

Questions and Answers

Last update: May 17, 2022

ARE – Request for Application (RFA012): Supporting Rural Lebanese Agriculture, Livelihoods, and Food Security

1. *Can we work as a consortium under this project to implement the suggested activities?*

Answer: Consortia are allowed to apply under this RFA. Noting that if the consortium is accepted at the evaluation stage, an MOU will be expected to be signed between the organizations/ companies within the consortium reflecting roles and responsibilities of each.

2. *RFA 12 states skilled and semi-skilled workers and supervisors; is ARE considering the same qualifications for skilled workers and supervisors? or is there a difference between them?*

Answer: A supervisor is considered a skilled worker, but skilled workers and supervisors will have different roles within the implementation of the activities. Noting that supervisors are expected to provide the reporting to the implementing partner.

3. *When mentioning short-term activities, is there under the implementation plan a minimum number of days that is required?*

Answer: In total at least 37,500 employment days should be covered over a period of 15 months, that is the grant timeline. The minimum number of days is for overall employment and not per worker.

4. *In Illustrative Labor Schedule for Selected Agricultural Value Chains/ page 5 of the RFA. Can we modify the total number of days?*

Answer: These tables are samples/templates of what can be done; applicants are free to adjust with what they find suitable, taking into consideration that at least 37,500 days are to be achieved.

5. *Through past experience, first aid training sessions were delivered by donors, should it be considered under the applicant scope or similarly it will be provided by ARE?*

Answer: The proposal should include all kinds of trainings to be delivered to the workers, including the first aid training.

6. *Is there a specific assessment/ criterion to differentiate the skilled from the semi-skilled workers?*

Answer: It is expected that the applicant will suggest the criteria based on which the skilled and semi-skilled workers will be selected.

7. *Is the project/ activities supposed to meet all the indicators mentioned in the RFA, or are we allowed to select those that can be met within the scope of the suggested project?*

Answer: ARE aims to target all indicators, yet it is understandable that interventions cannot target all of them. Referring to **Section V Application Merit Review Criteria**, the impact on ARE goals and indicators is scored at 10% of the total of 100%.

8. *Is the project supposed to target the three regions North, BML and South?*

Answer: The three regions need to be covered, yet if you prefer to cover one part and other applicants applied to cover other regions exclusively, then you might be considered. Otherwise, it is expected from the applicant to cover all the areas.

9. Are we allowed to include additional value chains other than the ones suggested in the RFA, for example citrus?

Answer: No, only the value chains included in RFA 012 should be targeted.

10. It is mentioned in RFA012 "Target individual farmers as well as MSMEs and other beneficiaries", can you please clarify?

Answer: MSMEs mentioned are part of the call objective, and farmers fall under the MSMEs.

11. Should we work with the same farmers for 15 months or rotate and include more farmers and beneficiaries

Answer: The total number of farmers to be reached is mentioned in the RFA, and it's up to the applicant to decide on the modality they would like to follow.

12. For the rotation of the workers, you consider FTE in the work recruitment; is there a rotation in the workers' recruitment, what is the schedule of the rotation if so?

Answer: It is up to the applicant to suggest the best option and approach for the intervention.

13. Are we supposed to provide them with the knowledge on how to tackle, let's say, international markets?

Answer: No, this is outside the scope of this intervention. However, what we expect is that if the applicant is supporting with decreasing their costs, then they might be looking for opportunities to increase their sales. And through the cash for work program, we're expecting farmers to improve their production practices. So, for example, the harvesting would be better, or the pruning would be better and that would increase yields which would increase sales, this is the logic ARE is following with.

14. Should the farmers be the landowners or not necessarily?

Answer: Farmers should have the needed legal documentation allowing them to use and work on the land, whether they own it or not.

15. Can the workers be Lebanese or Palestinians or only Lebanese are targeted?

Answer: No, as mentioned in the RFA, the intervention targets Lebanese residents. Thus, only Lebanese workers can be covered.

16. What are the regions covered under the intervention?

Answer: Across Lebanon, more specifically on the coastal areas with respect to olives and above 700 meters with respect to the pome and stone fruit.

17. Are we supposed to add the villages where we'll be intervening in the proposal, or could it be part of the outreach within the implementation of the project?

Answer: You can specify the villages at the proposal stage, if not the names of the villages themselves, you can refer to a region or a cluster, for example. However, it would be easier to evaluate and assess the proposal if it is included.

18. It is mentioned in the RFA that heavy machinery are to be contributed by the vendor. Did you mean purchasing them or renting them as well?

Answer: Heavy machinery, whether purchased or rented, cannot be covered by ARE. Therefore, it would be up to the applicant to either rent or buy them.

