

WFP CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE BRAZIL

Supporting the Development and Implementation of Resource Mobilization Initiatives

THE GAMBIA 



**World Food
Programme**

Centre of Excellence
against Hunger

In this document, WFP Centre of Excellence Brazil presents how it responded to the request of The Gambia (WFP Country Office and Government) for the preparation of a project application that granted more than USD 16 million to the country. From the initial grant call to the final approval, we present the “path” taken for a successful project preparation. The grant call came from the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP), a global fund financed by the G20 and managed by the World Bank, aimed at providing resources to scale-up agricultural and food security assistance to proposals for fragile and conflict affected countries.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Before mobilizing resources, it is essential to lay the fundraising foundations and strategy, developing a compelling case for donors.

International best practices propose strategic resource mobilization plans that consider your options, saving time and efforts, and creating better chances of success. This is central for programme sustainability. However, from time to time, the right opportunity can knock on your door, for example, with a grant call opening completely affiliated to your line of work, and for which you and your office stand a concrete chance.

Innovative resource mobilization is key to survival. With an ever-increasing demand for resources (particularly financial), development and emergency agents need to approach donors and come up with new and improved [multiple] funding streams to support programme delivery. Accessing the appropriate resources to implement and deliver structuring programmes is essential for all countries, especially lower-income and fragile states. In The Gambian case, this is key for the country’s food and nutrition security. The country only produces 50 percent of the food it currently consumes, leaving it extremely vulnerable and dependent on food imports. Women are recognized as main staple food producers in the country, but gender disparities in education and access to credit and land make it harder for them to compete in the agricultural sector.



WFP Brazil was called upon to support The Gambia under short notice in mid-March 2019 as a GAFSP call was launched.

Upon request of the WFP Country Office, WFP CoE Brazil activated an important readiness instrument in its toolkit under two different modalities: Direct and Remote Technical Assistance. Within less than one month, WFP CoE Brazil deployed two of its Programme Policy experts to Banjul so they could guide and support national counterparts, working as a team. Under the leadership of the WFP The Gambia Country Office, the team worked on how to converge GAFSP’s conceptual framework to WFP’s Country Strategic Plan and Gambia’s national sectoral and investment plans.

WFP plans to use GAFSP funding to continue and scale up the delivery of social projects.

These project have the potential to raise income and improve food security of the vulnerable population. This involves stimulating farm and non-farm entrepreneurial activity through additional investments to raise agricultural productivity, improve food security, link farmers to markets, reduce risk and vulnerability, and improve non-farm rural livelihoods. The new grant will finance a 5-year project that aims to benefit directly over 20,000 households, or over 168,000 vulnerable people, including smallholder farmers, school going children, and local beneficiaries engaged in activities within project impact areas. Indicators will be gender sensitive with a proportionally targeted number of women and youth, and women headed households, estimating at least 60 percent of project beneficiaries.

The WFP Centre in Brazil is a global hub for partnerships promotion, advocacy, knowledge exchange, capacity development and technical assistance to support countries achieve zero hunger. By working closely with regional and national stakeholders (governments and institutions), it aims to expand food and nutrition security policies and programmes from a multi-sector perspective, particularly social safety net programmes that include school feeding linked to local agriculture and nutrition. The WFP Centre fosters food and nutrition security solutions for countries to deliver long-term development benefits for children and vulnerable populations in the Global South. The Centre is also a powerhouse for solutions on country readiness to support programmes and understands that multiple sources of funding can increase independence and flexibility to hand over and reduce reliance on major and repeating donors over time. Therefore, WFP CoE Brazil presents the process below, which may be tailored to different cases as various other grant calls launch and may be extended to other resource mobilization efforts with the private sector, bilateral funds, and UN-administered funds.



HOW WFP CoE BRAZIL SUPPORTED THE GAMBIA TO MOBILIZE RESOURCES

In its March 2019 grant call, GAFSP requested as its impact goal to improve the income and food security of vulnerable people in fragile and least-developed countries.

This could be done through more and better public and private sector investment in the agriculture and rural sectors, owned and led by the country; and by filling existing financing gaps in ongoing bilateral and multilateral assistance. Deadline was tight: mid-April 2019 for a grant preparation assistance (required by the country), and early-September 2019 for the final grant call proposal.

A project preparation assistance grant was also available for the first time within GAFSP.

In addition to the main project proposal preparation, GAFSP offered preparation assistance support of USD 65,000 under the condition that the Government submitted a conceptual note for the project in mid-April 2019 (less than a month away from the launch). Quick action was required from all actors. The concept note was successfully submitted on time and was approved by GAFSP in May 2019. This preparation assistance resource granted the national actors with better conditions to develop a broader project for the final proposal submission in September 2019. Between September 2019 and March 2020, fine-tuning, validations and local readiness preparation were conducted by the entire team to ensure the project had all the necessary safeguards in place for the planned actions to take place immediately after final approval of project appraisal, during the pipeline stage in mid-2020.





On-ground and remote technical assistance by the WFP Centre. During March-April 2019, August-September 2019, and February 2020, WFP Centre conducted its activities on the ground in Banjul with the WFP Country Office, the leader of mobilization initiatives for project preparation. For the other nine months, WFP CoE Brazil supported The Gambia remotely through virtual exchanges, WFP Centre's remote assistance methodology. The Brazilian remote tool not only managed to successfully ensure the completion of the project on time in a participatory manner, but also enabled savings of over 300% of project preparation costs in while doing it remotely.

