

Canadian Foodgrains Bank Agriculture and Livelihoods Portfolio Strategic Review

Call for Expressions of Interest

Background

Canadian Foodgrains Bank was established in 1983. At that time, it focused exclusively on food assistance and specialized in the logistics of shipping Canadian grain to address humanitarian crises around the world. Contributions of grain were made by Canadian farmers and matched with a financial contribution by the Canadian government. Since then, the Foodgrains Bank has evolved significantly. The Foodgrains Bank played a key role in untying food aid, allowing food assistance programs to purchase food locally and, increasingly, provide cash-based transfers. Additionally, it recognized the need to support long-term, sustainable programming and began addressing the underlying drivers of food insecurity through agriculture and livelihoods projects. These projects were seen as an opportunity to build community resilience and reduce the need for food assistance.

The Foodgrains Bank began funding distinct agriculture and livelihoods projects in 2003. Projects have increased quickly in number and size since that time, and the total annual value of programming has grown from \$20,000 in 2003 to over \$14 million in 2016.¹ Over the past decade, the cumulative investment has been nearly \$110 million. In addition, the Foodgrains Bank has made significant strides in some areas such as conservation agriculture. This has included supporting three dedicated technical officers in Africa and implementing a five-year, \$14 million project with funding from Global Affairs Canada to scale up conservation agriculture in East Africa.

While evaluations of some individual projects have been completed in the past decade, no independent comprehensive assessment of our agriculture and livelihoods programming portfolio has been conducted. Given the extensive growth of this programming since it began in 2003 and strategic goals for the future, this is an important time to evaluate this programming.

The purpose of this review is to assess our agriculture and livelihoods portfolio to evaluate the degree to which the types of projects that are funded and the way these projects are implemented are achieving improved food security. The review will provide recommendations to improve future project planning and implementation to increase impact on food security and, more broadly, guide the strategic direction of future agriculture and livelihoods programs.

Expression of Interest

We are seeking expressions of interest from small teams of consultants (2-3 people). The review team should identify the lead consultant and the roles of all team members. The review team shall meet the following criteria:

- Minimum 10 years of experience in leading project/program evaluations, including evaluating food security and rural livelihoods projects
- Minimum master's degree in rural development, agricultural sciences, social sciences, or related field

¹ All figures in Canadian dollars.

- The team should include both research expertise as well as practitioner/practical development experience.
- Knowledge and practical experience in working with rural communities in developing countries.
- Demonstrate a diversity of experience amongst team members. Expertise related to agronomy, gender, resilience and climate smart agriculture is a priority. Other assets include expertise in markets, nutrition, rural household economics in developing countries, or other relevant topics.
- Excellent analytical and report writing skills.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- Experience in qualitative and quantitative methods.
- Fluent spoken and written English.

Timeline

The evaluation will be carried out between June and September 2017, with a draft report submitted by October 15, 2017 and a final report for this evaluation by December 1, 2017.

Budget

The budget for this evaluation, including evaluator fees, travel, and other relevant costs is CDN \$60,000.

Submission Information

If you are interested in being considered for this opportunity, please submit the following to Stefan Epp-Koop, sepp-koop@foodgrainsbank.ca, to arrive by 16:30 CST May 10, 2017.

- Brief CV of all team members
- Expression of interest indicating relevant knowledge and experience, the anticipated role of each team member, and how you meet the candidate requirements.
- Suggested methodology, schedule, and budget for the evaluation.

For more information on this evaluation, please refer to the attached complete Terms of Reference.

Agriculture and Livelihoods Portfolio Strategic Review

Terms of Reference

Canadian Foodgrains Bank



1.0 INTRODUCTION TO CANADIAN FOODGRAINS BANK

Canadian Foodgrains Bank is a partnership of 15 Canadian member churches and church-based agencies working to achieve food security in developing countries through food assistance, nutrition, and agriculture and livelihoods programming.

Member agencies initiate and deliver programming with a wide range of local, national, and international organizations. Canadian Foodgrains Bank receives proposals from members for these projects, ensures that projects fall within funding parameters, and prepares project agreements detailing financial commitments and reporting requirements. Additionally, the Foodgrains Bank provides technical assistance and capacity development to members and implementing partners related to project design and monitoring and evaluation.

Growth of Agriculture and Livelihoods Programming

The Foodgrains Bank was established in 1983. At that time, it focused on food assistance and specialized in the logistics of shipping Canadian grain to address humanitarian crises around the world. Contributions of grain were made by Canadian farmers and matched by the Canadian government. Since then, the Foodgrains Bank has evolved significantly. The Foodgrains Bank played a key role in untying food aid, allowing food assistance programs to purchase food locally and, increasingly, provide cash-based transfers. Additionally, it recognized the need to support long-term, sustainable programming and began addressing the underlying drivers of food insecurity through agriculture and livelihoods projects. These projects were seen as an opportunity to build community resilience and reduce the need for food assistance.

