



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA  
Global Programme Food Security

# CALL FOR PROPOSALS

**«Sustainable Water Management for Food Security and Nutrition in Agriculture and Food Systems»**

## Background and Introduction

Water of appropriate quality and quantity is essential for food production, processing and preparation. **Agriculture** accounts globally for 70% of all water withdrawn from aquifers, streams and lakes. 311 million hectares (16%) of all cultivated land is equipped with irrigation and contribute to 44% of total crop production. Inefficient and uncoordinated water use depletes aquifers (40% of irrigation uses groundwater sources), reduces river flows and degrades land (e.g. salinization on 20% of the global irrigated area and annual loss of 0.25 – 1.5 million hectares of irrigated land due to bad irrigation practices) and inappropriate use of fertilizer and pesticides translate into water pollution.

**Global water demand** is projected to increase by more than 50% by 2050. Industry, energy and domestic use are mostly responsible for the projected demand growth. By 2050 demand for food is expected to increase by 50% and food preferences are changing towards high-value products, such as meat and vegetables, which often have a much higher water footprint than staple crops.

**Climate change** will have significant impacts by increasing water demand, limiting crop productivity and reducing water availability, such as reduction of precipitation in semiarid areas or higher variability in rainfall distribution.

Many parts of the world are already struggling with **water scarcity** and a growing number of regions will face increasing water scarcity. Water scarcity and the depletion of freshwater resources can be felt in parts of the world other than where the consumption occurs (trade, imports, global value chains, etc.) and can also be the result of social, political and economic processes in other parts of the world.

Increasing scarcities and growing and competing demands by a multiplicity of users and sectors with different **economic and political power** make **water governance** for food security and nutrition (FSN) particularly challenging. Energy and industrial sectors, cities, food processing and beverage industry have an increasing influence in water governance and management.

Access to and use of water for food and nutrition security is informed by social, political and economic power relations. **Securing access** to water can be challenging for smallholders, marginalized populations and women. Women are often excluded from decision-making processes regarding water management or access to water technologies, and are often discriminated against by formal water allocation systems.

**Improving water management for FSN in agriculture and food systems** requires context specific responses and approaches, such as by improving water efficiency at all levels and by improving agricultural water productivity. This mobilizes actions ranging from planning and optimization of resources, inputs and means of production and value chains to sustainable management of ecosystems to enhance, regulate and stabilize water provision. Governance has to provide for mechanisms to arbitrate between diverging interests and to solve conflicts in a fair way. Water management needs to be sustainable. To address the manifold environmental challenges a specific focus on the ecological sustainability is pertinent. Multi-stakeholder approaches and principles of good governance need to be put in place to ensure equitable access, and not exclude less powerful actors. In the context of FSN, the challenge is to ensure that allocation systems give adequate priority to water for food production, especially smallholder food production, as well as for the basic needs of poor and marginalized populations. Community-based, watershed or catchment level approaches have the potential to enhance the resilience of both the environment and rural livelihoods by creating synergies across sectoral development policies, while minimizing negative trade-offs.

## **1. Guiding principles for the project**

### **1.1 Objectives**

The overall goal of the project is to promote ecologically sustainable water management for food security and nutrition in agriculture and food systems - through increased water productivity or water efficiency – and improve the economic and social situation of smallholders, in particular women and youth, thus leading to increased resilience of their livelihoods.

SDC is looking for project proposals that contribute to the achievement of the following outcomes:

1. Technical, organizational, social and economic approaches and innovations at field, smallholder, community, watershed and/or value chain/food system level contribute to ecologically sound, sustainable, fair and equitable water management and to an improved economic and social situation for smallholders, in particular women and youth.
2. Enhanced technical, entrepreneurial and managerial capacities of smallholders and other relevant actors, such as service providers, technical and government personnel and consumers, with a special focus on women and youth and sustainable businesses contribute to ecologically sustainable water management in agriculture and food systems and increased resilience of livelihoods.
3. Regulatory frameworks, strategies and policies at local, national and global level and/or standards at the level of communities and watersheds, the private sector and professional organizations or countries better reflect ecologically sustainable water management in agriculture and food systems.

The practical outcomes will influence policies, in particular at the level of the various institutions and platforms at the global level engaged in sustainable use and management of water resources in agriculture and food systems.

