

Public Sector Window: COVID-19 Response Additional Funding Request Template

Please review the “Public Sector Window: COVID-19 Response Additional Funding Request Guidelines” prior to completing this template. Submissions should be in English and no more than 11 pages in length (excluding annexes and supporting documents) and should include a Government request letter.

1. Basic Project Information (complete information for investment and/or TA project as applicable)

a. Project Name(s)	Investment project: Strategic Support for Food Security and Nutrition Project / Agriculture for Nutrition (SSFSNP/AFN) Programme TA project: <i>idem</i>
b. Current project development objective	Investment project: “Improved and diversified agricultural production and household nutrition enhance life prospects” TA project: <i>idem</i>
c. Responsible Supervising Entity/ies (SE)	Investment project: International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) TA project: World Food Programme (WFP)
d. Investment SE Project Team Leader	Name: Mr. Sisovath Phandanouvong Title: National Project Coordinator Email: ssfsn.project@gmail.com
e. TA SE Project Team Leader	Name: Mr. Edwin de Korte Title: Chief Technical Advisor Email: edwin.dekorte@wfp.org
f. Project country	Lao PDR
g. Counterpart Government Ministry/ies and Department(s)	Investment project: Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Department of Planning and Finance. TA project: <i>idem</i>
h. Date of Project approval by the SE	Investment project: 04/13/2016 TA project: <i>idem</i>
i. Current Project closing date	Investment project: 06/30/2022 TA project: <i>idem</i>
j. Latest Project implementation rating by SE for investment project	Rating towards project development objective: 4 Date: 03/04/2020 Rating on implementation progress: 4 Date: 03/04/2020
k. Latest Project implementation rating by SE for TA project	Rating towards project development objective: 4 Date: 03/04/2020 Rating on implementation progress: 4 Date: 03/04/2020

2. Project Financial Information (as of 30 June 2020)

l. Project Funding	Investment project: All funding sources ¹ : US\$ 32.82 million Of which GAFSP grant amount: US\$ 24.0 million TA project: All funding sources ² : US\$ 6.0 million Of which GAFSP grant amount: US\$ 6.0 million
m. Disbursements	Investment project: All funding sources: US\$ 22.225 million GAFSP grant: US\$ 18.506 million TA Project: All funding sources: US\$ 3.469 million GAFSP grant: US\$ 3.469 million

3. Summary of Additional Funding Request

n. Additional Funding amount requested	Investment project: US\$ 3,000,000 TA project: US\$ 2,300,000 (this also includes investment activities)
o. Supplemental SE administrative fee request ³	Investment SE: US\$ 156,000 (5.2% admin costs) TA SE: US\$ 200,000 (8% Direct & Indirect Support Costs)
p. Costed list of proposed components and/or activities to be funded	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scaling-up of grants for Agriculture Production Groups (US\$ 900,000) 2. Strengthening of local agriculture extension service providers (US\$ 400,000) 3. Scaling up of the Farmer-to-Farmer extension activities and piloting of remote extension model (US\$ 400,000) 4. Additional targeted infrastructure development (US\$ 1,100,000) 5. Expansion of farmer nutrition schools (US\$ 500,000) 6. Scaling-up provision of garden grants (US\$ 1,450,000) 7. Provide Rural Advisory Services through Village Nutrition Facilitators (US\$ 350,000) 8. Project Management Support - increased travel/DSA (US\$ 200,000)
q. Revised Project Development Objective (if applicable)	Investment project: NA TA project: NA
r. Revised project closing date (if applicable)	Investment project: NA TA project: NA
s. Estimated number of direct and indirect beneficiaries (disaggregated by gender) (indicate if these are additional to the current project beneficiaries)	Direct beneficiaries: 18,250 additional direct beneficiaries, out of which 14,125 are women and 11,300 are from various ethnic groups. Indirect beneficiaries: 25,000 indirect beneficiaries, out of which 12,500 are women (mostly current project beneficiaries).

1 Include GAFSP funds as well as other financing sources, such as bilateral, multilateral, government or beneficiary contributions.

2 Include GAFSP funds as well as other financing sources, such as bilateral, multilateral, government or beneficiary contributions.

3 The supplemental administrative fee should cover the SE's cost to appraise and approve the additional funding, and any additional funds needed for project implementation support. The indicative fee ceiling is 8% of the requested grant amount.

4. COVID-19 impact and Funding Needs (25%) (differentiate between investment and TA project as applicable)
(Max 3 pages, annex and supporting documents excluded)

- t. Provide a brief description of the impact and disruptions caused by COVID-19 on the project country, the project activity areas and target population, especially the most vulnerable, women and youth. How has COVID-19 response been coordinated at the country level? Has the SE been involved in the national COVID-19 response mechanism?

The COVID-19 pandemic is resulting in unprecedented global impacts affecting both lives and livelihoods across the globe. The socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 are expected to be particularly serious on the livelihoods and food and nutrition security of the poor in lower-income countries with weak healthcare systems. In Lao PDR, 20 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed to date, with no fatalities. Nevertheless, the country is being affected by socio-economic impacts as a result of safety measures including travel restrictions within the country and closed borders, implemented to prevent the spread of the virus and the overall economic downturn.

