

## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

Name of Project	Bangladesh Feed the Future Rice and Diversified crops (RDC) Activity
Request for Applications (RFA) No.	5-2018
Date of Issue	September 01, 2018
Closing Date for Receipt of Applications <i>(Late applications will not be considered.)</i>	September 30, 2018
Questions on this solicitation should be submitted to e-mail address provided no later than the date indicated.	E-mail: info@acdivocardc.org  No later than: September 15, 2018
<i>(Optional)</i> The project will hold a briefing for interested parties on the date and location indicated. Those interested should notify the e-mail above of their planned attendance.	Date: N/A  Location: N/A  Or, [X] Briefing will not be held.

### I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

ACDI/VOCA is implementing the project entitled, Bangladesh Feed the Future Rice and Diversified crops (RDC) Activity with funding from US-AID to improve food security through facilitating systemic changes that increase rural incomes. It is a five years project from July 13, 2016 to July 12, 2021. The USD 24.5 million initiative targets 500,000 farmers from the FtF zone in southwestern Bangladesh. RDC catalyze market system changes that promote a diversified farm management approach focused on intensified production of rice and production of higher-value, nutrient-rich crops, improve food security and nutrition in the Khulna, Barisal, and southern Dhaka divisions of Bangladesh (FtF Zone). Diversified crops that RDC will initially target include: maize, oilseeds (mustard, sunflower, ground nuts and sesame) and pulses (lentils and mung bean)

The objectives of the project are:

- Improve Food Security through Systemic Changes that increase incomes
- Increase the intensification of rice and productivity of diversified crops
- Increase competitiveness and inclusiveness of rice based crop market systems

#### Background Information for the RFA:

The RDC Activity is planning to work in the following agricultural sectors (select rotational crops) which fall under profitable, rice based cropping pattern in the FtF zone:

- Rice
- Maize
- Pulses (including lentil and mungbean)
- Oilseed (including mustard, sunflower, sesame and groundnut)

In addition, RDC will focus on the following cross cutting sectors:

- Fertilizer
- Crop Protection
- Information Communication Technology (ICT)
- Financial services
- Mechanization

The target districts under this FtF zone are: **Khulna** division (Jessore, Jhenaidah, Magura, Narail, Bagerhat, Khulna, Satkhira, Chuadanga, Meherpur), **Barisal** division (Barisal, Bhola, Jhalokathi, Pirojpur, Barguna, Patuakhali) and **Dhaka** division (Faridpur, Gopalganj, Madaripur, Rajbari, Shariatpur).

#### **What RDC is Looking for:**

Under the Request for Application (RFA) process, RDC is inviting companies/ firms who are interested to design new and innovative business models, targeting farmers of the FtF zone, with an objective to achieve improved commercial relationships among different market actors (e.g. companies, traders, agents, farmers).

In pursuit and support of these objectives, the project hopes to select eligible organizations to receive grants to carry out activities in the following:

#### **Mustard and Lentil Disease Control:**

Mustard and Lentil, nutritionally important foods in Bangladeshi diets, are high value, short season (85 to 100 day crops) rabi season crops that for relatively low levels of investment provide farmers with valuable income. Both crops have to compete with lower cost imported lentils and mustard (rapeseed) which reduces prices for farmers and threatens to reduce the economic viability of growing these crops. Competitiveness of both crops, though, could be improved by increasing crop yield by introducing improved cultural practices such as mechanized line sowing and weed control and pest and disease control. Competitiveness can also be improved by producing types favored more readily than imported types. Thus, small grained lentil and pungent mustard varieties command a 10 to 20% price premium over imported types. These “local” varieties are not branded, packaged products cannot be traced back to the farmer and not registered under any variety or provenance standards. RDC is inviting companies to apply for funding for the introduction of innovative ways of supplying farmers with certified seeds, information on technology such as line sowing and pest and disease control and at the same time marketing these products from crops that are of named varieties, from a registered lentil or mustard growing region and can be traced back to the producer.

