Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Livestock Systems
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida

Request for Applications (RFA)

Integrating System's Thinking to Local Capacity Development in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Nepal, Niger, and Rwanda
RFA No. AID-OAA-L-15-00003-LSIL-06

Important dates:

Item	NEPAL	RWANDA	BURKINA FASO	NIGER	ETHIOPIA
Co-design Process (**LCD workshops #1 and #2** in target countries)	April 24 & April 26	May 9 & May 10	May 24 & May 25	May 30 & June 1	June 15 & June 17
Deadline for submission of written questions[1]	3 weeks after 2nd LCD Workshop in the target country Only Nepal: 3 weeks after May 10th, 2022				
Posting of responses to written questions on Piestar RFx	1 week after Question submission deadline *(responses applicable to all LCD grant applicants will be shared across five countries)*				
Deadline for submission of full proposals **(only individual projects)**	8 weeks after 2nd LCD Workshop in the target country Only Nepal: 8 weeks after May 10th, 2022				
Deadline for submission of Concept Notes **(only consortium and consortium+ projects)**	8 weeks after 2nd LCD Workshop in the target country Only Nepal: 8 weeks after May 10th, 2022				
Notification about acceptance of Concept Notes and invitation to submit full proposal	2 weeks after Concept Note submission				
Deadline for submission of full proposals	4 weeks after Invitation				

Notes:

Questions, Concept Notes and Full Proposals must be submitted before 11:59 PM Eastern Daylight Time (Florida time) on the country submission deadline indicated above. Please start the submission process well before the deadline to avoid last minute problems or technical issues. The Livestock Systems Innovation Lab will not accept any submissions after the deadline regardless of whether they are caused by technical or other problems. Invitations to submit full proposals (only Consortium and Consortium+

projects) are scheduled to be sent to the shortlisted applicants on the country submission deadline mentioned above. Full proposals must be submitted by the deadline indicated in the invitation.

Proposals must be from INSTITUTIONS, not individuals. See page 11 for more details.

[1] In order to maintain the integrity of the competitive process, the Management Entity (ME) of the Livestock Systems Innovation Lab will only provide written answers to written inquiries about the RFA that are submitted to livestock-lab@ufl.edu by the country-specific deadline indicated above. Please note that USAID staff, including Mission staff, will be unable to advise or provide information that will be used in preparing a concept note or full proposal, to potential applicants. Therefore, applicants are advised not to contact University of Florida faculty or staff, USAID Missions staff or any other USAID staff members regarding this RFA, except to submit written questions to the Livestock Systems Innovation Lab by the stated deadlines.

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ACRONYMS

AET	Agricultural and education training
AFU	Agriculture and Forestry University, Nepal
AOI	Area of inquiry
ASF	Animal source foods
CDAIS	Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems
CCT	Cross-cutting theme
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
FTE	Full time equivalents
FY	U.S. federal fiscal year
HICD	Human and Institutional Capacity Development
IFAS	Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
IP	Innovation platform
LCD	Local Capacity Development
LSIL	Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Livestock Systems, aka Livestock Systems Innovation Lab
ME	Management Entity
MSP	Multistakeholder platforms
PI	Principal investigator
RFA	Request for applications
SAM	System for Award Management
SDN	Specially designated nationals
UF	University of Florida
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) awarded the University of Florida (UF) Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) funds to establish the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Livestock Systems (henceforth, LSIL) and to act as its Management Entity (ME). This ten-year initiative (Phase I 2015-2020, Phase II 2020-2025) supports USAID's agricultural research and capacity building work under Feed the Future, the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative. LSIL manages global research for development portfolio that focuses on Livestock Production and Disease Management; Human Health, Food Safety, Diets and Nutrition, and Markets and Innovation Translation areas of inquiry (AOIs); as well as Local Capacity Development (LCD), Gender and Youth, Future Livestock Systems and Resilience, and Enabling Environment crosscutting themes (CCTs) in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda. Since 2015, LSIL has funded and managed over 40 country-focused and demand-led research and capacity development projects to boost the livestock sector and consumption of animal source foods (ASF) in participating countries.

During Phase I, all research projects funded by LSIL had a human and institutional capacity development (HICD) component. The HICD team supported subawardees and implemented interventions in the target countries through mapping stakeholders critical for the HICD success and then engaging with them in the extensive gap analyses and assessments of the livestock research capacity. The assessments informed the development of training-of-trainer courses to enhance knowledge in critically important areas that the research organizations and institutions of higher learning, especially agricultural and education training (AET) organizations with animal science and veterinary degrees cover inadequately, e.g., biostatistics, qualitative research methods, participatory training for adult learners, experiential learning, etc. LSIL collaborated with the Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU) in Nepal to develop a blueprint for establishing a human subject's ethical review board at AFU. LSIL also facilitated the improvement of laboratory management capacity of university and research organizations in Niger and Burkina Faso. Finally, LSIL contributed to the development of the livestock research systems thinking process using the *Capacity Development For Agricultural Innovation Systems* (CDAIS) toolkit (https://cd4ais.ifpri.info/).[2]

Building on Phase I achievements, LSIL decided to put stronger emphasis on local organizational and institutional capacity development during Phase II by re-branding the HICD CCT to become the Local Capacity Development (LCD) CCT. LSIL has also shifted away from Capacity 1.0 (see Figure 1) that focuses on strengthening technical and soft skills, such as lab management, statistical analysis, teaching, communication skills, etc. While important, these skills alone cannot lead to changes within the research system unless supported with
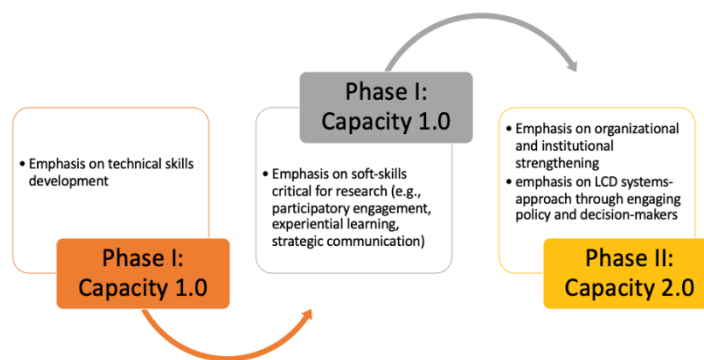
Figure 1. LCD approach