The Foodgrains Bank began funding distinct agriculture and livelihoods projects in 2003. Projects have increased quickly in number and size since that time, and the total annual value of programming has grown from \$20,000 in 2003 to over \$14 million in 2016.² Over the past decade, the cumulative investment has been nearly \$110 million. In addition, the Foodgrains Bank has made significant strides in some areas such as conservation agriculture. This has included supporting three dedicated technical officers in Africa and implementing a five-year, \$14 million project with funding from Global Affairs Canada to scale up conservation agriculture in East Africa.

Foodgrains Bank Agriculture and Livelihoods Programming (2007-2017)				
	Projects	Countries	Value of Projects (\$C)	% of Portfolio
Africa	188	22	\$76,037,739	69%
Asia	78	12	\$26,099,149	24%
Americas	20	5	\$4,953,975	5%
Middle East	7	2	\$2,847,932	3%
TOTAL	293	41	\$109,938,795	

The Foodgrains Bank's agriculture and livelihoods portfolio includes a wide variety of agriculturally-based programming in developing countries including farmer training, seed provision, facilitating access to water, and environmental rehabilitation. Much of this work seeks to enable farmers to adapt to climate change, including changing precipitation and temperature patterns and extreme weather events.

Continued growth of agriculture and livelihoods programming is envisioned in the Foodgrains Bank's strategic plan, with the goal of strengthening livelihoods that increase access to food for one million hunger-

² All figures in Canadian dollars.

affected individuals by 2020. To achieve this, the Foodgrains Bank has also set a strategic goal of securing an additional \$5 million in annual institutional donor support for agriculture and livelihoods programming.

Food Security

Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (FAO, 2002). Within this definition of food security, there are four components:

- *Availability* refers to the quantity, quality and seasonality of the food supply in the affected area including all sources of food including agriculture, livestock, fisheries, and wild foods as well as foods imported into the area by traders.
- *Access* refers to the household's ability to acquire available food through a combination of food production, purchase, barter, gifts, borrowing, or food assistance.
- *Utilization* refers to a household's use of the food to which it has access, including food storage, processing and preparation and its distribution within the household. It also refers to an individual's ability to absorb and metabolize nutrients, which can be affected by disease and malnutrition.
- *Stability* refers to the stability of the other three dimensions over time. Significant impacts on stability normally include such things as seasonality, adverse weather conditions, political instability, or economic factors.

All of the Foodgrains Bank programming must demonstrate a measurable and meaningful impact on one or more of these four components of food security for hunger-affected individuals, households and communities in the developing world.

Strategic Review

While evaluations of individual projects have been completed in the past decade, no independent comprehensive assessment of our agriculture and livelihoods programming portfolio has been conducted. Given the extensive growth of this programming since it began in 2003 and strategic goals for the future, this is an important time to evaluate this programming.

The purpose of this review is to assess our agriculture and livelihoods portfolio to evaluate the degree to which the types of projects that we fund and the way these projects are implemented are achieving the goal of improved food security.

As a first step to analyze the Foodgrains Bank's agriculture and livelihoods portfolio, an initial descriptive review was completed in November 2016 to document the current scope of the portfolio. Both quantitative (beneficiary numbers, budgets, inputs, activities, etc.) and qualitative (context, targeting criteria, gender assessment, etc.) data was collected from the 63 projects that are currently funded and active. This data was collected exclusively through secondary sources (project proposals and reports). No project visits or key informant interviews were done during the descriptive review to assess project results or quality.

Portfolio Review Key Learnings

- Most of the Foodgrains Bank's current agriculture and livelihoods programming occurs in Africa (60%), with the balance in Asia (27%), Latin America (8%), and the Middle East (7%).
- The most common interventions are: establishing farmer groups, providing seeds, vegetable cultivation, conservation agriculture, and income generating activities.
- All projects provided training in improved agricultural practices, particularly conservation agriculture and vegetable and fruit production.
- Half of projects contribute to physical infrastructure including improving water sources, roads, or storage and processing facilities.
- 26% of projects link project participants to local governments.
- 36% of projects facilitate access to markets.

- Just over half of the projects included income generation activities and approximately 40% were income diversifying.

2.0 AGRICULTURE AND LIVELIHOODS PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Agriculture and livelihoods projects are funded through two accounts at the Foodgrains Bank. The projects funded through the Food Security Account work towards the following outcomes:

Ultimate Outcome:

- Reduce hunger, improved nutrition and increased food security for hunger-affected individuals and households in developing countries.