The World Bank estimates that due to the impacts of COVID-19, poverty in Laos is estimated to increase by 1.4 to 3.1 percentage points in 2020 pushing many people back into poverty. This increase in people living in poverty would have a devastating impact on the food security situation in Lao PDR. Prior to COVID-19, about 659,222 people (9.4% of the total population) already experienced severe food insecurity, especially in the northern provinces where AFN is active.

Similarly, according to the World Bank, the economy of Lao PDR is expected to grow a reduced 1 percent in the more favorable scenario, while in the downside scenario, the economy could contract by 1.8 percent in 2020⁴. In either case, this will be the slowest growth rate since 1990. 33% of Lao PDR's GDP depends on exports, much of its agricultural products such as coffee, cardamom, cassava, banana, livestock, fresh vegetables and fruits.

Another sector heavily impacted by COVID-19 is the tourism industry⁵, contributing 4.6% to Lao PDR's GDP. Tourism, which employs around 54,000 workers, 63% of them women, has come to a sudden stop and will take years to come back to its pre-COVID-19 level. Presently around 38% of workers have already been laid off.

The agriculture sector is hard-hit due the combined impacts of COVID-19 and natural disasters, with below normal rainfall in early 2020 and expected below to normal rainfall in Sep-Oct for the northern part of the country. MAF has estimated that, based upon planted areas, rice may see a slight increase in production for 2020, whereas corn will see a 36% reduction in production. Similarly, root crops will see a 51% reduction, fruits a 24% reduction and vegetables an estimated 31% reduction in production by the end of 2020.

A recent UN document⁶ on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 estimated that the pandemic could push an additional 341,000 people into unemployment and about 383,000 people into poverty. About 50% of surveyed people reduced expenditure on food or simply reduced food consumption, with ca. 15% of those unable to pay for basic food. In the same vein, 78 % of people that took out loans in March did this specifically for food purchases.

⁴ World Bank Group – Lao PDR in the time of COVID-19, May 2020

⁵ ADB – The Impact of COVID-19 on Tourism Enterprises in the Lao People's Democratic Republic: An Initial Assessment, June 2020

⁶ UN – Lao PDR Socio-Economic Response Framework to COVID-19 (draft, not published), Lao PDR, July 2020

AFN with other rural development projects in Laos, funded by IFAD, WFP and FAO, carried out their own specific surveys⁷⁸ that contributed to the above report during April-June 2020. Surveys were undertaken to measure the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on food security and agriculture and identify bottlenecks and affected populations/provinces, and ultimately guide a response. The COVID-19 assessment identified that there are existing concerns for food insecurity which are being exacerbated by the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19.

The main findings of these studies were:

- 87% of AFN-villages reportedly blocked entrance roads and 76% of villages refused entry to any outsiders from entering their village, hereby disrupting the transport of products to the village and sales of agriculture products from farmers to the local, regional and export markets.
- Disruption of agriculture extension and project-activities from district and provincial level, no training sessions could be organized at village-level.
- Although 90% of regional and local markets remained open, 70% of them were severely reduced in size
- Overall, farmers in AFN villages noted a 27% decrease in agriculture sales.
- 35% of AFN villagers noted a decrease in food available at village level and 45% of AFN villagers noted an increase in food-prices, especially for meat products such as eggs.
- An 80% drop in overseas remittances was reported from AFN project areas.
- 65% of AFN villagers reported inability to consume 5 out of 10 food groups, this increased to 84% for pregnant women, and mothers with children under two years old.
- 48% of surveyed villagers perceived their present food security situation worse as before.
- Unemployment spiked in many parts of the country, especially among daily laborers, additionally 150,000 Lao migrant workers returned from abroad adding to the overall unemployment

AFN project areas were found to be particularly vulnerable to reduced exports of cash crops to neighboring countries Thailand, Vietnam and China, such as vegetables, bananas, cardamom and rubber, thereby severely reducing incomes of small holder contract-farmers growing cash-crops. Incidences of increased food prices were mostly reported from the northern part of Lao PDR, including the project provinces and districts.

WFP, IFAD and FAO (Rome based Agencies – RBA) through the COVID-19 related surveys and long-term experience working at the local level contributed to the UN wide response framework. The RBAs have been at the forefront of assessing the impact of COVID-19 on the agriculture and food-security situation in Lao PDR and advising the Government of Lao PDR (GoL) on mitigation efforts.

The “Response plan for ensuring Food Security and Nutrition mitigating impacts of COVID19 containment measures in Lao PDR”⁹ developed by MAF is still in the draft stage (June 2020). Some of the agreed actions in the draft plan are:

The most immediate responses needed can be divided into immediate crisis responses, social protection for nutrition (short-term) and investing in a sustainable future (medium-term). The Response Plan places a strong focus on resilience of food systems and enabling capacities for enhanced nutrition:

⁷ WFP – Rapid Assessment of Food Security and Agriculture in Lao PDR, May 2020

⁸ FAO and IFAD – Rapid Assessment: Impact of COVID-19 on agriculture and food security in Lao PDR, June 2020

⁹ MAF-FAO-WFP – Response plan for ensuring Food Security and Nutrition mitigating impacts of COVID19 containment measures in Lao PDR (draft, not published), 23 June 2020