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[2]CDAIS is a conceptual framework embedded in the agricultural innovation system (AIS) and the relationship between human capacity, organizational capacity, and the enabling environment. The AIS emphasizes a diverse network of actors (e.g., institutes of higher learning, research centers, private sector, policymakers, and others) working together to advance innovative capabilities and organizational changes through policy analysis, relationship building, systems thinking and learning.

institutional and policy reforms that provide an enabling environment and initiate system-wide changes.

Moreover, USAID's forthcoming approach to LCD argues that every organization[3] has a system which needs to be appreciated. Previous efforts often focused on improving an organization's ability to manage USAID projects and directives and less on strengthening the system's capacity. Capacity 2.0, then, is a combination of Capacity 1.0 complemented with improvements in management, governance, strategic planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning, plus collaboration and creating social value through organizational and institutional strengthening. Therefore, the LCD CCT is focusing on capabilities of various research organizations (collective ability) and competencies (of individuals within the broader research organization system) and applying LCD systems-thinking approaches to engage policy and key decision makers to support and sustain changes in the livestock research systems.

LCD specific objectives for Phase II include:

- Engaging local partners and stakeholders (including private sector) to play leading roles in strengthening the livestock research systems in target countries.

- Supporting leading research and higher education organizations in target countries to take responsibility for coordinating LCD activities, providing peer-to-peer mentoring, facilitating policy dialogues, and establishing and contributing to learning networks around LCD issues. And,

- Supporting the LCD pilot interventions in target countries.

This Request for Applications (RFA) invites local LSIL Reach and Focus Project partners in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Nepal, Niger, and Rwanda to submit proposals to enhance their current LCD activities and plans in the LSIL Reach and Focus Projects and to strengthen local livestock research systems.
The proposed LCD work **MUST** address one or more LSIL LCD Priorities, presented below, which were developed based on Phase I HICD findings and stakeholder consultations between September 2020 and March 2021.

LCD Approach in Phase II

LSIL's LCD approach is focused on system's thinking that integrates participatory engagement, experiential learning, and strategic communications with technical and professional skills development and a focus on developing local partners and stakeholders' abilities to navigate complexities, collaborate, reflect and learn, and engage in strategic policy processes. LCD CCT works closely with the Enabling Environment CCT, for example, to bring together key stakeholders in the livestock research process to inform, co-design, monitor, and revise policy considerations or recommendations. It is important to note that the livestock research process is a cycle that can be entered and re-entered at any time, highlighting the iterative nature of learning, co-creation and monitoring.

USAID, in its recent higher education framework, has recognized the key role of higher education in development (USAID, 2020a).[4] Accordingly, the LCD CCT aims to continue to build strong relationships with local institutes of higher learning, especially AET organizations. The LCD CCT also recognizes that national research organizations and ministries, as well as private sector stakeholders, are critical partners in informing and advocating for knowledge and capacities needed for livestock research. In Phase II, therefore, LCD will rely heavily on consultative processes, with LSIL country coordinators and both Phase I and Phase II research partners, to co-create a local capacity development roadmap for

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[3] An organization is defined here as a group of people working together in an organized way for a shared purpose, while the social and legal norms and rules underlying economic and social activities are defined as an institution.

[4] USAID, 2020a. Higher education as a central actor in self-resilient development: A program framework. Office of Education. Washington, D.C.:USAID (https://www.edu-links.org/learning/program-framework-higher-education)

strengthening local livestock research systems. The roadmap (defined as a process of refining the broader problem set, defining system boundaries, and identifying system domains, actors and their relationships) will focus on the following questions: 1) How can a national livestock research system be strengthened? 2) Who needs to be "at the table"? and 3) What are the leverage points to achieve and sustain the best impact?

LCD Theory of Change

The LCD theory of change emphasizes the transformation of local organizations and systems to work together and foster system-wide changes that are locally identified, locally owned, locally led and locally sustained. The LCD approach focuses on exploiting target-country stakeholders and partners' existing knowledge of their systems to navigate complex processes, structures, relations, norms, and practices, as well as collaborate, reflect, learn and engage with decision and policy processes at home and abroad. Specifically, LCD assumptions reflect that:

- IF entry points for system changes are identified and supported, and

- IF local research and AET organizations become engaged in the process and commit to the capacity development effort, and

- IF individuals within the research and AET organizations acquire the technical and functional skills linked to improved organizational performance, and

- IF adequate resources (staffing, infrastructure, networks, etc.) are provided, and

- IF policymakers, the private sector actors and others are aware of and respond to evidence-based information and make the needed changes,