Intermediate Outcome:

- Protected or strengthened productive, sustainable, and resilient livelihoods of hunger-affected individuals, households and communities.

Immediate Outcomes:

- Increased access to food for individuals and households to protect livelihoods.
- Increased knowledge of and skills in sustainable agriculture or other livelihoods.
- Increased access to goods and services to support livelihoods.
- Increased access to functioning community and environmental assets.

Other projects are funded through the General Account, and have not necessarily been designed based on these outcomes. However, projects funded through the General Account are generally similar to those funded through the Food Security Account.

3.0 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

The purpose of this review is to assess our agriculture and livelihoods portfolio to evaluate the degree to which the types of projects that are funded and the way these projects are implemented are achieving improved food security.

To do that, objectives of this review are to understand and improve:

- (1) The short (during project implementation) and long-term impact on food security of the Foodgrains Bank's agriculture and livelihood programming.
- (2) The broader impact of agriculture and livelihoods programming on both participants and the communities in which they live, including impacts beyond food production and food security.

The review will provide recommendations to improve future project planning and implementation to increase impact on food security and, more broadly, guide the strategic direction of future agriculture and livelihoods programs.

4.0 TARGET USERS OF THE REVIEW

The primary target users of this review are staff from the Foodgrains Bank and its members. This includes:

- *Member organization staff* who implement agriculture and livelihoods programming and will use the review findings to strengthen future projects in collaboration with their partners.

- The Foodgrains Bank's *Agriculture and Livelihoods Technical Advisor* and *Program Officers*, who will use findings to guide the development and implementation of the Foodgrains Bank's agriculture and livelihoods programming and build the capacity of Foodgrains Bank members and partners to implement programming.
- *The Foodgrains Bank's Program Development Officer*, who will use findings to inform planning for new funding proposals to build on program strengths.

5.0 REVIEW QUESTIONS

To address the objectives outlined in section 3.0, the key questions for this review are:

- 1) What impact has the Foodgrains Bank's agriculture and livelihoods programming had on food security during project implementation and in the long term?
- 2) What impact has the Foodgrains Bank's's agriculture and livelihoods programming had on the participants and communities in which they live, including impacts beyond food production and food security?
- 3) How can the Foodgrains Bank's's agriculture and livelihoods programming be improved to increase its impact, particularly on food security?

6.0 DAC EVALUATION CRITERIA

To answer the key evaluation questions, possible sub-questions for the consultants to address are listed below.

Relevance

- Are the appropriate participants targeted by agriculture and livelihoods programming?
- Are the appropriate geographic areas being targeted by agriculture and livelihoods programming?
- Are the appropriate types of programming being implemented to increase food security?
- What are the characteristics of partners that contribute to strong project outcomes?

Effectiveness

- What are the strengths of the Foodgrains Bank's agriculture and livelihoods programming?
- What are the major factors that limit the effectiveness of agriculture and livelihoods programming?
- In what ways does the Foodgrains Bank as a network of members contribute to project effectiveness (ie through shared learning, capacity development)? How could this be improved?

Impact

- How has funded programming contributed to improved food security for project participants?
- How has funded programming contributed to food security for the broader communities in which participants live?
- What other positive or negative impacts have agriculture and livelihoods projects had for participants and the communities in which they live (such as gender status, improved environments, increased social capital)?
- To what degree has agriculture and livelihoods programming reduced the need for food

assistance? How could the connection between food assistance and agriculture and livelihoods programming be improved?

Sustainability

- Are food security activities and benefits maintained beyond the lifespan of projects?
- Do projects plan appropriately for the long-term sustainability of project interventions?
- What are the factors that contribute to sustainable projects?
- What are the factors that threaten project sustainability?

The final list of questions will be agreed upon between the consultants and Canadian Foodgrains Bank staff.

7.0 METHODOLOGY

This review will include a document review of existing evaluation reports and other project documentation (such as end of project reports) and key informant interviews with members, Foodgrains Bank staff, and implementing partners. Consultants may propose in-country visits to Foodgrains Bank agriculture and livelihoods projects.

The final methodology of this review will be agreed upon between the consultants, Canadian Foodgrains Bank staff and the Agriculture and Livelihoods Committee.

8.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The consultants will perform the following roles and responsibilities for the duration of the review contract:

1. Develop methodology (including interview guides) and work plan
2. Complete the review based on the agreed upon methodology, including:
 - a. Conduct interviews with key Foodgrains Bank staff, member staff, partner staff, and other relevant experts (through telephone or Skype)
 - b. Review existing documentation
 - c. Potentially conduct in-country visits to select Foodgrains Bank programs. In-country visits will be determined in agreement with Foodgrains Bank and member staff.
3. Develop recommendations (in consultation with Foodgrains Bank staff and Agriculture and Livelihoods Committee)
4. Present an oral and written report to the Foodgrains Bank Program Working Group³ and possibly the Board of Directors.