A: Immediate Crisis Responses

- Preserving critical humanitarian food, livelihood and nutrition support to vulnerable groups through distributing grants in kind (rice) and in cash, and grants for women to maintain food production systems that contribute to good nutrition (vegetable gardens, fishponds, toilets etc.)
- Declaring food production and marketing as essential services, supporting food supply chains, ensuring contracts with foreign buyers for agricultural commodities and livestock
- Expanding real-time food security monitoring systems by better data collection and databases on rice balances, outbreaks of crop and animal pests and diseases for rapid response
- Ensuring relief and stimulus packages reach the poor through support to smallholder farm production and productivity

B: Strengthening social protection systems for nutrition (short term)

- Protecting the most vulnerable population groups especially women through protecting small-holder farmers, assuring their health and those of other operators along the supply chain, ensuring water supply in rural villages
- Scaling-up successful nutrition-sensitive agriculture support programs that focus on rural poor and women

C: Investing in a sustainable future (medium term):

- Transforming the food system to be more resilient through strategic adjustment of policies in the agricultural sector
- Laying the foundation for more inclusive, green and resilient recovery through supportive macro-economic and trade policies and support to research and extension services

- u. *Provide a summary of the current project implementation progress. Has the COVID-19 crisis impacted project implementation, and the attainment of its original development objectives? If yes, how?*

Pre-COVID-19, the project was on track to reach the project goal, objective and outcomes with about 32% of time remaining and 34% of the total budget remaining. A midline survey was conducted in November to December 2019, followed by an IFAD/WFP mid-term-review mission in February/March 2020.

The SSFSNP/AFN project midline survey found that:

- Moderate stunting for children under 2 years old (CU2) decreased from 39.5% to 33.1% in AFN villages, whereas it increased slightly in the control villages from 32.5% to 33.1%
- Underweight decreased from 23.9% to 19.9% in project villages and from 20.9% to 19.9% in control villages.
- On income, it was found that the share of villagers having less than US\$ 270/capita decreased from 70% to 57% in AFN villages and from 64% to 55% in control villages, seeing an accelerated decrease in the project areas. Overall, about 3,740 households were lifted out of poverty.
- The Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) showed that 12.4% of women in project villages consumed less than 5 food groups, against 13.5% for the control villages.
- 25,000 households showed improved food security measured as a Months of Adequate Household Food Provisioning (MAHFP) score of 7.0 or lower, exceeding the project target of 21,000 households.
- About 22,300 women of 15-49 years of age are consuming at least 5 out of 10 defined food groups daily as measured by the Minimum Dietary Diversity score for Women (MDD-W); the project target is 28,000 women.

Because of government issued lockdown orders and additional closures of roads between districts but also between villages, the project estimates that implementation of project activities has been delayed by at least

three months. With the monsoon starting in August, many villages will become inaccessible, thereby further delaying some project activities and potentially put more pressure on the most vulnerable beneficiary groups.

Due to the travel restrictions and work-from-home orders, much of the project tasks such as farmer trainings, small infrastructure construction and day-to-day project management was halted and delayed. Much of the project management was conducted remotely, including the use of video conferencing. Although most villages were inaccessible during the lockdown (some had put up barricades to restrict entry by outsiders) project staff kept a good communication going with key persons in the villages such as village chiefs, lead farmers and village facilitators to monitor overall project, agriculture and food security issues. It is expected that the original project objective will be attained, unless COVID-19 or other externalities affect the implementation of SSFSNP/AFN to improve food security.

- v. *Is the project currently addressing the impacts of COVID-19? If yes, in what way? Have any changes already been made to the project design, activities, target population and/or implementation arrangements to respond to the impact of COVID-19 in the project area? Has funding been insufficient to implement these changes?*

Due to its objective and focus on nutrition combined with investments in poor villages, many of the present project activities are already geared towards increasing resilience to externalities. Thus, SSFSNP/AFN is well positioned to address the impacts of COVID-19 particular on women and children, poor smallholder farmers and poor ethnic groups. The AFN project areas are located in the less developed northern part of Lao PDR and comprises the most food insecure districts and villages, many of them in remote locations.

SSFSNP/AFN combines (i) planning for rural development and notably for nutrition, (ii) training on nutrition practices with (iii) investments in agricultural production and supportive infrastructure (irrigation, transport). This approach aims to build local capacities, strengthens local institutions and delivery of services and thus addressing concerns of sustainability. In the COVID-19 situation, for example, through the continuation of provision of grants to Agriculture Production Groups, the project is helping to mitigate reduced cash flow caused by market access restrictions, increased unemployment and reduced remittances. Thus, it supported farmers to continue to invest in production. Furthermore, the training and extension support is equipping farmers to adjust their production and post-harvest practices to maintain their harvests and farm income against COVID-19 threats. Due to enhancing local capacities and services, households are well-equipped to shift production away from cash crops where exports have fallen. By securing their production, food systems and sources of income, households have not reverted to negative coping strategies such as slash and burn agriculture that could cause long-term damage to their livelihoods and the project's development objectives.

As the bulk of the remaining project budget has already been committed to various ongoing and planned activities (infrastructure development, group-grants, farmer nutrition schools etc.), there is insufficient budget available to scale up activities impacting mostly the above target population (women, small-holder farmers and the poor) and in particular provide a safety-net for these populations so they do not fall back into poverty due to the dual shocks of COVID-19 and natural disasters.

As such the proposed additional financing does not propose any major changes to the original project design, overall activities, target group or implementation arrangements. It rather aims to deepen the intervention on nutrition and resilience to COVID-19 effects among its core target group and to reach more direct beneficiaries notably poor women and their children, poor small-holder farmers and poor ethnic groups.