THEN, the livestock research system will be able to participate in world class research with global partners (see Figure 2).
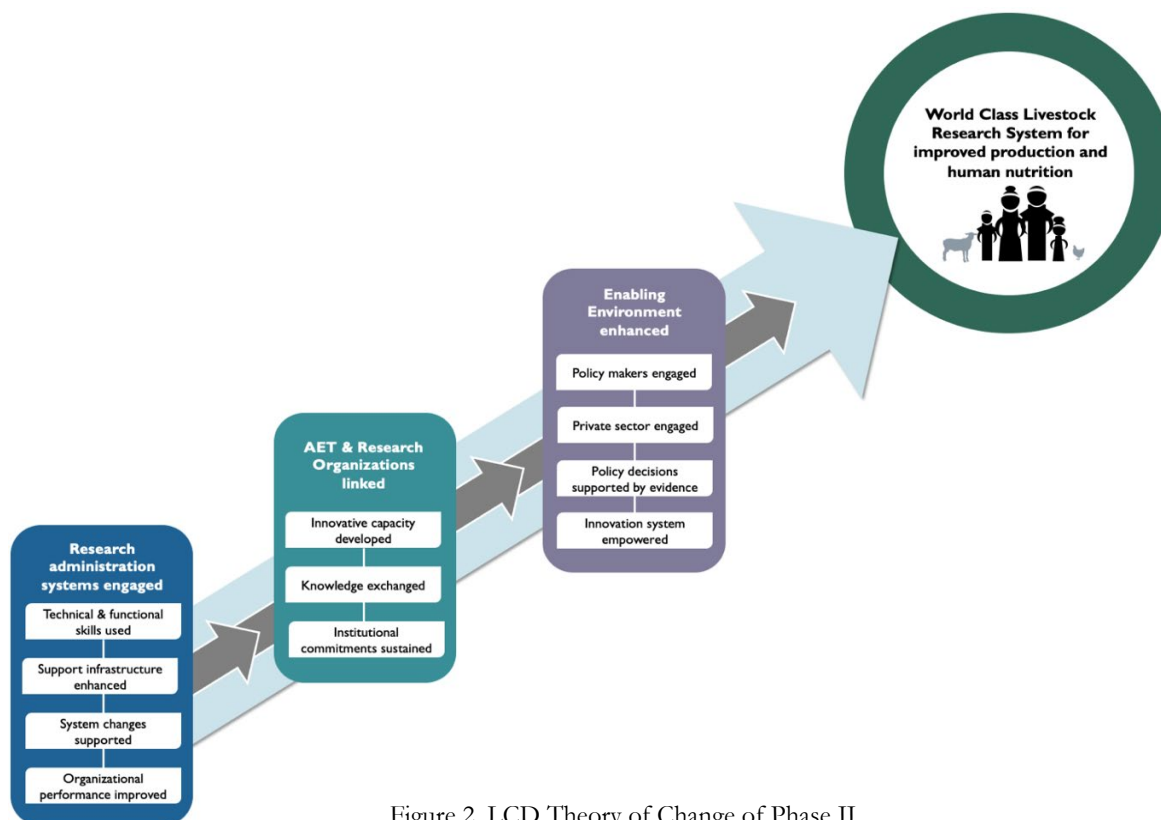
Figure 2. LCD Theory of Change of Phase II

LSIL LOCAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

1. Enhancing networking and collaboration

Funds can be used to facilitate multistakeholder platforms (MSPs) at national or regional level or community of practice for joint identification of livestock research challenges, identification of strategic partners and alliances, objectives and goals, or development of strategic and operational plans for continuity. Applicants are encouraged to use LCD funds to enhance collaboration of diverse actors, including the private sector, non-government organizations, civil society organizations, and target-country governments, to mobilize knowledge, expertise, technology, business solutions, advocacy, and financial resources. The proposal will be expected to include a stakeholder engagement plan, the audience and participants, expected outcomes, and a sustainability plan for a proposed networking platform.

2. Strengthening institutional linkages

Funds can be used to develop and implement activities to strengthen strategic institutional linkages to enhance the delivery of demand driven research. This could be the link between research and educational institutions, research and extension organizations, research and producer groups/cooperatives, or the private sector, and other government agencies participating in policy making. Applicants will be expected to include a strategy/plan to develop new or strengthen current institutional linkages, a list of actors identified, performance objectives set for the activities planned, and a sustainability plan to ensure cross-institutional linkages are continued and expanded. Potential areas for funding include but are not limited

to leadership training as a path for mid-level and junior researchers seeking institutional collaborations, scholarly writing (including policy documents), building social capital, critical thinking and problem-solving skills development for networking and collaboration, and developing policy publications and advocacy (applicants pursuing this area will be expected to partner with the Enabling Environment CCT). Applicants should demonstrate the two-directional exchanges between researchers and collaborating partners to ensure the mutual benefits and viability of institutional linkages.

3. Curricula development/upgrade

Funds can be used to develop new or update existing curricula (especially in practical skill areas). Under this LCD priority area, applicants are encouraged to propose a new course on research skills (for example, introductory or advanced R programming, mixed research methods, gender equality and social inclusion (GESI), community development, etc.) for credit at universities or colleges with at least four-year degree programs. Applicants can request a budget support for hands-on curriculum-related activities or for upgrading classroom and laboratory facilities. Equipment, teaching aid and supplies should not exceed 25 percent of the proposed budget for all types of LCD projects. Applicants are encouraged to integrate a virtual exchange (VE) (i.e., a module in course or entire course) for high impact practice. VEs can connect local university students and faculty participating in research with their counterparts at a U.S., international or local university to work collaboratively, promote students' intercultural competence and digital literacy across shared multicultural learning environments, utilize a variety of teaching strategies, such as peer review, cooperative learning, online discussions, project-based learning, service learning and co-teaching. Applicants applying to address this priority area will be required to demonstrate institutional commitment to continue LCD initiated activities after LSIL funding.

4. Enhancing student engagement and professional development

Funds can be used to identify and optimize strategies to engage students, especially women and underrepresented minorities (e.g., students from low socio-economic background or caste in Nepal) in research activities of the LSIL Reach and Focus Projects as well as through internship or field work. Funds can be also used to strengthen students' capacity via professional development programs focused on research competence, academic enrichment and other complementary skills (e.g., leadership, communication, critical thinking, etc.) deemed important to develop successful researchers for livestock research systems. Proposals for student engagement can include small stipends for students' participation in an international research conference, professional workshop(s) or research internship. PIs must indicate the type of output that student(s) will need to accomplish and submit as part of measuring students' performance in the program. Applicants applying to address this priority area will be required to demonstrate institutional commitment to continue LCD initiated activity(ies) after LSIL funding.