### **1.2 Strategic linkages**

The project shall ultimately contribute to the thematic priority 1.2 “Reduced ecological footprint of agriculture” of the GPFS Strategy 2017 - 2020 that specifically highlights more efficient water management technologies and approaches. For further details, see GPFS Strategy 2017 – 2020, available on <https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Agriculture-and-Food-Security/sdc-context-overview/sdc-strategic-documents>.

For the selection of the proposal(s), the following will be of importance:

- the comprehensiveness and consistency of the chosen modalities and approaches;
- the way how possible trade-offs (ecological, social and economic) are addressed and positive externalities are strengthened whilst negative impacts are being avoided or at least minimized;
- the way how gender equality and women’s empowerment are fostered;
- the way how youth are engaged and empowered;
- the approach how benefits of a public and private interest are complementing each other and providing the successful demonstration of approaches of sustainably creating public and private benefits;
- the way how relevant regulatory institutions are being addressed and can be complemented;
- advocacy and knowledge sharing efforts in bringing the experience from the field to the regional and/or global level and in contributing to policy influencing;
- the potential for the approach(es) to be scaled up/scaled out; and

- the composition of the applicants as consortia of different stakeholder groups. The different consortia partners should complement each other and ensure coherence and competence in all related fields, including the generation of public and private benefits and experiences in policy influencing.

### **1.3 Geographic focus**

The project should focus on Africa. The project shall be relevant at local level and have a clear link to policy frameworks at national, regional and global levels.

## **2. Application details**

### **2.1 Who can apply**

Any consortium, including different stakeholder groups, such as the private sector, civil society, farmers organizations, water user associations, local and national governments, research organizations, extension services and intergovernmental organizations, with experience in the above mentioned fields and able to demonstrate the capacity to develop and implement projects of similar volume and complexity may participate.

Applicants, which already receive a programme contribution from the SDC (through the institutional partnerships division), will not be eligible for proposing a project.

### **2.2 What kind of project can be funded**

Public - Private - Development - Partnerships and multi-stakeholder approaches are highly welcome. Exclusive research projects will not be considered.

### **2.3 Duration**

The first phase of the project shall last 4 years (April 2019 – March 2023), followed by a possible second phase of another 4 years (April 2023 – March 2027).

The first phase of the project will focus mainly on the implementation of activities to achieve the outcomes, while a possible second phase will in addition further focus on the sustainability of the approach and possible business model in preparing scaling up and out and policy influencing at national, regional and/or global levels.

### **2.4 Funding**

In the framework of this call, SDC might choose up to two proposals for funding. SDC's contribution will indicatively range between CHF 500'000 – CHF 1'500'000 per year and project, with a total maximum of 1.5 Mio. per year. The annual contribution will decrease in the possible second phase.

SDC's contribution will cover a maximum of 50% - 80% of the total cost of the project.

The presented budget shall include the full cost of the project and show all cost and all sources of finance.

There is no remuneration for the submission of the proposal.

### **2.5 Contractual aspects**

The Subsidy Act and the conditions of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs regarding contributions are applicable.

By submitting a proposal, the applicant accepts without reservation the enclosed standard contracts (i.e. Federal contribution for project incl. GCB; Contribution outside Switzerland; see annex on the website).

### 3. Submission procedure

- All information about this call for proposal is publicly available on SDC's A+FS network website: <https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Agriculture-and-Food-Security>.
- Questions related to the call for proposals shall be submitted by email to the following address: [gpfscallforproposals@eda.admin.ch](mailto:gpfscallforproposals@eda.admin.ch) with the subject: Sustainable Water Management – Question until 14 Mai. All questions and relative answers will be anonymously and openly available on the A+FS website, and weekly updated.
- The proposals have to be submitted by 11 June 08:00 CET latest to the following email address: [gpfscallforproposals@eda.admin.ch](mailto:gpfscallforproposals@eda.admin.ch) with the subject: Sustainable Water Management.
- Validity of proposals: 180 days after deadline for submission of proposals.

#### 3.1 Documents to be submitted

Please respect the following structure for your proposal:

Cover letter with signatures (1 page)

Technical proposal (max. 6 pages):

- description of approach, proposed strategy of intervention, impact hypothesis or theory of change and sustainability of the project
- expected results to be achieved within 4 years, and if applicable of the results achieved so far
- description of direct and indirect partners and beneficiaries
- assessment indicating opportunities and risks and the means identified for addressing them
- composition of the consortium and organizational structure
- description of institutional profile and experience in the thematic fields of the project proposal
- description of personal resources

Financial proposal (max. 3 pages):

- Budget specifying personnel, material, travelling and other costs and allocation to various lines of action, not exceeding the maximum budget indicated in chapter 2.4
- Confirmation of co-financing and share of co-financing

Annex:

- Acceptance GCB

Additional annexes or links to further documents are not allowed.