5. COVID-19 Response Activities (40%) Description of Additional Financing Activities (Max 3 pages, annex and supporting documents excluded)

Describe the activities to be financed with the additional funding requested. How will the proposed activities address or mitigate the COVID-19 impacts described under section 4 above? Briefly describe how additional funding will address COVID-19 issues in the food system of the project area and how it will respond directly to the potential economic and social damage triggered by the pandemic. Are these short-to-medium term measures expected to have longer-term impacts? How can the existing project sustain these outcomes and build resilience?

The following activities are fully aligned with the findings of the various assessments of the impacts of COVID-19 on food security and agriculture as well many of the activities referenced in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's COVID-19 draft response strategy and plan, specifically focusing on the immediate and short term crisis responses.

Leveraging the positive results of the ongoing activities implemented under the AFN project, the project proposes to increase direct support to the most affected population benefitting an estimated additional 18,250 direct beneficiaries. This initiative aims to mitigate specific COVID-19 related issues in rural villages through enhanced nutrition, highly productive agriculture and infrastructure investments and supported by effective agricultural extension services.

The proposed activities will have an immediate positive impact on the nutritional status of especially the poorer households. In the short- and medium-term, production of nutritious will be improved within households and across the project villages through both from home-garden production and from increased crop yields such as rice and maize. The expansion of nutritional training to women will promote lead to a higher accessibility and consumption by the entire household, notably children.

In conjunction with the ongoing AFN activities, this will give a strong boost to nutritional status and, in case of surplus of crops, agriculture income for the most COVID-19 affected population in the AFN project areas and will help to ensure that longer-term to rural livelihoods, food security, and food systems.

1. Scaling-up of grants for Agriculture Production Groups (APG) - IFAD

AFN supports the provision of small grants to APGs, mainly in the field of livestock raising (cattle, pig, goat, chicken), vegetable production and commercial crop production (such as cardamom). The proposed scaling-up of APG grants will be for rice, maize and vegetable production and targets around 150 groups with approximately 2,250 smallholder farmer-members in total; these are additional direct beneficiaries. The APGs are responsible to develop simple grant proposals focusing on the transformation from existing to climate smart crop production systems, for example including the introduction of a drought resistant rice variety. The APG grant covers small equipment that can be used by the entire group, such as solar pumps, hand-held tractors or other small agriculture machinery. The APG grant stimulate food production and economic activities from within and thus, render the communities more resilient. Each grant will be around US\$ 6,000 for a total budget of US\$ 900,000.

2. Strengthening of local agriculture extension service providers - IFAD

The provision of quality agriculture extension services at village level is still limited in most project areas, especially under the COVID-19 restrictions as most project-villages did not allow any outsiders to visit. The additional activities by AFN target village-based, local, private agriculture service providers such as Lead Farmers, Village Technicians, Village Veterinary Workers and private Input Suppliers. AFN will provide technical training courses to these local extension providers on agriculture and veterinary related topics through practical and

hands-on training courses. Additionally, AFN will provide these local service providers with a basic kit to facilitate their day-to-day work. In this activity 1,000 local service providers are targeted, around 200 of them additional direct beneficiaries. It is estimated that the total cost will be US\$ 400,000.

3. Scaling up of the Farmer-to-Farmer extension activities and piloting of remote extension model- IFAD

The project has made good progress in the development and implementation of a Farmer-to-Farmer extension system, based upon successful experiences of IFAD funded projects in both Lao PDR, Vietnam and Cambodia. With the additional funding, F2F activities will be implemented in 100 villages, including 300 on-farm demonstrations (i.e. reaching the additional beneficiaries), farmer trainings and extension activities by project supported Lead Farmers and other local service providers. This will strengthen the local, village-based agriculture extension, and decrease the dependence on outside services, which may be disrupted or erratic during emergencies such as COVID-19. The Lao Farmer Network (LFN), as part of the Asian Farmer Association (AFA), will be engaged to provide its expertise in extension and technical support to farmers. LFN has a strong network of local farmer groups in all the AFN provinces and is a current partner of AFN and MAF.

Under this activity, to overcome restrictions on movement and gatherings, the project will pilot a system of remote backstopping and providing real-time support to Lead Farmers and Village Facilitators through existing social media platforms such as Whatsapp and Facebook, but also look into other easy-to-use ICT-based solutions, building upon successful activities implemented by IFAD in countries such as India and Kenya. This will be additionally supported by technical backstopping from IFAD.

The total cost for this activity is estimated at US\$ 400,000.

4 Additional targeted infrastructure development - IFAD

AFN has been very successful in the implementation of targeted infrastructure, following the Village Development Plans that were developed with support of the project, and up to now, a total of 370 sub-project have been completed or are under construction. These infrastructure sub-projects have covered mostly rural roads, small scale irrigation and drinking water supply schemes. All the remaining funds at AFN have been committed, meaning that no additional sub-projects will be started in the remainder of AFN, although the demand from the village authorities remains high.