5. Enhancing junior researchers, faculty and administrative staff training and professional development

Funds can be used to propose training for junior researchers, faculty, research administrators, and laboratory staff in practical and research skills that enhance their institutions' research output. Proposed activities can include a leadership academy for junior women scientists or faculty, workshops on policy advocacy and policy publications (applicants pursuing this area will be expected to partner with Enabling Environment CCT), research methods, strategic alliances and partnering, research administration, etc. Applicants may want to consider combining some professional development activities for junior researchers, faculty, research administrators, and staff with those that might be considered for graduate students. Applicants can include small stipends for junior researchers or faculty's participation in an international research conference, professional workshop(s) or research internship. PIs must indicate the

type of output that junior researcher or faculty will need to accomplish and submit as part of measuring their performance in the program.

Applicants may also offer activities to enhance research culture and administration within the participating organization through improvements in management, governance, strategic planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning, plus collaboration and creating social value through organizational and institutional strengthening. Trainings can focus on grant-writing skills, pre- and post-award services, ethics and compliance, etc. with the aim to enhance institutional capacities to support and advance research.

Applicants applying to address this priority area will be required to demonstrate institutional commitment to continue LCD initiated activities after LSIL funding.

6. Enhancing the planned training program for communities, farmers, and other stakeholders

Funds can be used to design a cost-effective training and extension model using the proposed training of trainers (TOT) approach, base materials and methods described in the LSIL Focus or Reach Projects. Proposals must include a training strategy, delivery and sustainability plan that meets the needs of a stakeholder group(s) targeted by the LSIL Reach or Focus Project, and that is scalable. TOT strategy may include a training of local cadre of trainers, peer-to-peer learning, coaching, mentoring, and shared accountability, risk, and responsibility. The delivery and sustainability plan should connect the training to local extension services, where applicable, to ensure the training program is sustained and the knowledge is disseminated to larger audience. The training program must include the development of training manuals and other supplementary materials to enhance the learning process.

It should be noted that the funds in this priority area are for the current training program in the LSIL Focus or Reach Project that does not have a TOT component or miss an element from the TOT component that can strengthen it. The LCD funds cannot be used to replace budgeted expenses for the training/TOT in the current LSIL Focus or Reach Project. Funds can be used only to complement or maximize the impact of the current effort in the LSIL Focus or Reach Project.

Applicants applying to address this priority area will be required to demonstrate institutional commitment to continue LCD initiated activities after LSIL funding.

RFA REQUIREMENTS

The following are important requirements for applicants:

- **Only target-country institutions of active LSIL Reach and Focus Projects can apply**. The US and/or international counterparts (i.e., principal investigators (PIs) /co-PIs of LSIL Reach and Focus Projects) can serve as mentor(s) to the target country team.
- LCD funds can be used to support one or more LCD priority areas described in the LSIL Local Capacity Development Priorities section specific to the project to enhance existing LCD activities in the LSIL Reach and Focus Projects and to integrate system's thinking.
- Applicants will need to demonstrate how LCD funds will be used to enhance the value and sustainability/viability of LCD activities in target countries.
- LCD funds can be used by two or more projects in a target country where local partners are willing to pool LCD funds and collaborate to enhance their current LCD efforts that crosscut through LSIL funded projects. It will be up to local partners to decide who leads the pooled effort.
- Target-country institutions will be allowed to invite other local institutions, including institutions involved in LSIL Phase I, that are critical to the sustainability of LCD efforts in the target

country. For example, LCD funds can be used to involve local extension services to expand the scope and sustainability of a TOT program even if they have not been involved in LSIL Phase I or II activities.

The following types of projects will be funded:

(1) **Individual project:** This is a short-term grant issued as a subaward to a local institution for projects lasting up to15 months with budget of up to $30,000. These projects shall enhance the scope of the current LCD activities in the LSIL Reach or Focus Project. The project will focus on at least one LCD priority area and must demonstrate having an organizational impact.

(2) **Consortium project:** This is a longer-term grant issued as a subaward to the lead organization for projects lasting up to 24 months with budgets of up to $70,000. These projects will commonly involve **up to three local partners** and employ an integrated, interdisciplinary approach involving two or more LCD priority areas that crosscut through all target country LSIL Reach and Focus Projects. Applicants must integrate a system's thinking approach and demonstrate having a systems-wide impact.

(3) **Consortium+ project:** This is a longer-term grant issued as a subaward to the lead organization for projects lasting up to 24 months with budgets up to $100,000. This set up will engage local partners from LSIL Reach and Focus Projects, and employ an integrated, interdisciplinary, and system's thinking approach(es). Projects must address two or more LCD priority areas that crosscut through all target country LSIL Reach and Focus Projects and demonstrate having a systems-wide impact. If this mechanism is selected by **ALL** LSIL Reach and Focus Projects in the target country, then there will be only one LCD-funded project in the target country.

Consortium and Consortium+ projects will be awarded through a **two-step process** involving the submission of a Concept Note (see Application Guidelines below), followed by a full proposal upon invitation from LSIL. The LCD CCT will have a discretion to advice LSIL Reach and Focus Projects to pool funds if their proposed LCD priority areas of focus are similar and that pooled efforts will maximize systems-wide impact. The LCD CCT team will engage LSIL Reach and Focus Projects in the co-design process of the LCD activities (see LCD Co-design Process below). Upon submission of full proposals and/or concepts notes, the LSIL reserves the right to ask applicants to make changes to the budgets, scope, timing, and locations of proposed activities or to combine proposals.