Language of proposals: English. Proposals written in French are also accepted.

### 3.2 Timetable

Date / Deadline	Activity
19.04.2018	Call for proposals opening
14.05.2018	Deadline submission of questions by email: <a href="mailto:gpfscallforproposals@eda.admin.ch">gpfscallforproposals@eda.admin.ch</a>
11.06.2018, 08:00 CET	Deadline for submission of complete proposals by email: <a href="mailto:gpfscallforproposals@eda.admin.ch">gpfscallforproposals@eda.admin.ch</a>
June 2018	Evaluation of submitted proposals
July - August 2018	Oral presentations and negotiations (remain reserved)
August 2018	Evaluation decision
August 2018	Communication on decision to all applicants and publication of award <sup>1</sup>
September 2018 – January 2019	Development of a full proposal to be considered for funding by SDC
March 2019	Signing of Contract between SDC and implementing organization, subject to approval by SDC
01.04.2019	Start of phase 1

### 3.3 Evaluation

The evaluation is carried out in accordance with the procedure described in chapter 4.

### 3.4 Oral presentation and negotiation (remain reserved)

In case of high quality proposals with similar scoring, SDC reserves the right to invite the concerned applicants (maximum of 5 proposals) for an oral presentation (phone or video conference) to a selection committee of SDC. The oral presentation will tentatively take place in July 2018.

### 3.5 Evaluation decision

In the framework of this call for proposals, SDC might chose up to 2 proposals for funding. SDC reserves the right not to select a proposal. No appeal will be permitted.

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<sup>1</sup> The award will be published at SDC's A+FS network website: <https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Agriculture-and-Food-Security>. All applicants will be informed in writing of the award decision.

## 4. Selection of projects; evaluation criteria

### 4.1 Eligibility check

An evaluation committee setup by SDC, will check whether the proposals meet the formal criteria as described in the chap 3.1 and 3.2. Proposals that do not meet the formal criteria will not be evaluated.

The committee will then evaluate all the eligible proposals according to the criteria described in the chap. 4.2.

### 4.2 Evaluation

Proposals will be reviewed according to international peer review standard procedures. The following table provides an overview of the evaluated criteria and the corresponding weighting:

C	Criteria	Weighting
	<b>Technical Proposal</b>	
<b>C1</b>	Demonstrated thematic expertise/qualification/capacity/achieved results and institutional network	<b>20%</b>
<b>C2</b>	General approach, relevance and probability of success	<b>50%</b>
	<b>Financial Proposal</b>	
<b>C3</b>	Clarity of the proposition, full character of the cost structure (personnel, material, traveling and other costs) and allocation to various lines of action, realistic estimation of the costs	<b>10%</b>
<b>C4</b>	Relation of estimated costs to expected outcomes of the project proposal (Cost/Benefit ratio)	<b>10%</b>
<b>C5</b>	Reliable source of co-financing and % of co-financing	<b>10%</b>

Each criterion (C) will be evaluated according to the following score table:

Score	Fulfilment and quality of the criteria	
0	Cannot be established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information has no significance.</li> </ul>
1	Very bad fulfilment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information is insufficient.</li> <li>Data quality is very poor.</li> </ul>
2	Bad fulfilment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information relates inadequately to the requirements.</li> <li>Data quality is poor.</li> </ul>
3	Average fulfilment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information globally responds inadequately to the requirements.</li> <li>Data quality is adequate.</li> </ul>
4	Good fulfilment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information focuses well on requirements</li> <li>Data quality is good.</li> </ul>
5	Very good fulfilment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information clearly relates to the achievement of outputs</li> <li>Data quality is excellent.</li> </ul>



## **5. Communication of SDC decision and next steps**

### **5.1 SDC decision**

After the evaluation of all eligible proposals, SDC will officially communicate its decision in August 2018.

### **5.2 Full project proposal development**

Project(s) would be expected to start at 1 March 2019 and the winning consortium(s) would in the meantime elaborate the full project proposal.

## **6. List of annexes**

No.	Annexes
1	Contract template federal contribution for project
2	Contract template contribution outside Switzerland
3	General conditions for contracts concerning federal contributions for projects