Applicants will be asked to present details of the:

1. Technology and varieties to be promoted
2. Process for providing farmers with crop production information.
3. The method intended to use for branding products for sale through retailers and how these products will be traceable back to the producer.

**Period of performance should not be more than one year.**

## **II. AWARD INFORMATION**

Any amount that may be indicated below are projections. Applicants should not use them as targets or assume them to be guaranteed amounts.

Projected number of grants to be awarded	5
Projected not-to-exceed amount of an individual grant	US \$25,000 or equivalent BDT
Currency in which grant will be issued and paid	Bangladeshi Taka
Anticipated period of performance of an individual grant ( <i>duration in months</i> )	12 months/not more than 1 year
Anticipated start date of performance ( <i>Note: Grants will not be expected to begin on the same date. This date is only a guide to when the initial batch of grants will be expected to commence.</i> )	October 15, 2018
Type of grant that <u>may be</u> issued: ( <i>Note: The final choice of grant instrument will be determined after all elements of the grant application have been evaluated, including any risk that may be identified by ACDI/VOCA.</i> )	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>In-kind Grant</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only goods and services (not cash) will be transferred to the grantee.</li> </ul>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Fixed Amount Subaward</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grantee will receive grant funds in pre-determined fixed amount (non-adjustable) increments only after successful completion of quantifiable or otherwise verifiable milestones.</li> </ul>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Cost Reimbursable Grant</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grantee will be reimbursed for allowable and allocable costs incurred up to the amount obligated (i.e., available funds) to the grant.</li> </ul>	

### III. ELIGIBILITY

Applications from potential new partners are encouraged. All applicants must be able to demonstrate that they meet the following mandatory eligibility requirements.

1. Properly document its legal status in its country of operation or place of performance of the grant, if awarded. It must be able to provide proof of its registration in the relevant jurisdiction and other appropriate documents that it is formally constituted, recognized by and in good standing within such jurisdiction, and compliant with all applicable civil and fiscal regulations.
2. Not identified in the System for Award Management (SAM) as ineligible to receive U.S. government funds.
3. Not appear on the Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) and Blocked Persons List maintained by the U.S. Treasury for the Office of Foreign Assets Control, or "OFAC List".
4. Not listed in the United Nations Security designation list.
5. Agree to be subject to a pre-award assessment to examine its possession or ability to obtain the necessary management competence to plan and carry out the activities to be funded and the Applicant will practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for the funds and other assets to be provided under the grant.

Can and willing to sign and submit the following required certifications if the grant will be funded by USAID:

- *Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs*

- *Certification Regarding Lobbying*
- *Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing*
- *Key Individual Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking*
- *Participant Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking*
- *Certification of Recipient*

**Additional eligibility requirements** (applicable if checked):

- [ X ] Demonstrate successful past performance of activities similar to those proposed in the application.
- [ ] Cost share. Applicant must have the ability to contribute a minimum of *(enter percentage)* of the total activity budget as cost share, in cash or in kind.
- [ X ] *Add any other project-specific eligibility requirements as may be determined.*

Have been a legally registered company for at least the past two (2) years

Make an investment of at least 50% of the total program budget\*\*

Is not involved in an activity prohibited by USAID and is not in default with any development project.

Propose business models/concepts which satisfy and support one or more of the following will be given preference – (i) new and innovative business models, (ii) expansion of successful business models into new and underserved geographic markets and (iii) expansion of the business models targeting underserved customers in the rural areas, such as youth and women

**Note:** Only *"for profit"* like food processors, exporters, traders and other firms who work for source rice, maize, pulses or oil seeds from producers are eligible to apply who have legal registration. Program is not eligible for Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), Consulting Firms, or Associations.

\*\* The Applicant need to meet under RDC market actor agreement the 1:1 leverage requirement in cash funds or In-Kind resource which can be measurable. The grantee is encouraged to provide more than the minimum leverage requirement depending on the level of facilitation intensity required.