Eligibility & Definition of an African or Asian Institution

This solicitation's eligibility is limited to researchers from local African and Asian Institutions which are named as a principal or co-principal investigator (PI or Co-PI) or a collaborator in the LSIL Reach or Focus Project in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Nepal, Niger, and Rwanda. Following USAID practice, we define a local African or Asian institution as 1) majority African/Asian owned and/or managed and 2) majority African/Asian board of directors' composition. If you have questions about the eligibility of your institution, please contact livestock-lab@ufl.edu.

Each proposal must identify the lead-PI from the Africa- or Asia-based research/academic institution that is part of a LSIL Phase II project, who will take the lead in defining priorities and will then draw on a local or international mentor for support as needed to enhance their capacity in implementation and management of LCD projects. A mentor can be from any US, international or locally based institution. If you have difficulty identifying a mentor or would like assistance getting in touch with a mentor you think may be appropriate, please contact livestock-lab@ufl.edu.

To receive USAID funding a local organization shall be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) with an assigned Unique Entity Identifier. Instructions for registration in SAM can be found here https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration. The status of eligible organizations must be verifiable against

both the U.S. Department of Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control List of Specially Designated Nationals (SDNs) and Blocked Persons, and the United Nations Security Designation List, in accordance with 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 25.110 (https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/granule/CFR-2013-title2-vol1/CFR-2013-title2-vol1-sec25-110).

Lead Organization and Collaborator Roles; Contribution from Mentors

For proposals selected for funding, UF will establish a subaward with the institution (for individual projects) or with the lead institution (for consortium or consortium+ projects), which will coordinate all activities in the target country, including execution of appropriate agreements with all collaborating partner(s) in the consortium.

For teams pursuing the consortia arrangement, the requirements aim to ensure mutually beneficial partnerships, strengthening the capacity of local partners, ensuring they can access the latest scientific information, and facilitating the development of local or context-appropriate capacity. The target country governments, in particular the ministries of agriculture and/or livestock as well as the ministries of health and related agencies, are critically important stakeholders in each target country. Consider how best to involve them in the proposed LCD activities.

International organizations with an office or branch in the target country are not considered target country partners.

Mentor's role include but are not limited to the following: 1) mentors must be ready to support the PI in both LCD project refinement and implementation, 2) mentors are encouraged to support intellectual growth and development of the PI and local team, provide professional guidance and support mentees to build local or global networks with relevant professionals and researchers, 3) mentors may co-author capacity development outputs and results, and finally, 4) mentors will ensure that proposed LCD efforts strengthen LCD activities of the LSIL Reach and Focus Projects and demonstrate system's thinking.

Full proposals should clearly identify the respective roles, responsibilities and activities of all members in the project management section, and by including a more detailed description of each of the key personnel using the form in Appendix 2. The respective budget allocations and budget justification narrative for each collaborating partner should also be described using the template in Appendix 3. All subaward projects must comply with USAID, LSIL, and their own organizational rules governing the use of human subjects or animals for capacity development programs.

The lead organization will be responsible for fulfilling all USAID requirements and submitting data and reports to the ME. This includes responsibilities related to Monitoring and Evaluation, Open Data Management, Knowledge Sharing, and Environmental Management and Mitigation measures. The lead organization will also need to ensure compliance with the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan of the LSIL. The ME will provide oversight to the lead organization, and through it to its subawardees, on matters that are technical (e.g., by giving feedback on work plans and progress reports, and by monitoring ongoing field and other activities), administrative (e.g., verifying quality of reporting), and financial (e.g., reviewing financial reports, and giving approvals for procurement and travel).

LSIL LCD co-design process

The LCD CCT will launch the LCD RFA and the co-design process at the project meetings in the target countries scheduled between April and June 2022. Two co-design workshops are planned (see Important Dates table on Page 1 of this RFA for LCD workshops #1 and #2 in target countries). These workshops will be open to the LSIL Reach and Focus Project PIs, Co-PIs and collaborator(s). A selected number of partners from LSIL Phase I will be also invited to potentially participate and build on the work from Phase I partners. The aim of the co-design process is to collaboratively identify LCD priority areas that

align with the LSIL Reach and Focus Projects' LCD plans, define project objectives, and refine LCD plans so they integrate system's thinking and contribute to systems-wide impact.

The LCD CCT may also host virtual follow up meetings with project teams to answer any outstanding questions before submission of the concept notes and/or full proposals. This process may involve potentially discussions with the USAID mission staff and other experts, within or outside of target country.

Invitation to or participation in co-design or other communication with LSIL during the application process does not guarantee automatic approval of the full proposal or funding. Furthermore, any expenses incurred during the application process including expenses incurred to prepare for and attend the co-design workshops are the sole responsibility of the applicant(s). However, LSIL recognizes that not all potential stakeholders may have the financial capacity to participate and therefore, the LSIL LCD CCT will cover the costs of the initial event in each country. Additional costs will be assessed on a case-by-case basis as we expect that most interactions among project teams will happen virtually. It should be noted that the co-design process will be in the target country and no international travel is expected.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Concept Notes for Consortium and Consortium+ projects

- Applicants for **Consortium** and **Consortium+** projects shall submit initial Concept Note introducing the proposed LCD effort.
- Concept Notes are not required of Individual projects.
- Concept Notes must be in English.
- Concept Notes must be **3 pages** long (single-spaced), excluding the title page, references, and qualifications.

Furthermore, the applicant shall:
- Use the Letter Format 8 ½" x 11" with 1" margins.
- Use Times New Roman font size 11, single space except for 1) budgets may be in a slightly smaller font (10 point) with smaller margins, and 2) tables may use smaller fonts and margins, however, must be easily readable and no smaller than font of 9 point.
- Include the name of the lead institution and page numbers in the header on each page.
- Submit the Concept Note (as a single document) in PDF format through the Piestar RFx platform.

