronic food insecurity is widespread. Important factors contributing to food insecurity in Madagascar include: annual cyclones, flooding and drought; limited access to agricultural inputs and credit; poor post-harvest techniques; soil degradation and poor natural resources management; lack of access to markets and market information for smallholder farmers; limited off-farm employment opportunities; and more recently a locust plague. Inadequate water and sanitation coverage and poor hygiene practices; high rates of childhood illness; lack of access to quality health care; and inappropriate infant and young child feeding practices are equally important drivers of food insecurity.

Available data highlight regional differences in the determinants of food insecurity, whereby behavioral determinants play a greater role in the highlands, while poor food access, low agro-ecological potential and frequent shocks play a relatively greater role in the south, southeast and southwest. Since the reduction in aid from the international donor community as a result of the 2009 political crisis, progress

toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has stagnated or reversed. Nationally, over half (53 percent) of children under five years of age are stunted, and in some region it reaches 72 percent. Chronic food insecurity is widespread, but is most acute in the southern areas of the country and specific pockets in the highlands. The national prevalence of underweight in children under five years of age is at least 30 percent; the prevalence of wasting is 6 percent, and the prevalence of severe stunting is at 22 percent (INSTAT and World Bank, 2012). A soon to be released FAO and World Food Program (WFP) food security assessment will provide additional details that should be taken into consideration when developing proposals.

### **Policy Environment**

The current Madagascar Title II food assistance program operates in a context of enormous political and economic uncertainty, which may continue into the next phase of the Title II development program. Chances of achieving the country's MDGs are now slim. Nonetheless until the political crisis ends and constitutional rule resumes, the United States Government (USG) is expected to continue the suspension all non-humanitarian assistance as well as direct assistance to the Government of Madagascar (GOM). The current exceptions to the suspension of non-humanitarian assistance are the USAID Mission's health portfolio and the Title II development programs.

Applicants are encouraged to consult the United States Department of State and USAID guidance regarding how USG-funded projects are to engage with GOM actors, particularly until the political crisis is resolved. The political situation prohibits partnerships with GOM institutions or any of their parastatals, and until free and fair democratic elections occur, USG sanctions prohibits the USG from providing support in any form to the GOM

### **Programming Priorities for Title II Resources in Madagascar**

#### **Overview**

The over-arching goal of the program will be to reduce chronic malnutrition and food insecurity with a sub-goal to increase resilience among chronically food insecure households in the most vulnerable regions of Madagascar. Applications must address both the root causes of chronic food insecurity as well as chronic malnutrition, with an integrated programming approach. More specifically, FFP seeks applications that will focus on: (1) reducing chronic malnutrition and improving the nutritional status of pregnant and lactating women and children under five years of age; (2) increasing household and microenterprise productivity and income through appropriate market-oriented approaches; and (3) building household resilience to withstand and mitigate the effects of shocks and natural resource degradation.

All of these interventions need to include gender considerations.

#### **Development Approach and Sustainability**

FFP seeks to implement effective models, build local capacity, and create an enabling environment adapted to the Madagascar context. Therefore, applicants must provide an overall implementation strategy that seeks to create wherever possible, self-financing and self-transferring models that will continue to spread under their own momentum both during and after the program. It is the expectation that these models will be adopted and adapted by a significant proportion of the population. Many examples of this type of intervention exist, but one particularly successful example of this type of model is the Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) system that is spreading in Niger. A paper describing this system can be found here:

<http://www.ifpri.org/publication/agroenvironmental-transformation-sahel>

Applicants should place strategic importance on sustainability, replicability and transferability during all levels of program design. When working through and with existing structures, institutions and organizations, applicants must develop a capacity building plan for these entities. Applicants should identify linkages with key local stakeholders, and community-based organizations. Community participatory approaches focus on ensuring community ownership and responsibility. Applicants should propose a set of interventions that are informed by a rigorous analysis of potential impact of proposed livelihood and agricultural (including livestock) interventions using market research, household economy analysis, and economic modeling, such as investment vs. outcome, crop budgeting, or projected household cash flow statements. Interventions must be evidence based and discuss implementation in the Madagascar context taking into consideration the cultural and religious practices of the target population.

