

**Responses to the received questions on Call For Concept Notes on Investing in the Rain-Fed Agriculture in Sudan**

1 – 20 September 2021

Question	Answer
I am interested in Call For Concept Notes on Investing in the Rain-Fed Agriculture in Sudan	Please carefully read the eligibility criteria, competencies, and program outlines and submit a concept note accordingly no later than September 30, 2021, via email at <a href="mailto:kha@minbuza.nl">kha@minbuza.nl</a> .
In the case of participating in a consortium, please confirm if only the consortium lead applicant (prime) should be the one that provides the total co-funding? And in what form could it be (in kind or cash)? Could other partners in the consortium (private sector) fully cover this contribution?	The co-funding is not compulsory to be in cash; it is mainly how the lead applicant and the consortium members can contribute from their end. This contribution may include the office equipment and expertise they make available for the successful program delivery.
Is there a minimum accepted for the total co-funding?	There are no minimum contributions expected from the candidates, but rather than the candidates should show their buy-in contributions in their financial proposal.
Can a contribution be shared among consortium members or it is a must that the lead applicant should cover the full amount of co-funding?	The contributions can be shared among different consortium members or based on whatsoever agreed-upon internal arrangements among partners organizations.
The announcement of this call refers to the acceptance of the “contribution agreement” for the applicants outside the EU. As per this, can you share this info with us ( the model of the agreement if possible) so that we can confirm if we are able to comply with and accept these obligations/requirements?	The template of the contribution agreement is publicly available ( <a href="#">Please see the attached</a> ).
Are the non-EU NGOs exempted from the co-funding?	NO
If project has ended, can a letter of acknowledgement of delivery or closure letter from the contracting authority/donor organization be accepted in place of the signed summary sheet?	Letter of accomplishment from the contracting authorities would fit the purpose. A one-page summary for each intervention remains valid.
If an applicant is unable to get any of the summary sheets signed, can contracting authorities point of contact be provide in place of it?	NO.
If the requirement cannot be met, that is any of the summary sheet could not be signed, will the application be rejected or will it affect the applicant chances?	The failure to meet the requirements will affect the applicant's chances.

<p>Do you see the programme as one large programme that can be implemented by one applicant or consortium that has elements of a challenge fund that would be considered as direct costs, and if so what would the percentage be?</p>	<p>The Ministry/Embassy envisages this activity as one integrated program made up of different components, including the challenge fund.</p>
<p>What proportion of the total budget is anticipated to be allocated to the challenge fund component of the programme?</p>	<p>The Ministry/Embassy leaves the estimation of the challenge fund for large agri-business and SMEs prizes to the applicant. Yet, the embassy maintains the right to discuss with candidates who passed the concept notes threshold on the challenge fund percentage out of the total budget.</p>
<p>Can we submit information about all our consortium partners, rather than just the lead applicant?</p>	<p>All the consortium members should present their relevant capacity and track records based on the required competencies and clarifying how roles will be divided.</p>
<p>A challenge fund has been mentioned in Section VI and VII, however not in the outline of the program or approach. Is a challenge fund (or other financial instrument) required? If not, is a challenge fund (or other financial instrument) desirable? How does this impact the CV of the suggested Programme Manager as outlined in Section VI, where they are referred to as program manager-cum-fund manager?</p>	<p>The challenge fund or any similar co-sharing funding is one of the requirements. Please refer to section V (Outline for the program); outcome 2 Agri-businesses have taken a more inclusive approach in terms of partnerships. Under this outcome, the call for concept notes highlighted in KPIs (Number of companies engaged in inclusive agribusiness, Number of companies with a supported plan to invest, trade, or provide services (Dutch/ non-Dutch; male/ female; youth). Both indicators are mainly related to how the applicant will support viable and inclusive plans for the agribusinesses and Agro-SMEs. A program manager-cum-fund manager with experience in managing a challenge fund or similar instrument is a plus.</p>
<p>Included in the eligibility requirements is past experience managing a Challenge fund or similar financing mechanism. Will managing (non-competitive) small business grant programs or sub-contracts to national implementing partners be considered relevant experience for this requirement?</p>	<p>The small business grants or sub-contracts to national implementing partners are not considered as relevant experience of challenge fund.</p>
<p>If a challenge fund is understood to be a disbursement of funds to third parties within the scope of the project, how does this align with the response in the FAQ that sub-granting is not allowed?</p>	<p>The disbursement of the challenge fund does not fall under the concept of sub-granting.</p>
<p>Can we add a half a year inception phase, so that we have a robust foundation for the program? (4.5 years of program with the same budget) Or do we have to include this half a year inception phase within the 4 year period</p>	<p>The project duration is four years. The applicant can propose the inception phase if it's necessary and justifiable within the project lifespan.</p>
<p>Can you provide any guidance on the preferred format for the full detailed budget? Where can more information on eligible and ineligible costs be found and exactly what are considered direct and indirect costs?</p>	<p>The Ministry/embassy does not have a fixed financial proposal format. A four-year indicative budget showing the main categories is required at this level. The Ministry/embassy, and in due course process, will engage the Financial Support Office (FSO) to review the financial</p>