Concept Notes should include the following elements:

Requirement	Description
Title page	Title of the proposed project
	Prime applicant's name, institution, and contact information
	Key partner organizations
	Proposed project period (estimated start and end in month/year)
	Overall project budget amount
The following are part of the page limit	
Abstract	Not to exceed 200 words
Technical description	Describe how your proposed approach aligns with the LCD objectives for LSIL Phase II as well as with the USAID LCD vision. Applicants should integrate a system's thinking approach and demonstrate having a systems-wide impact. Describe how the proposed work will complement the LCD

	activities of the current LSIL Focus and Reach Projects. Technical description should address: - Description of proposed activities, including rationale, planned inputs and anticipated outputs; and how they map with the LSIL LCD objectives. - Short description of both core and non-core partners, including their institutional strengths, capabilities, resources leveraged (do not include financial resources from the LSIL Reach or Focus Projects) and other appropriate context. - Description of key internal (i.e., within the prime applicant institution) collaborations and how they will contribute. - Short description of the specific roles and responsibilities of each partner in the proposed activities, as well as how each partner can contribute to the system-wide impact. - Short description of how the proposed activities and/or overall project are driven by local needs and emphasize local leadership. - Describe how existing/ongoing LCD activities within the LSIL Reach and Focus Projects will be balanced with new initiatives and activities under this award. - If the project is to be funded, describe how the intended outcomes of your project (and partnerships, where appropriate), can be sustained beyond the life of this award.
Not part of the page limit	
References	Use the Journal of Animal Science style to format references: https://academic.oup.com/jas/pages/General_Instructions
Qualifications	Appendix 1. Biographical sketch of the PI (limited to one page) Appendix 2. Key Personnel. Summarize project team's qualifications including mentor's if applicable (limited to one page). *Applicants are encouraged to include a general organizational chart and description of how the project will be coordinated among partner*s.

Full Proposals

Full proposals are expected to provide extensive details about the planned activities as well as incorporate ideas, adjustments, or feedback provided by the ME and LCD CCT teams.

Full proposals are required for Individual projects.

Some applicants who submitted Concept Notes to implement Consortium and Consortium+ project will be invited to submit full proposals.

Important:

- The maximum length for **Individual project** proposals is **5 pages** (single space) excluding the title page, table of contents, acronyms, references, and appendices. Abstract is part of 5 pages.

- The maximum length for **Consortium** and **Consortium+ project** proposals is **8 pages** (single space) excluding the title page, table of contents, acronyms, references, and appendices. Abstract is part of 10 pages.

Furthermore, the applicant shall:

- Use the Letter Format 8 ½" x 11" with 1" margins.

- Use Times New Roman font size 11, single space except for 1) budgets may be in a slightly smaller font (10 point) with smaller margins, and 2) tables may use smaller fonts and margins, however, must be easily readable and no smaller than font of 9 point.

- Include the name of the lead institution and page numbers in the header on each page.

- Submit the Full Proposal (as a single document) in PDF format through the Piestar RFx platform. Additionally, a Project Budget must be prepared in and submitted as Microsoft Excel. Use Appendix 3. Budget Template.

Full Proposal should include the following elements:

Section	Description
Title page	Title of the proposed project Prime applicant's name, institution, and contact information Key partner organizations Proposed project period (estimated start and end in month/year) Overall project budget amount
Table of contents	
Acronyms	
The following are part of the page limit	
Abstract	Not to exceed 200 words
Technical approach	Describe how your proposed approach aligns with the LCD objectives for LSIL Phase II as well as with the USAID LCD vision. The Individual projects should at least demonstrate impact on local research capacity development while Consortium and Consortium+ projects should demonstrate a system's thinking approach and have systems-wide impact. Describe how the proposed work will complement the LCD activities of the current LSIL Focus and Reach Projects. Technical description should address: • Description of proposed activities, including rationale, planned inputs and anticipated outputs; and how they map with the LSIL LCD objectives. • Description of both core and non-core partners, including their institutional strengths, capabilities, resources leveraged (do not include financial resources from the LSIL Reach or Focus Projects) and other appropriate context. • Description of key internal (i.e., within the prime applicant institution) collaborations and how they will contribute. • Description of the specific roles and responsibilities of each partner in the proposed activities, as well as how each partner can contribute to the system-wide impact. • Description of how the proposed activities and/or overall project are driven by local needs and emphasize local leadership. • Describe how existing/ongoing LCD activities within the LSIL Reach and Focus Projects will be balanced with new initiatives and activities under this award.

	• If the project is to be funded, describe how the intended outcomes of your project (and partnerships, where appropriate), can be sustained beyond the life of this award. • Provide a provisional implementation timeline.
Management plan	• Describe the qualifications, roles, and responsibilities of the lead and each member organization in the project, including a staffing plan (for key personnel and other project staff). • Mention anticipated problems and how they will be addressed. Explain how you will address possible COVID-19 related restrictions that may impact LCD activities.
Expected outcomes	Focus on measurable indicators of the potential development impact of the LCD activities. Include brief description of the expected outcomes.
Not part of the page limit	
Budget	A budget for the life of the project that gives detail for each institution as well as an overall budget summary. *Use the "Budget template" in Excel and upload to Piestar RFx as a separate document.* (Appendix 3)
Budget narrative	Provide a detailed budget narrative that is clear and thorough so that costs included in the spreadsheet can be easily verified.
Financial Questionnaire	Complete the subrecipient financial questionnaire using the "Subrecipient Financial Questionnaire form." (Appendix 4).
References	Use the Journal of Animal Science style to format references: https://academic.oup.com/jas/pages/General_Instructions
Qualifications	Appendix 1. Biographical sketch of the PI (limited to one page) Appendix 2. Key Personnel including mentor's qualifications.
Letters of support	Provide a letter of support from participating institutions in the Consortium or Consortium+ projects (maximum 1 page each) as non-binding documentation of collaborators' intent, willingness, and ability to commit to conducting activities together if the proposal is selected for funding.
Letter of commitment	LSIL believes that institutional commitment and organizational alignment with proposed activities/ objectives are essential to success and sustainability. Please provide a letter of commitment from the prime applicant institution of the proposed project. A strong letter will articulate dedication to the project, knowledge of and commitment to their role in the proposed project, highlight any organizational synergies (institutional priorities, pervious partnerships, mandates, etc) with the proposed activities and objectives, and indicate existing resources that can be leveraged (If applicable).