Under this activity it is planned to fund 40 additional infrastructure sub-projects, as these build the foundation for higher resilience to COVID-19 impacts:

- Small scale irrigation (new and rehabilitation) to increase food production and counteract the threats of COVID-19 to food prices and availability
- Water supply (new and rehabilitation) which includes water for household use (drinking, hygiene and COVID-19 preventative measures) plus surplus water for use in home gardens and fishponds
- Community fishponds to increase production of an important nutrition source and to provide another source of income for farm households and the newly unemployed
- Market and storage related infrastructures to avoid post-harvest losses caused by restricted market access

These sub-projects are small-scale in scope that can be completed within 18 months. These are community-owned and -managed infrastructures and the project will provide additional trainings on scheme management, including addressing the Operation and Maintenance issues. Hence, these infrastructures have a strong potential to sustain and provide the means for enhanced food production despite drought, COVID-19 and other

externalities. The total cost is estimated at US\$ 1,100,000 and will benefit an estimated additional 3,500 direct beneficiaries.

5 Expansion of Farmer Nutrition Schools - WFP

WFP implements the establishment of 400 Farmer Nutrition Schools (FNS) at village level in all project villages, targeting pregnant and nursing women and mothers with children under two years of age. FNS are semi-structured gatherings in villages, focusing on basic information and interactive discussions about nutrition and food insecurity issues. FNS convey social and behaviour change communication in the form of practical learning sessions to women and communities about household nutrition, food security, basic hygiene, food preservation and processing, diet diversity, and menu planning with nutritious foods including crops grown in gardens, raising fish and keeping small animals. The FNS addresses directly one of the priority interventions under the “National Nutrition Strategy to 2025 and Plan of Action 2016-2020” of the National Nutrition Committee under the Government of Lao PDR to “Bring about a change in practices – nutrition education with the participation of multiple stakeholders”. FNS have been replicated successfully in other provinces and will be an integral part of the new Nutrition Plan of Action under development.

Under this activity—in order to counteract the threat to nutrition from higher food prices and reduced availability—the scope of FNS will be broadened by including all villagers, besides pregnant and nursing women and mothers with children under two years of age, adding an estimated 12,000 additional beneficiaries. Cooking demonstrations will be expanded and separate modules on food processing and food safety that are being developed by WFP, will be rolled out in the FNS. It is estimated that the extra costs amount to US\$ 500,000.

6 Scaling-up provision of garden grants - WFP

Home gardens are an essential source of nutritious food and income, and were most critical during the COVID-19 lockdown. After enrolling in the learning sessions at the FNS, participants are eligible to receive a “garden grant” amounting to 1 million LAK (US\$ 120). This grant is invested in the development of home gardens and is mainly used to purchase basic farming inputs such as small gardening materials, seeds, or small livestock such as chicken, ducks, frogs and fish fingerlings but also material for simple greenhouses, shade-nets etc. Decentralized extension activities are covered within the groups (see also next activity) and experiences from AFN show that most of these female groups stay together and expand into other income generating activities.

Under this activity a total of 10,000 additional garden grants will be provided to 10,000 women and the criteria will focus on women, specifically women-headed households, ethnic groups and poor households. The total cost is estimated at US\$ 1,450,000.

7 Provide Rural Advisory Services through Village Nutrition Facilitators - WFP

Under AFN, WFP has trained more than 1,200 Village Nutrition Facilitators. These facilitators are managing and running the FNS and act as intermediaries between the AFN staff at district level and the project villages. The skills of the facilitators are mainly in the field of nutrition and behavioral change. With the lack of agricultural extension services at village level, AFN has planned to engage these facilitators as local extensionists for the home garden groups. This activity will focus on expanding the skills of these existing 1,200 Village Nutrition Facilitators to include basic agricultural skills (crop and livestock) and simultaneously improve their community development skills such as group moderation and facilitation. Tailored training courses will for the most part be outsourced to existing and professional Regional Agriculture Training Centres. The total cost is estimated at US\$ 350,000.

How do the proposed activities complement or fill a gap in the local COVID-19 response? What other organizations (including POs/FOs and CSOs) are involved in these activities and is there a coordination mechanism in place to monitor and learn from this process?

The additional beneficiaries to be reached comprise the most at-risk and hardest to reach households. The project endeavors to fill the gap in the local COVID-19 response by going the extra mile to reach those families which have been most affected by the pandemic.

The proposed activities are fully aligned with the ongoing SSFSNP/AFN activities and as such profit from existing coordination and monitoring activities. Under the additional funding, successful AFN activities will be adapted to be more “COVID-19 effective” and scaled out to include more and harder to reach households. At provincial and district level, the project is already providing support to the Provincial and District Nutrition Committees, which will take over much of the coordination efforts between the local government departments of agriculture, health and education once the project is phased out as a part of the Exit Strategy of the project.

Most of the project planning, implementation and management, including for the additional funding, is carried out through the Provincial and District Agriculture and Forestry Offices and as such, the MAF and GoL coordination and monitoring mechanisms are already in place such as regular monthly, quarterly and annual technical and coordination meetings including all the project stakeholders from central and local levels. The Lao Farmer Network will play an important role in the expansion of technical extension services.

- w. *What is the expected impact of the additional funding? How will beneficiaries be identified/targeted? Will there be any targeting of certain beneficiary groups such as women, youth, or other vulnerable groups?*

AFN is presently working in 4 provinces and 12 districts in northern Lao PDR, which are among the least developed areas of the country. The 400 villages where AFN is working were selected based on the highest scores in food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty. The total population of the project area is about 34,000 households and 227,800 people. Around 73% of this population consist of various ethnic groups.