## **IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **A. Format**

1. All costs associated with responding to this solicitation shall be the sole responsibility of each applicant.
2. ACDI/VOCA reserves the right not to make any award from this solicitation without any further discussion or negotiations.
3. Applicants must use the template provided in Annex A for the technical approach and Annex B for corresponding budget.
4. Applications must be submitted in English.
5. The total number of pages shall not exceed **3** for the technical approach including attachments supporting the technical section.

6. The proposed grant budget and attachments supporting the budget are excluded from the page limitation.
7. The application must be signed by an officer of the Applicant organization who is duly authorized to represent the organization in further discussions and/or negotiations on the application.
8. *Mark as appropriate:*

Applications must be submitted in *(enter number)* hard copies. They must be received by the closing date indicated on the cover of this solicitation. Place of delivery is at the address below. Envelopes must be clearly labeled, "**Application in response to RFA No. "**

Point of delivery: *(enter address)*

Electronic submissions will be accepted by the same closing date. If submitting electronically -

The technical section and any attachments should be submitted using Microsoft Office Word 2013, or compatible version. The budget section should be submitted using Microsoft Office Excel 2013, or compatible version.

Electronic submissions should be submitted to this e-mail address: [info@acdivocardc.org](mailto:info@acdivocardc.org) clearly stating the "**Application in response to RFA # 5-2018- Mustard and Lentil-Disease control**" in the subject line.

**ACDI/VOCA will not be responsible for any failure of transmission by an Applicant.**

#### **B. Additional Instructions for Budget Section**

1. Applicants should propose only those costs that are necessary and reasonable to perform the activities described in the application.
2. Items of cost will be reviewed under the standards of the cost principles in the U.S. government regulation, 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.
3. Applicants should submit a budget narrative that explains and justifies the need for the costs proposed in the budget. The narrative should help the reviewer understand *why an item of cost is necessary and how it will be used for the activity for which it will be incurred.*

#### **V. APPLICATION EVALUATION**

##### **VA1 EVALUATION CRITERIA**

- Does the organization meet the eligibility requirements?
- Does the proposed activity fit within the Rice and Diversified Crops (RDC) Activity objectives described in the RFA?
- Is the request for funding commensurate with the potential impact?
- Is the product or service sustainable?

More specific criteria will be used for evaluating full applications for those whose proposals have been selected:

Full applications will be evaluated against the evaluation criteria in the table below.

Specific Criteria	Maximum Score
Technical Merits	60
Organizational capacity and Past performance	25
Cost Effectiveness and Cost Realism	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

These evaluation criteria elements are described more fully below.

A. *Technical Merits*: The quality and feasibility of the application in terms of the viability of the proposed technical approach, (i.e., the proposed technical approach can reasonably be expected to produce the intended outcomes), appropriateness of the proposed methodology, innovativeness, and the work plan for achieving project Evaluation of approaches may include either approaches proven to be effective or new untried approaches with promise. Proposed mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation with objectively measurable indicators will also be appraised. **60 points**

B. *Organizational Capacity*: Evidence of the capability to undertake and accomplish the proposed activities and positively strengthen the environment for trade and investment. The application should demonstrate the organization’s effectiveness in terms of internal structure, technical capacity, and key personnel, in meeting economic development goals. In addition, the organization must demonstrate adequate financial management capability. The evaluation will be based principally on the background, qualifications, reputation, appropriateness and skills of its key personnel; and the “track record,” reputation, and achievements (including development of self-sufficient, sustainable activities) of the organization.

*Past Performance*: Previous or ongoing experience implementing similar activities. This examines an Applicant’s references and experience, which is a critical factor in assessing the capacity of the organization to implement the activity. **25 points**

C. *Cost effectiveness and Cost Realism*: The degree to which budgeting is clear and reasonable and reflects best use of organizational and grant resources. Applicant contribution reflects commitment to the project. Any applicant to be supported under this RFA is expected to make a 50% of investment to total program budget proposed towards the implementation of the activity. **15 points**

Additionally, *Rice and Diversified crops (RDC) Activity* will ensure environmental soundness and compliance in design and implementation as required by 22 CFR 216.

## **SECTION VI. AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

All grants will be negotiated, denominated and funded in *Bangladeshi Taka*.