Budget

At the full proposal stage, a detailed budget must be submitted as a separate file using the MS Excel template provided (Appendix 3). The budget narrative must be submitted as part of the full proposal. At least 80% of the total budget amount (including direct and indirect costs) must be spent in the target country. Examples of in-country spending include: subawards given to local organizations; costs budgeted for in-country activities such as trainings, seminars, workshops or MSP meetings; other consultants or service contracts made with local suppliers; equipment and supplies purchased in the target country.

The budget and budget narrative must include the following:

- Direct salaries and wages: Include names and positions of individuals for each position proposed (if known). Please consider directly budgeting fiscal/clerical support to adequately support project administration. Directly budgeted administrative position(s) may not be recovered through indirect costs. Salaries should be budgeted in the units in which they are paid. For example, if an organization pays its employees in monthly rates, then the unit of measure in the budget should be the month and the applicant must use the rate per month for each employee. Salary increases can be adjusted to allow for inflation. **No salary should be budgeted for U.S. or internationally based mentors**. In-country/local mentors can be paid a honorarium budgeted under Consultants' category.
- Fringe: Include any employment benefits that staff paid from this project will receive. These may include health insurance, unemployment benefits, education benefits, etc. Benefits should be calculated based on the standard employment benefits offered by the organization and should meet the minimum requirements mandated by law.
- Travel, transportation, and per diem: Follow the USAID standard provisions "Travel and International Air Transportation". Describe the itinerary including dates, estimated airfare, class of travel, and any transportation-related expenses. Include lodging and subsistence costs in accordance with your institution's established policies and practice (U.S. Government per diem rates can be used) for each trip, location, number of days, and the daily rate. Also include miscellaneous travel expenses such as ground transportation, shuttle/transfers, etc. Distinguish between domestic (U.S.) and international travel. Applicants are encouraged to include one international travel for U.S. or internationally based mentor if applicable. Budget justification must provide a brief statement of justification for that travel.
- Equipment: Provide a detailed budget breakdown for purchases of durable equipment, including type, quantity, unit price and total cost. Durable equipment is defined as any item valued US $5,000 or more with an expected life of more than one year. All costs for durable equipment must be determined through formal price quotes and the applicant must be ready to provide these quotes to UF upon request. If you plan to purchase any equipment, please notify LSIL at livestock-lab@ufl.edu and we will share additional forms with you to complete.
- Consultants: Include names and titles of proposed individuals (if known), number of units (days, months, or FTEs) for each person, proposed unit rate, and total consultant costs.
- Other direct costs: Include costs for branding and marking, communications, postage, passport/visas, medical exams/immunization (for international travel), medical evacuation insurance, expendable supplies and materials, lab tests, field inputs, publication costs, etc. Provide the basis for each estimate, including type, quantity, unit price, etc. as applicable. In this section, applicants may also include:
  - Trainings, seminars, workshops or stakeholder meeting costs: These refer to all the costs incurred for organizing and conducting training events, workshops, seminars, or stakeholder meetings, including travel.
  - Participant Support Costs: All Participant Support Costs must be preapproved by USAID and should thus be identified separately in the proposal budget. Participant Support Costs could include stipends, travel reimbursements or other fees paid on behalf of a participant in connection with a training, workshop, or activity. A 'participant' is defined as a non-employee who is the recipient, not the provider, of a conference, workshop, seminar, training, or other short-term informational activity. Participants do not provide deliverables, perform work, or provide training. Please complete the detailed participant support tab in the budget template.
  - Tuition: Tuition fees are allowed only for local students. No U.S. students should be budgeted.

- o Materials and Supplies: Budget for classroom or lab supplies and teaching aids. Provide the basis for each estimate, including type, quantity, unit price, etc. as applicable. If you plan to purchase any restricted items (restricted items that require explicit prior approval from USAID prior to purchasing include, agricultural commodities such as seeds, pesticides, fertilizer, and feed as well as pharmaceuticals including veterinary drugs), please notify LSIL at livestock-lab@ufl.edu and we will share additional forms with you to complete.
- Subaward: If the proposed work includes subrecipients, a detailed line-item budget breakdown for each of such subrecipients should be included. Applicants are encouraged to use the detailed line-item budget template (Appendix 3) to calculate subrecipients' expenses. Each subrecipient's budget must be accompanied with a detailed budget narrative. All proposed subrecipients must be based in the target country and be registered in SAM.gov with a Unique Entity Identifier.
- Indirect cost (overhead or general and administrative costs): If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), then use NICRA rate (attach a copy of your latest NICRA). Also, describe the type of indirect rate applied. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may claim 10% de minimis indirect cost rate as defined in 2 CFR 200.414(f) (http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200_1414&rgn=div8).

All proposed grant activity costs must be allowable within the normal operating practices of the applicant and should be in accordance with their written policies and procedures. All line items must be clearly explained in the budget narrative with enough detail to allow UF to determine if the cost is allowable. Budgeted amounts must also be supported by justification and the applicant must be able to provide supporting documents if requested.

Important:
- No funding should be requested for acquisition, construction, alteration, refurbishment or repairs (including dredging and excavation) of buildings or other vertical structures.
- No Cost Share is requested. "Cost share" refers to contributions from the organization or other entities. It also include in-kind contributions such as volunteer's time and donated venues.