The additional funding would enable AFN to reach an estimated 18,250 additional direct beneficiaries, 14,125 of them women and 11,300 belonging to ethnic groups. Furthermore, it is expected that AFN will touch about 20,000 additional indirect beneficiaries, of which 10,000 women.

The proposed activities will particularly target those vulnerable groups mostly impacted by the COVID-19 situation and the frequently occurring natural disasters such as droughts and flooding. As AFN has already over 3 years of hands-on experience in the project area, it will be relatively easy to identify the most affected people, especially women, smallholder farmers, poorer households and certain ethnic groups.

During the midline survey, it was found that ethnic groups such as Khmu, Hmong and Akha are more affected by malnutrition, experience increased food insecurity, have a slightly less nutritious food intake and in general have lower incomes.

The nutrition and home garden activities will specifically target women and will also extend the activities to adolescent women (youth).

- x. *Under Annex 2, include a draft revised Results Framework (or logframe) with newly introduced indicators or revised targets for existing indicators. Please refer to the [GAFSP Monitoring and Evaluation Plan](#).*

See Annex 2 for the draft revised Logframe

6. Project readiness to utilize additional funds (35%) (Max 3 pages, annex 1 and supporting reports excluded)

- y. *Describe the alignment of the additional funding activities with the existing project development objectives and activities. Activities are expected to be extensions, modifications, or scale-ups of existing activities under the project. Where new activities are proposed or activities are expanded to a new geographic area, the funding request should demonstrate the project readiness to implement these new activities in a timely manner to address immediate needs. Indicate how the activities financed from additional funding are to be implemented. Will the proposed activities use existing project implementation arrangements?*

All the currently proposed activities are fully aligned with the original design in terms of project development objective of “Improved and diversified agricultural production and household nutrition enhance life prospects” and outcomes. All proposed activities are scaling-up existing activities and target specifically the project target population which is most vulnerable and impacted by the COVID-19 and other natural disasters including droughts and floods.

The additional activities will be carried out through the existing project implementation arrangements i.e. staff, offices, vehicles, implementation guidelines and monitoring and financial systems. The project has an experienced and fully integrated staffing structure: The National Project Coordination Office (NPCO) at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the four Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Offices (PAFO) and the 12 District Agriculture and Forestry Offices (DAFO). Besides, WFP provides staff at national, provincial and district levels. At village level, the project maintains close collaborations with village authorities, as it ensures efficient coordination of the project implementation. There will be very limited need for extra staff and in such an event, the DAFOs committed to mobilize additional staff (non-AFN liaised staff) to ensure the proper implementation of the additional activities.

- z. *What is the estimated timeline to (i) deploy the additional funds, (ii) implement the proposed COVID-19 activities, and (iii) achieve results? What results are expected from this additional funding within 18 months?*

The additional funds are deployed to further scale-up successful project activities and to increase outreach to the most vulnerable population impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, i.e. women, ethnic groups, poor small-holder farmers, landless poor households. As such the activities are fully aligned with present project activities and can be rolled out immediately once the funding becomes available.

The project is fully prepared to utilize additional funds immediately as soon from becoming available. Effects at household level will be measurable shortly after the implementation, due to an efficient project M&E system. It is expected that the bulk of the funds will be spent within 12 months.

All the proposed activities are intentionally planned to have swift impacts on the target population in terms of agriculture production, food security, nutritional status and income.

Hand in hand with the ongoing AFN activities, the additional funding will give a particular extra boost to the most vulnerable population and ensure that they will not fall back into poverty and malnutrition due to the impacts of COVID-19 and other natural disasters such as droughts and floods, which are occurring frequently in the project areas.

Key results expected from this additional funding

- Increase in nutritional status of women between 15-49 years old
- Increase in household food security
- Increased income of small holder farmers
- Increased agriculture production by small holder farmers
- Increased use of decentralized agriculture extension services by small holder farmers

The results (outcomes, outputs) will be measured by the AFN Monitoring and Evaluation system. This will be implemented in the form of project –wide annual outcome surveys measuring progress against all the indicators in the project Logframe, including the ones mentioned above.

Project data is segregated by gender, ethnicity, youth and poverty levels allowing for detailed tracking of all results.

- aa. *If the project implementation progress is currently rated less than moderately satisfactory, please specify how any implementation challenges will be addressed.*

NA

- bb. *Under Annex 1, provide an updated project budget by component and activity, showing the original grant and the additional funding requested. Has the project tried to access alternative sources of funding?*

See Annex 1. The project has no access to alternative sources of funding on a short-term basis from either IFAD or WFP or through existing MAF funds.