To sustainably support the increased production of any livestock and/or agriculture-related or off-farm products, applicants are strongly encouraged to incorporate into the design mainstream market development initiatives, and include the early creation of market linkages with key private sector actors. Proposed interventions must be guided by a market analysis. Applicants must have a defined method to rationalize crop selection, livestock selection, and other income-generating interventions based on financial analysis at the community and household levels. Market driven interventions must also be balanced with the need to promote appropriate sustainable and resilient forms of agriculture that will not further undermine the natural resource base or increase vulnerabilities to natural disasters and market fluctuations. While improved quantity and quality of production is important, considerable attention must be directed to the actual impact on income, maternal and child nutritional status, and food security at the household level.

### **Geographic Priorities**

Six predominantly rural regions should be considered for targeting for the next round of Title II development programming in Madagascar: Atsimo Andrefana in the southwest; Atsinanana and Vatovavy Fitovinany in the east; and Haute Matsiatra, Amoron'i Mania, and Ihorombe in the central highlands. Applications should clearly explain the rationale for selecting proposed program target areas. An upcoming FAO/WFP food security assessment should provide greater clarity in regard to which districts and communes are the most food insecure as may future FEWSNET reports.

Within these regions, communes may be selected based on food security and nutritional data, as well as other programmatic factors. It should be emphasized that there is value in working in contiguous areas so that the program is better able to link infrastructure projects (e.g., linking market feeder roads or roads throughout a health clinic or school catchment area) and take advantage of economies of scale. In the event that the application targets areas in which the SALOHI program previously operated, the applicant should make clear how the proposed activities will build on and scale-up from where SALOHI left off, with the aim of graduating communities by program's end.

Applicants should recognize the potential for strategic partnerships and complementarity in all the suggested districts, while being cautious about duplication of effort with other programs. Applicants may propose interventions in villages where FFP activities are currently operational in order to build on work done to date. However, FFP would like to see a strong justification for continued work in the same areas, along with a phase out plan linked to sustainability. The applicant must substantiate proposed

target areas based on comparative need, activity sequencing, and potential return on investment to the beneficiary household.

### **Beneficiaries**

Targeting of communities should be based on prevalence of stunting and historical need for food assistance. FFP advises that the program targets populations groups that are at greatest risk of food insecurity, based upon an understanding of the food security shocks they face, the sources of vulnerability, and the capacity to mitigate the effects of shocks. Applicants must develop a transparent selection process to target food insecure households which have the commitment and the physical means to engage in targeted interventions.

To leverage USG resources and for added value to the program, FFP expects the applicants to focus on an approach that would target the same communities and households for both maternal and child health and nutrition and market driven livelihood and value chain interventions with the expectation of building linkages and synergies with other USAID programs such as the new Primary Health Care portfolio. Title II applicants will need to identify opportunities to collaborate with the USAID Health activities in the same areas of interventions.

### **Programmatic Priorities**

To achieve sustainable reductions in food insecurity and chronic malnutrition in Madagascar and increase resilience among chronically food insecure households, the applicants should address the underlying factors of food insecurity and undernutrition. The applicants should accordingly design an integrated set of activities that aims to increase and sustain household production and income, while bolstering resilience and improving health and nutrition. Applicants may identify, prioritize, and design project activities, with a corresponding results framework that complements the Mission's results framework for health and food security that includes FFP assistance (See Attachment) that they believe will most effectively reduce chronic food insecurity and malnutrition in a specific setting. The applicants should ensure that the interventions are context specific to households, communities and to the particular region. By promoting diversity in agricultural productivity and income generation, rural households will experience a shorter lean season, reduced exposure to food security shocks and decreased reliance on rain fed agriculture. For maximum impact, cross cutting issues such as integrated programming, geographic and vulnerable group targeting, national nutrition policy strengthening, capacity building, behavior change, gender equality, sustainability and exit strategies, market development, local governance, land access, and resilience should be incorporated and fully integrated into the program across all components.