Submission

All Concept Notes and Full Proposals must be submitted via the Piestar RFx proposal platform. To submit, the PI will need to create a free account at https://livestock.piestar-rfx.com/opportunities and follow the detailed submission instructions. If local PI has an account from previous LSIL engagements, they can use it to sign in. If you have technical difficulties with your submission, click on "Help" within Piestar RFx. Proposals and/or supporting documents (e.g., budgets, supporting letters) that are submitted via e-mail will not be accepted.

Questions

Questions or concerns about the technical content or budget should be written and emailed to livestock-lab@ufl.edu by 11:59 PM U.S. Eastern Daylight Time (Florida time) on the date indicated for a specific country in Important Dates table (Page 1 of this RFA), using the subject line "LCD RFA related question" Answers to the inquiries will be posted as indicated in the Important Dates Table on the website from which this RFA was accessed.

Concept Note and Full Proposal Review and Evaluation Criteria

The LSIL ME and LCD will review the Concept Notes (applies only to Consortium and Consortium+ projects) and the Full Proposals (applies to Individual projects as well as to those Consortium or Consortium+ projects who are invited to submit Full Proposals after Concept Notes selection) for completeness and alignment with the guidelines outlined in this RFA. Exclusion criteria include but not limited to:

- Project team did not participate in the LSIL LCD co-design process in the target country.
- The proposed project team does not meet the required eligibility and/or team composition requirements (for example, the PI is not from a local institution participating in the LSIL Focus or Reach Project as a PI, Co-PI or collaborator).
- Submitted response (i.e., concept note or full proposal) or does not have the required format/information.
- Submitted response is poorly written and it cannot be fully understood.
- Proposed activity(ies) do not focus on the target country and LCD priorities outlined in the LCD RFA.
- Submitted response does not address how proposed activity(ies) will align with the USAID vision for local capacity development writ large.
- Proposed activity(ies) unnecessarily duplicate LCD CCT activities already included in the LSIL Focus or Reach Project.
- Proposed LCD approach is not suitable.

Successful applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal. Unsuccessful applicants will also be informed.

Evaluation criteria:

	Points
LCD Approach	**80.00**
• Alignment with stated priorities of the LCD CCT; complementarity with existing LCD activities built into the LSIL Reach or Focus Project	5.0
• Strong justification for the selected LCD priority area(s)	15.0
• Innovation, quality and soundness of the approach which integrates systems thinking; proposed approach has potential for system-wide impact	30.0
• Feasibility of achieving results within the proposed budget and timeline	15.0
• Demonstrated a clear plan for sustainability or impact of the LCD activity after LSIL funding ends	15.0
Management Approach	**10.00**
• Team member qualifications and past performance in capacity development	10.0
Budget	**10.00**
• Proposed costs are reasonable, effective, real, fair, necessary, allowable, allocable, and well justified	10.0

It should be noted that awarded projects will be expected to work with the LSIL ME and LCD CCT team to develop a project workplan and related Monitoring and Evaluation performance indicators.

Additional Materials for Concept Note and Full Proposal Preparation

Feed the Future and USAID Materials:

- USAID Local Capacity Development Policy (DRAFT): https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/LCD_Policy_-_FORMATTED_508_01-11.pdf
- Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development, USAID, 2014: https://www.usaid.gov/policy/local-systems-framework
- Paper Series on Capacity and Capacity Strengthening - Inquiry 3: Approaches to Strengthening Capacity with Local Actors: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/SRLA_Paper_Series_Inquiry_3_Approaches_to_Strengthening_Capacity_FINAL.pdf

Country level resources available on the LSIL website including the HICD gap analyses, reports, etc.

- Burkina Faso (brief and full report): https://livestocklab.ifas.ufl.edu/themes/cctlcd/

- Niger (brief and full report) : https://livestocklab.ifas.ufl.edu/themes/cctlcd/

- Ethiopia (brief and full report): https://livestocklab.ifas.ufl.edu/themes/cctlcd/

- Rwanda (brief and full report), https://livestocklab.ifas.ufl.edu/themes/cctlcd/

- Nepal (brief and full reports of HICAST): https://livestocklab.ifas.ufl.edu/themes/cctlcd/

- Nepal (brief and full reports of AFU): https://livestocklab.ifas.ufl.edu/themes/cctlcd/

LIST OF APPENDICES

Forms and templates to complete

Concept note and full proposal:

    Appendix 1. Biographical sketch template

    Appendix 2. Key Personnel

Full proposal only:

    Appendix 3. Budget template (Excel)

    Appendix 4. Subrecipient Financial Questionnaire form (PDF)

Appendix 1: Biographical Sketch for PI

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

*[The biographical sketch should include an overview of academic and research credentials. **The biographical sketch is limited to 1 page, including publications**.]*

NAME

Education and Training *[List in chronological order]*

Year Awarded	Degree	Institution	Area

Research and Professional Experience *[List in reverse chronological order beginning with your current position. Limit to 5.]*

Years	Position title and organization/unit

List up to 3 Synergistic Activities aligned with Local Capacity Development approaches/vision

1. …
2. …
3. …

Publications (up to 5)

*[Include a chronological list of your publications in refereed journals, including those in press, or non-refereed technical publications from that past five years that have relevance to the proposed project. All authors should be listed in the same order as they appear on each paper cited, along with the title and complete reference as these usually appear in journals. Publications **are included** in the 1-page limit]*

Appendix 2. Key Personnel

KEY PERSONNEL

*[Complete table including all key personnel including mentor's qualifications. **The key personnel is limited to 1 page**.]*

NAME	ROLE IN THE PROJECT	QUALIFICATIONS

Appendix 3. Project Budget

Please prepare and submit the Project Budget in MS Excel using template provided.

Appendix 4. Subrecipient Financial Questionnaire form

Please complete and submit the subrecipient financial questionnaire using the "Subrecipient Financial Questionnaire form" provided.