- cc. *Include the latest technical progress report such as SE project supervision report, Government prepared technical progress report, or Aide Memoires etc. (Optional; will not be publicly disclosed)*

Attached:

1. AFN Mid Term Review Report, IFAD (March 2020)
2. AFN Mid Term Aide Memoire, IFAD (March 2020)
3. Midline Survey Report, AFN (March 2020)
4. GAFSP Project Progress Report for January to June 2020, AFN (July 2020)
5. Rapid Assessment of Food Security and Agriculture in Lao PDR, WFP, FAO (May 2020)
6. Impact of COVID-19 on agriculture and food security in Lao PDR, FAO (June 2020)
7. Lao PDR in the time of COVID-19, World Bank Group (May 2020)
8. The Impact of COVID-19 on Tourism Enterprises in the Lao PDR, ADB (June 2020)
9. DRAFT Response plan for ensuring Food Security and Nutrition mitigating impacts of COVID19 containment measures in Lao PDR, MAF-FAO-WFP (June 2020)
10. DRAFT UN Lao PDR Socio-Economic Response Framework to COVID-19, UN-Lao PDR (July 2020)

Annex 1: Updated Project Budget

Investment Funding:

Components	Activities	Original Budget (US\$)		Additional Funding (US\$)	Total Budget (US\$)
		Disbursed	Available		
Component 1: Strengthened public services	Activity 1: Program coordination capacity	620,216	(828,071)	0	1,448,287
	Activity 2: Nutrition-sensitive agricultural services	1,879,396	1,004,108	400,000	3,283,504
Component 3: Sustainable and inclusive market-driven partnerships established	Activity 1: Strategic Investment Plans	107,731	103,459	0	211,191
	Activity 2: Village Agriculture Infrastructure	7,054,338	2,578,731	1,000,000	10,633,069
	Activity 3: Farmer Investment	4,334,678	1,199,312	1,400,000	6,433,990
	Activity 4: Public-Private investments	200,280	289,361	0	489,641
Component 4: Project management	Activity 1: Investment costs	1,495,880	(59,375)	0	1,436,504
	Activity 2: Recurrent costs	1,287,466	(14,430)	0	1,273,036
	Activity 3: DSA (local travel)	365,101	287,416	200,000	852,517
	Activity 4: Operation and Maintenance and other operating costs	332,360	933,972	0	1,266,332
<i>Total additional budget for component 1, 3 and 4</i>		18,505,617	5,494,383	3,000,000	27,000,000
<i>Additional admin costs IFAD (5.2%) above estimated budget</i>				156,000	156,000
TOTAL BUDGET FOR ALL COMPONENTS		18,505,617	5,494,383	3,156,000	27,156,000

Technical Assistance Funding:

Components	Activities	Original Budget (US\$)		Additional Funding (US\$)	Total Budget (US\$)
		Disbursed	Available		
Component 2: Community-driven agriculture-based nutrition interventions established	Activity 1: District multi-sectoral convergence planning	624,440	455,560	0	1,080,000
	Activity 2: Village development planning	936,660	683,340	0	1,620,000
	Activity 3: Farmer nutrition schools Activity 4: Household availability and utilization of nutritious food	1,908,010	1,391,990	2,300,000	5,600,000
	Direct & Indirect Support Costs (SC) 8%	-	-	200,000	200,000
<i>Add rows for additional components and activities as needed</i>					
TOTAL BUDGET FOR ALL COMPONENTS		3,469,110	2,530,890	2,500,000	8,500,000

Annex 2: Updated Results Framework (or logframe)

This can be an initial draft, which would be finalized if the proposal is accepted for additional funding.

Agriculture for Nutrition (AFN) Revised Logical Framework for additional COVID-19 impact response funding

Results Hierarchy	Indicators				Means of Verification			Changes related to the extra available GAFSP funding (additional targets)
	Name	Base-line	Mid-Term	End-Target Original	Source	Frequency	Responsibility	
Outreach	1.a Corresponding number of households reached				Project Report	Annual	Project management	18,250 additional direct beneficiaries <i>2,250 APG farmers</i> <i>300 on-farm demo farmers</i> <i>200 local service providers</i> <i>3,500 infrastructure beneficiaries</i> <i>12,000 FNS participants (including 10,000 garden grant recipients)</i>
	Women-headed households - Number							
	Non-women-headed households - Number							
	Households – Number			34,000				
	1 Persons receiving services promoted or supported by the project – direct beneficiaries				Project Report	Annual	Project management	
	Females - Number							
	Males - Number							
	Indigenous people - Number							
	Youth - Number							
	Total number of persons receiving services – Direct beneficiaries			95,000				
1.b Estimated corresponding total number of household members								
Household members - Number of people		227,800	227,800					
Project Goal Contribute to reduced extreme poverty and malnutrition	Incidence malnutrition (height for age) among two-year old children reduced from 60% at present to 50% by project completion				LSIS for Children under 5	every 5 years (2022)	Ministry of Health	
	Malnutrition - Percentage (%)			50				

Results Hierarchy	Indicators				Means of Verification			Changes related to the extra available GAFSP funding (additional targets)
	Name	Base-line	Mid-Term	End-Target Original	Source	Frequency	Responsibility	
Development Objective Improved and diversified climate resilient agricultural production and household nutrition enhance life prospects	21,000 HH out of poverty by increasing per capita income from the current level to more than \$270/yr by Project-end.				Baseline Survey	Mid line and end line	Project management	Additional 3,000 HH out of poverty Additional 5,000 HH with improved food security
	Households - Number		8,000	21,000				
	Women Headed HH - Number							
	Indigenous people - Number				Baseline Survey using score of MAHFP	Project start, mid-term and end-project	Project management	
	At least 21,000 households with improved food security (measured as a MAHFP score of 7.0 or lower).							
	Households - Number		8,000	21,000				
	Women Headed HH - Number							
Indigenous people - Number								
Outcome Strengthened public services	14 Technical Service Centers improved capacity and support to target farmers.				Project M&E	Annual	Project management	2,250 smallholder farmers make use of pilot-activities on remote extension services
	Service centres - Number			14				
	At least 10,000 HHs have adopted at least one improved technology on production or food processing introduced by the project. Adoption of one improved technology is a set of key practices in the technical guideline of the demonstration of specific technology to be defined by technical specialist. Farmer adoption is defined by adopting at least 2/3 of the key practices for specific production or food processing.				Project M&E	Annual	Project management	
	HH			10,000				