All costs funded by the grant must be allowable, allocable and reasonable. Grant applications must be supported by a detailed and realistic budget as described in Section IV.

Issuance of this RFA and assistance with application development do not constitute an award or commitment on the part of Rice and Diversified crops (RDC) Activity, nor does it commit Rice and Diversified crops (RDC) Activity to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Further, Rice and Diversified crops (RDC) Activity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received. Applicants will be informed in writing of the decision made regarding their application.

**LIST ANNEXES:- Annex A – Grant Application Form and Budget template**

## Grant Application Form

Title of the Proposed business model/ concept: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the company/ firm		
Company/firm address		
Contact Person (on behalf of the company/ firm)	Name	
	Designation	
	Contact number	
	Email:	
Proposed Duration of the project (should be within 6 – 12 months)		
Proposed total budget (in BDT)		

### 1. Organizational Profile [maximum ½ page]

*[Please write a brief introduction of the organization. The introduction must include information on its establishment, offices (headquarter and field offices), no. of permanent employees and core business of the organization such as crops which are procured, distribution models, etc.]*

### 2. Proposed Business Model [maximum 2.5 page]

#### 2.1. Market Opportunities

*[Explain the market scopes for the proposed crops in terms of procurement opportunities, growing consumer demand, prospects for selling at higher value market, etc.]*

#### 2.2. Challenges

*[Explain the challenges for the company / firm (the applicant) in terms of sourcing/ procuring the proposed crops]*

#### 2.3. Proposed Business Model

*[Describe the proposed business model/ concept that will help the company/ firm to overcome the challenges mentioned in Section 2.2]*

#### 2.4. Relationships:

*[Describe how the proposed business model will lead to improved relationships among different market players (e.g. farmers, traders, the company)]*

## 2.5. Target Group and Geographic Coverage

- How many farmers can potentially be reached by the proposed business model? Who are the other actors (e.g. traders, arottdars, etc.) who might benefit from the model?
- How many female farmers or other female market actors will be reached (if any)?
- Mention the target geographic areas (district and upazilla)

## 3. Key Activities and Proposed Timeline [maximum 1 page]

- Mention the major activities which need to be undertaken to implement the proposed business model
- Propose a timeline to carry out the major activities

## 4. Future Plans [maximum ½ page]

Beyond the project period and without the project fund, what are the plans

- to continue the proposed business model in the future, and
- to expand the proposed business model in other geographical regions or other product lines of the company/firm

## 5. Fund Requirement and Rationale [maximum ½ page]

- What is the proposed total Budget?
- What amount of the total budget (in BDT or percentage) is expected from RDC?
- Why does the applicant need external funding (Please explain how the fund will help the company to implement the business model)?

## 6. Experience with Other Development Projects or Government Projects

- Past experience of working with other development partner(s) in the last **two years** (if any)

Sl.	Name of the Project	Name of the Development Organization (i.e. donors, donor funded projects, development organizations or others)	Current status (on-going or closed)	Project Budget	% budget contribution of the company
1					
2					



## Budget Template

**Instructions:** Each company/ applicant will prepare a budget using the format below. If possible (though not mandatory) the applicant should prepare and send this budget as an additional file in Microsoft Excel format. Applicant must contribute 50% of the program budget. If Operations and Administrative budget\* is included in the total budget, the applicant must contribute 50% of the total budget.

*\*Operations and Administrative budget includes staff salary, rent and administrative expenses*

No.	Activity/ Cost head	Unit	Quantity	Cost per unit (in BDT)	Total cost (in BDT)	Company Contribution (in BDT)	RDC Contribution (in BDT)
1							
2							
3							
4							
<b>Total Budget</b>							
<b>Contribution to the budget (in %)</b>							

**Note:** If any applicant wants to add additional information relevant to the budget or any line item of the budget, please add columns to the right of the above template.

- Units are description of the activity, for example- Retailers' Trainings, Demonstration Plots, Meetings, Participants
- Quantity = Numerical count of the Unit