19. Is there any specific percentage of cost share by the implementing partner or it's flexible for the applicant to decide on?

Answer: No, there is no specific contribution. Bearing in mind that cost effectiveness is part of the merit review criteria with 10% allocation of the total score, as mentioned in **Section V Application Merit Review Criteria**.

20. What are the eligible expenses within the project?

Answer: All costs that have not been included as ineligible expenses, as mentioned in the RFA - **Section IVA3. Ineligible Expenses**. Examples of expenses that are considered as eligible are tools that workers might be using for small agricultural practices and salaries of staff who will be overseeing the project's implementation.

21. Can seeds be covered under the project?

Answer: Seeds are not considered as eligible expenses as part of this activity.

22. Would you consider a biocultural or you don't care about using pesticides?

Answer: Under this intervention, ARE does not target a specific type of agricultural practices. This should be part of your proposal and will depend on the proposal you will be submitting.

23. Concerning the small machinery and small tools, is there a limit for the cost approved? Meaning if the cost exceeds a certain threshold, will not be considered as a small machinery anymore.

Answer: No, there is no limit in the pricing, but it will depend on the reasonableness of the cost and the type of tools.

24. Do you envisage working or building cooperative to make the activities more communitarian based?

Answer: As mentioned in the RFA under **Section III. Eligibility**, the local partner(s) that ARE will be working with can be any registered Lebanese company/organization/association/cooperative/NGO (or other legal entity). Since this a development-oriented project it would be an added value to see cooperatives working on board, yet it is not part of the review criteria for this project.

25. Do you anticipate processing the crop, is there any activity considered as part of this project?

Answer: No, as the agricultural production cycle that we are looking at ends with the harvest. Outside of this cycle will be beyond the project's scope.

26. Should we submit a kind of feasibility study or to train the farmers to follow numbers as minor financial approach?

Answer: At this stage, feasibility and record keeping is not expected to be part of the technical training; technical trainings are related to the farmers' and workers' crop production practices and their safety during work.

27. In the grant budget template, it is mentioned in section 6 that equipment and goods are less than 5,000 USD, can you please clarify what is the 5K?

Answer: The templates provided with this application are illustrative to reflect how we prefer seeing the budget segregated, yet please feel free to suggest the cost of the tools and services.

28. Can u please inform about peanut butter processing does it fall under this RFA?

Answer: No. Peanut butter processing does not fall under the scope of this RFA. The RFA aims to support olive, pome, and stone fruit production practices.

29. Can we teach the family members of the Farm owner those farming skills therefore we generate more income to the same family supporting in decreasing the labor cost (as a sustained

approach) leading to increase in sales and therefore increasing in improved harvesting outcomes? Or will you count this as conflict of interest?

Answer: There is no restriction in providing trainings to family members. However, for the actual work that will be done, and in an effort to extend support to the widest number of Lebanese families, payment cannot be made to a family member, as the farmer will be benefiting from reduced production costs. However, farmers and their family members can work on other farms. Note that there will be a selection process for workers and Lebanese cfw applicants and their immediate families) that are not benefiting from the labor subsidy (eg. Worker on their own farm) on their farm will be prioritized over those that are.

30. If the above is approved, is there any certain age range criteria for selecting the semi-skilled laborer?

Answer: A minimum age of 18 years is required to be eligible to work

31. If our proposal of building capacity of HH members is rejected and we should tackle other community members for capacity building and learning skills, can we charge transportation cost besides the daily labor fees or it should be inclusive within the 8\$/day support?

Answer: Transportation is an eligible cost to be paid by ARE to the partner(s). It will be evaluated as part of the “Cost Effectiveness” criteria.

32. Just as confirmation so we can kick off till you share the Q&A tackled today, shall we consider the farms are MSMEs? therefore referring to indicator two.

The proposed activity will include the following indicators:

2. (PSD IR 1.b) Number of MSMEs, including farmers, and other organizations benefiting from new horizontal & vertical linkage

by horizontal linkage you mean knowledge shared by learning peers and vertical you mean skills shared from trainer to laborer?

Farmers are considered as MSMEs.

By “Horizontal Linkages”, we mean the cooperation between firms or farmers and entrepreneurs on the same step in the value chain who cooperate to form a single entity that interacts with other actors in a business ecosystem or value chain.

By “Vertical Linkages”, we mean commercial transactions between buyers and sellers.

By “New linkages” we mean any linkage formed between two actors or beneficiaries who have not previously transacted to buy and sell a targeted product (in a vertical linkage) or cooperated (in a horizontal linkage material or in-kind cooperation).