Results Hierarchy	Indicators				Means of Verification			Changes related to the extra available GAFSP funding (additional targets)
	Name	Base-line	Mid-Term	End-Target Original	Source	Frequency	Responsibility	
Output Build government staff capacities and procedures and technical packages to support and converge community implementation of selected National Nutrition Strategy interventions	At least 9 guidelines and tools developed and implemented on a project-wide level: Finance, procurement, planning M&E, PPCP, APG, Garden Grand, Infrastructure, PAR, and F2F.				Project M&E records	Annual	Project management	
	guidelines/tools - Number			9				
Outcome Community-driven agriculture-based nutrition interventions established	300 Village Development Committees have a basic convergence plan on food and nutrition.				Project M&E	Annual	WFP	Additional 5,000 women of 15-49 years of age, consume at least 5 out of 10 defined food groups daily
	Basic convergence plans			300				
	28,000 women in project area of 15-49 years of age, consume at least 5 out of 10 defined food groups daily.				Baseline Survey	Project start, mid-term and end-project	Project management	
	Females - Number		10,000	28,000				
Indigenous people - Number								
Output Planning for improved nutritional outcomes	12 District Nutrition Committees hold at least two meeting per year to develop, coordinate and implement a convergence plan on food and nutrition.				Project M&E	Annual	WFP	
	District - Number			12				
	28,000 beneficiary households participate in VDP preparation				Project M&E	Annual	WFP	
	Households - Number		20,000	28,000				
	Males - Number							
	Females - Number							
	Indigenous people - Number							

Results Hierarchy	Indicators				Means of Verification			Changes related to the extra available GAFSP funding (additional targets)
	Name	Base-line	Mid-Term	End-Target Original	Source	Frequency	Responsibility	
Output Women-led improvement in household nutrition	Number of HH provided with targeted support to improve their nutrition (eg. from Farmer Nutrition School, Garden Grant, and Nutrition Awareness Programme).				Project M&E	Annual	Project management	Additional 10,000 HH provided with targeted support to improve their nutrition
	HH- Number			21,000				
	Women Headed HH - Number							
	Indigenous people - Number							
Outcome Sustainable and inclusive market-driven partnerships established	10,000 HH participating in the project activities increase income by at least 30%.				Baseline Survey	Project start, mid-term and end-project	Project management	Additional 2,000 HH participating in the project activities increase income by at least 30%
	Males Headed - Number			8,000				
	Females Headed - Number			2,000				
	Indigenous people - Number							
Output Profitable investment in nutrient-sensitive, climate-adapted agriculture	300 hectares of new irrigated land established				Project M&E	Annual	Project management	
	Hectares of land - Area (ha)			300				
	400 Kilometers of roads constructed, rehabilitated or upgraded				Project M&E	Annual	Project management	
	Length of roads - Length (km)	0	200	400				
Output Linking farmers to markets	At least 7 private or public-private partnership agreement signed and implemented				Project M&E	Annual	Project management	
	Agreements Implemented - Number			7				
	2,000 HH benefiting from the PPCP				Project M&E	Annual	Project management	
	HH			2,000				

Annex 3: List of eligible GAFSP Public Sector Window projects

No.	Country	Project name	Investment/TA	Supervising Entity
1	Benin	PAPVIRE-ABC	Investment	AfDB
2	Bhutan	FSAPP	Investment	WB
3	Burundi	PNSADR-IM	Investment	IFAD
4	Cambodia	Rice-SDP	Investment	ADB
5	Ethiopia	AGP2	Investment	WB
6	Ethiopia	AGP2-TA	TA	FAO
7	Gambia	FASDEP	Investment	AfDB
8	Haiti	PITAG	Investment	IDB
9	Honduras	ACS-PROSASUR	Investment	WB
10	Kenya	SIVAP	Investment	AfDB
11	Kenya	SIVAP-TA	TA	FAO
12	Kyrgyz Rep.	APNIP	Investment	WB
13	Lao PDR	AFN	Investment	IFAD
14	Lao PDR	AFN-TA	TA	WFP
15	Liberia	SAPEC	Investment	AfDB
16	Mali	PreSAN-KL	Investment	AfDB
17	Myanmar	CFAVC	Investment	ADB
18	Myanmar	CFAVC-TA	TA	FAO
19	Nepal	FANSEP	Investment	WB
20	Niger	PMERSA-MTZ	Investment	AfDB
21	Rwanda	SAIP	Investment	WB
22	Senegal	PASA Lou/Ma/Kaf	Investment	AfDB
23	Tanzania	ERPP	Investment	WB
24	Tanzania	TANIPAC	Investment	AfDB
25	Timor Leste	SAPIP	Investment	WB
26	Uganda	UMFSNP	Investment	WB
27	Yemen	SAPEP	Investment	WB
28	Zambia	APMEP	Investment	AfDB