The Title II food assistance program in Madagascar should encompass activities that are designed to synergistically achieve priorities and could include, but are not limited to:

A) Improving maternal and child health and nutrition with emphasis on the following (In addition, outcomes see page28 of the RFA for a minimum package of activities):

- Address Essential Nutrition Actions (ENAs) and Essential Hygiene Actions (EHAs) that need to be reinforced at local levels;
- Support efforts aimed at preventing growth faltering and chronic malnutrition with focus on the critical 1,000 day window of opportunity from conception through child's second birthday;
- Strengthening behavior change communication to address the specific local determinants of malnutrition;

- Creating community involvement and commitments to encourage and enable pregnant women and lactating mothers to seek preventive care and treatment for illness and improving behaviors pertaining to feeding practices and care of children under two;
- Developing or strengthening links with existing family planning services through coordination with other donors or consideration of support from the USAID Flex Funds if available; and
- Empowering women;

B) Agriculture and natural resource management:

- Diversifying and improving crop production by promoting appropriate technologies and best practices with a focus on gender equality and appropriate inclusion of men and women in proposed activities;
- Improving opportunities for income generation and adding value through livestock, fisheries, agroforestry, bee keeping, dairy, poultry and egg production, improved seed production and multiplication; and drying, processing and storage of harvested crops;
- Strengthening existing community structures and governance in part by developing integrated watershed approaches for improved natural resource management and increased soil and water conservation to improve water infiltration and storage, and prevent soil erosion;
- Minimizing soil disturbance through direct seeding, use of cover crops and diversification of crop species;
- Promoting economically valuable agroforestry, reforestation, and conservation of natural vegetation; and
- Demonstrating and promoting Climate Smart agricultural technologies such as soil and water conserving practices appropriate to the ecosystem (e.g. mulching, ridging, new seed varieties, enhanced soil fertility etc.), and promoting diversified cropping systems;

C) Increasing market access, information and orientation:

- Developing partnerships with private vendors for improved seeds and pesticides and extension information;
- Strengthening partnerships with universities, researchers and technical service providers;
- Establishing and strengthening economic opportunities for communities, including on and off-farm income-generating activities and access to markets with a specific inclusion of women;
- Supporting village-based, informal savings groups to assist with market access and small scale initiatives with a specific focus on women to assist group members to make strategic investments and diversify livelihood, including non-agricultural, opportunities as well as develop basic literacy, numeracy and business skills;
- Strengthening, training and formalizing producer groups in key aspects of marketing; and
- Conducting market analysis of feasible, sustainable and potentially profitable value chains and linking of producers with value chains and non-traditional marketing channels;

D) Enhancing resilience and risk management:

- Supporting activities that promote Disaster Risk Reduction, such as community emergency response planning that include gender considerations;
- Promoting community-based sustainable resource management and land use planning
- Promoting community -led seed security schemes;
- Assisting and supporting communities and districts in establishing and managing early warning systems;
- Using Food for Assets or Cash for Assets interventions to support community asset creation. This could include the use of mobile money systems for cash transfers. If cash for assets is proposed applicants have to demonstrate that participants have suitable access to markets.;

- Developing a crisis modifier mechanism that facilitates responses to shocks such as providing temporary employment through a Food for Assets or Cash for Assets program or if appropriate, a time limited non conditional transfer;
- Improving and rehabilitating small irrigation schemes while establishing mechanisms to sustainably pay for the recurring operational costs of these systems;
- Promoting water point development for livestock and fisheries;
- Improving roads and trails with a special focus on market feeder roads;
- Constructing crop and seed storage facilities;
- Building soil and water conservation structures;

Applicants should explain how they will carry out the proposed interventions.

### **Program Linkages**

Applicants should articulate how proposed activities complement and link with other USG investments including the USAID Mission's current health care portfolio and other donor activities and basic services to create a package of interventions that will focus on food security, health and nutrition, and malaria prevention, education, and economic opportunities.

Applicants should also articulate how the proposed activities complement the aims, activities and investments of other development actors, including the WFP, other United Nations agencies and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), civil society, the private sector and the Malagasy communities. Proposals should describe the means through which the development program will contribute to and encourage an enabling environment for promoting gender equity, enhanced governance, household resiliency and scaling up of interventions.

### **Strategic Partnerships**

The Madagascar Title II program places high priority on strategic partnerships. Partnerships in development can enhance sustainability, mobilize complementary areas of expertise and capacity to an activity, and enhance the breadth and reach of programs. Applicants may engage a range of partners in different roles in their programs, based on their own assessments of capabilities required to maximize program impact and sustainability.

At this time, USG sanctions prohibit the USG from providing support in any form, i.e. technical, financial, etc., to the Government of Madagascar or any of its' parastatals. Applicants should seek to link with on-going development activities funded by the United Nations and other donors whenever possible.

Should USAID be able to fully re-engage with the GOM, FFP will expect partners to develop plans that work with and build the capacity of local government actors in order to improve the sustainability of activities.

### **Gender**

Please refer to the RFA for information on gender.