Remote assistance means project preparation savings. Savings mean that WFP CoE Brazil did not require neither large disbursements and sums from the Country Office's programme administration budget nor the need for the WFP local office to indicate national staff to be full-time committed to a single resource mobilization activity. Preparing remotely the project, in a 12-month period, costed less than USD 40,000, which is 10% of the cost if non-local staff had to come over in long duty missions. This also allowed the WFP Country Office to continue focusing its operational and delivery work on the ground.

The process that WFP Centre supported in and with The Gambia team consists of three elements that loop as phases:

1) Assess the situation and plan the next steps; **2)** Engage in a participatory process and compile the data/information into knowledge and actions; and **3)** Reflect and finalize the project preparation.

1 ASSESS AND PLAN

To foster sustainability and lasting impacts, WFP CoE Brazil, WFP Country Office and the Government fostered the reinforcement of two steering groups. The first included a multi-stakeholder High Level Task Team, acting as a decision-making group, and the second referred to a Multi Multisector Working Group, acting as a steering committee for national ownership. Both groups were key to indicate which documents and data collection should be conducted by WFP CoE Brazil to produce a set of evidence-based summary of Overall Agriculture and Food Security Strategy and Associated Investment Plan for the new GAFSP project.

Complementary assessments and evidences created a theory of change and a log frame for project to work on both the supply and demand sides of the Gambian food system. It seeks market creation for an enhanced and diversified smallholder farming production, with a gender-sensitive focus. The rationale for the value chain support is to link agriculture development to the ongoing home-grown school feeding programme as a first sustainable market access for smallholder farmers. The project will target vulnerable smallholder farmers in the rural areas in three of The Gambia's regions. The entry point will be to promote crop planning, access to production and post-harvest inputs, and reduce the climate-related risks facing poor smallholders. By increasing their capacity to supply the school feeding market, the project will support them in improving livelihoods.

2 ENGAGE AND COMPILE

The construction process for the current project proposal was led by the multi-stakeholder High Level Task Team.

This team was chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Gambia Ministry of Agriculture, and included representatives from government ministries and agencies, NGOs, private sector, farmer organizations, technical experts, development partners and UN agencies. Additionally, understanding the immense importance of ownership and collective building, consultations were key to the proposal preparation phase. Three moments of official consultations took place:

• **Regional Social Consultations:**

These consultations were supported through Government and led on the ground by the NGO Action Aid International The Gambia jointly with the apex body of farmer organizations, the NACOFAG, who is the national focal point of the regional West African network of farmers and agricultural producers. Over 300 smallholders attended including community leaders, smallholders, private sector, civil society organizations, and staff from government departments and projects. In total, ten consultative meetings were organized in all the agricultural regions targeting farmers, especially women and youth farmers.

• **Institutional Thematic Consultations:**

Three days of thematic consultations took place in July 2019 to order to discuss three key areas of possible intervention for the project. Almost 50 participants participated in the three events, analysing good practices and results from a previous GAFSP-funded project.

• **Validation Workshop:** A validation workshop was done on August 20th, 2019, to engender participatory endorsement of the proposal design and risks management measures through interactive group sessions. This was a crucial moment to complete and update the GAFSP project proposal structure for design, implementation and M&E which entailed reviewing of project's component, sub-components and activities at design; log frame specifying outcomes, outputs and indicators; identification of target beneficiaries by region and the key implementing partners. The teams also completed and validated the proposal structure for risk management by identifying the risks to the achievement of the specific objectives and each component and sub-component identify the mitigation measures.

This participatory process was topped up by weekly meetings with the two steering groups.

Most of the writing process was conducted remotely but with the constant communication and feedback from the team and the leaders on the ground.

3 REFLECT AND FINALIZE

Assessments and consultations conducted during project preparation were highly effective.

Based on their results, the Gambia team focused on drivers and indicators that could impact the most national institutions and smallholder farmers' capacity to achieve substantial income gains, to be food-secure, and ultimately to be "market-ready", sharing the gains of local growth and development. Within the GAFSP areas of engagement, the following thematic interventions were tailored to the specific Gambian contexts: **1)** strengthening country capacity and macro-stability of the agricultural sector; **2)** enhancing delivery of services that foster social inclusion, such as home-grown school feeding; **3)** promoting livelihoods, markets, and sustainable private sector development through the school feeding programmes in place in the country; **4)** boosting shared prosperity, equity and inclusion, with special and cross-cutting focus on gender and youth; and **5)** mitigating the impact of climate change on smallholder farmers.

Other relevant evidence topics brought up to be included in the project. These include:

1) Mainstreaming gender equity and social protection into economic policies could shield vulnerable groups from the negative impacts of socioeconomic change, and subjecting investment projects to rigorous environmental-impact assessments could ease pressure on the country's fragile ecosystems; and **2)** Promoting country capacity strengthening and readiness development mappings with activities designed to improve the welfare of young people, impacting on the Gambia diaspora.

Good things come to those who

(work and) wait. In April 2020, after the positive response from the GAFSP Technical Advisory Committee and Coordinating Unit to approve the Gambia project proposal, WFP Brazil Centre of Excellence, WFP Country Office in The Gambia and the African Development Bank, the designated supervising, will move on a detailed plan for project appraisal and implementation between May and October 2020.