	proposals of those who successfully passed the concept notes threshold. Guidance on the minimum financial requirements will then be communicated.
Part of the requirements includes submission of a CV for a Programme Manager. Is there an indication of whether this is a national or international position?	Given the scale and the size of the fund, the expectation is to attract highly qualified national and international teams and subject matter experts to run the program.
Given the call's focus on rain-fed agriculture, to what degree can the activities focus on larger scale water and irrigation systems from sources other than rain water?	The program looks for ideas to address the lack of a food-water-climate nexus approach that prevents farmers from efficiently using runoff and groundwater in supplementary irrigation and continually cultivating their land for more than one season. The low-cost water harvest techniques are on the radar. Please see the last paragraph of the problem analysis (section IV).
Section I of the Call for Concept Notes mentions 6 objectives of the Multiannual Country Strategy, which is not publicly available. Is the aim of the program to cover all 6 objectives or will there also be other programs/ projects that will also contribute to these objectives?	The program should contribute where possible to the embassy MACS objectives on the one hand while seeking synergies and complementarities with other interventions on the other hand (please see the annexed Dutch Development corporation in Sudan).
Can applicants include some formative research in year 1 of the project?	The program plans to employ new and innovative solutions in rain-fed areas. Needs-driven and tailor-made technical assistance and research elements in this essence are highly recommendable.
The call outlines in the requirements that a lead partner has "adequate experience and capacities to fulfil both the technical assistance responsibilities (full time and short term assignments) as well as the role of manager of the Challenge Fund". Please can you provide more details as to exactly what is meant by full time and short term technical assistance assignments?	The adequate experience and capacities are mainly related to the quality of the team that the applicants will assign to implement this pregame in full-time and part-time positions.
Would you accept limited references for consortium of young organization as legitime to you to proof the competencies in our team, or do all competencies have to come from the lead partner itself?	The competencies of the lead partner are a requirement, given the program scale and size of funding. However, and depending on how these organizations will add value for the program deliverables, the opportunity is still there for a consortium with highly competent lead partners with proven track records to apply.
In regards to nutrition security, would it be recommendable to add specific outputs to this?	It depends on how the applicant will phrase in the concept note. The program expects to look at market-based strategies to scale up access to nutritious foods rather than focus on community-based approaches. The focus herewith is on better food availability and barriers in the food environment (external and individual) that prevent BoP households from having sustainable access to a healthy and nutritious diet( please see paragraph 3 in problem analysis).
Must the consortium address all value chains listed in the call for concept notes, or may the Concept Note focus on the value chains with	Not necessarily. However, this depends on whether the proposed value chains are related to reality and are among the top priorities of different stakeholders, including

which they have the most familiarity and thus impact?	smallholders farmers, the private sector, and the government.
If the consortium has a strong history with value chains not included in the Call for Concept Notes, may those be included?	The same as above.
Is implementation throughout each geographical region required, or may the submitting consortium articulate the areas of each region in the Concept Note which they have the greatest knowledge and work only in those?	The program proposes to focus on East and Central and South Darfur and South Kordofan states based on agronomic conditions and interests of agro-businesses. In the target locations, the program should prioritize areas where the potential for developing sustainable and resilient crops and livestock value chains is high.
The Call for Concept Notes and the FAQs state that third party awards are not allowed. Past experience on similar size and duration projects have required up to 40 partners, and including all of those in a Concept Note written in 30 days is a significant request. Will additional partners be allowed to be added during the proposal stage or after award?	The Ministry/Embassy envisages the inclusion of the third party not just as a route for executing low-value tasks. The key driver for third-party engagement must be driven by acquiring specialist skills and knowledge that can make a significant difference to the value of applicants' end deliverables. The involvement of sub-contracted organizations must be seen from the value addition angle and not just to fulfill applicant contractual obligations.
Will all questions submitted and Embassy of the Netherlands responses be made available to all?	The Embassy of the Netherlands will make all questions asked available to all by September 23, 2021. Please revisit the FAQ at the <a href="https://netherlandsandyou.nl">FAQ For Call For Concept Notes on Investing in The Rain-Fed Agriculture in Sudan   netherlandsandyou.nl</a>
If the submitting consortium is made of organizations linked by a parent organization, may past projects also come from partners with the same parent but not the lead?	This is possible as long as these organizations are involved in the implementation of the projects.
Are the articulated outcomes in the Call final? May the proposing consortium propose differences?	The call is highlighted in section V to achieve the overall goal, a theory of change needs to be developed that indicates how the change will be realized, the underlying assumptions need to be verified, and if necessary, adjust the outcome and output indicators accordingly.
Are the maximum of six summaries (1 page each) of recent contracts only to be provided by the lead organization of the consortium or can other consortium members experience also be included in the 6 summaries?	The requirement of project summaries sheets of six contracts also applies to the co-applicant in the case of the consortium. Please refer to footnote #18; Tip: The criterion above can also apply to co-applicants.
Please explain if International Organizations are excluded from the requirement to meet the Dutch government's Standards for Remuneration Act for this opportunity.	The Dutch Standards for Remuneration Act does not apply to international organizations. The Ministry, however, reserves the right to assess whether or not the proposed salaries or staff costs are reasonable in the context of the project.