The Foodgrains Bank Program Development Officer will:

1. Act as a liaison to connect consultants with relevant Foodgrains Bank and member staff
2. Facilitate travel details and logistics related to site visits
3. Review and approve the work plan and review framework (as outlined in 9.0) with relevant Foodgrains Bank staff.
4. Be the primary contact person for the evaluators for the duration of the project.

³ The Program Working Group is comprised of representatives of all Foodgrains Bank members to facilitate discussion, collaboration and planning between and amongst members and Canadian Foodgrains Bank staff.

Other Foodgrains Bank International Program Department staff will:

1. Participate in the validation workshop.
2. Participate in key informant interviews.

The Agriculture and Livelihoods Committee of the Foodgrains Bank will:

1. Approve and support in-country site visits.
2. Participate in the validation workshop and provide feedback to consultants on results.
3. Provide feedback regarding the evaluation methodology.
4. Participate in key informant interviews.
5. Disseminate review findings to partners.

Others, including other member staff and partner staff, will be involved as key informants.

9.0 DELIVERABLES AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

There are five key deliverables for this review process:

1. Detailed Review Framework
2. Work Plan
3. Validation workshop
4. Draft Report (see format in Final Report Format section below)
5. Final Report (see format in Final Report Format section below)
6. Oral report

1. Preparation of Detailed Review Framework:

The detailed review framework, to be reviewed and approved by the Foodgrains Bank, will include the following:

- Summary of the review methodology
- Review timeline (as per the detailed work plan)
- Geographic scope and coverage
- Methods of data collection (quantitative and qualitative)
- Summary of primary collection methods (specific questions addressing review objectives and questions must be included)
 - Desk review process
 - Key informant interviews
 - Other tools deemed necessary by the consultant
- Travel and logistical considerations
- Ethical considerations
- Detailed tools (questionnaires, survey guides, etc) as annexes
- Budget
- Other elements deemed necessary by the consultant

2. Detailed Work Plan:

The detailed work plan will be a schedule of dates for key actions and deliverables for this review process.

3. Validation workshop:

The consulting team leader will prepare and present an oral presentation of results to Foodgrains Bank staff and Agriculture and Livelihood committee members and be present for follow-up questions and discussion.

4. Draft Review Report:

The consultant will present a draft review report to the Foodgrains Bank. The Foodgrains Bank will review and provide feedback on the draft report.

5. Final Report:

The consultant will present a final report to the Foodgrains Bank. Any final changes to the report will be provided to the consultant by the Foodgrains Bank, with input from the Agriculture and Livelihoods Committee. Upon agreement on the final report, a management response will be initiated by the Foodgrains Bank. The Foodgrains Bank will then disseminate the final review report to members.

6. Oral Report:

An oral report will be provided to the Foodgrains Bank Program Working Group in December 2017. This oral report will highlight key review findings. Agriculture and Livelihoods Committee members not on the Program Working Group will also participate in this session.

Final Review Report Format:

A final review report is expected to be delivered within three weeks after the receipt of the comments on the draft report. This report, which should be no more than 50 pages, excluding annexes, will include the following:

- Executive Summary (max 3 pages) that also summarizes recommendations.
- Review Objectives.
- Background: Includes background information relevant to the review.
- Review Methodology: Includes a description of the review methodology applied and its limitations.
- Major Findings and Learning.
- Conclusions (directly connected to a major finding, and thus explicitly stated).
- Recommendations (directly connected to a major finding, and thus explicitly stated).
- Annexes: To include
 - Final Terms of Reference,
 - Cited resources or bibliography,
 - A list of those interviewed,
 - Survey tools,
- Reporting language for all reports is English, and the report is expected to be free of spelling and grammar errors

All products arising from this review will be owned by the Foodgrains Bank. The consultants will not be allowed, without prior authorization in writing, to present any of the analytical results or to make use of the review results for private publication purposes.

10.0 TIMELINE AND MILESTONES

The consultant will present to Canadian Foodgrains Bank's Program Working Group in December 2017. To meet this goal a draft report will be provided to the Foodgrains Bank by October 1, 2017.

The timeline for the review will be agreed upon by the consultant and Foodgrains Bank staff as part of the review framework.

11.0 REVIEW CONSULTANT REQUIREMENTS

It is expected that the review will be completed by a small team of consultants (2-3 people). The review team should identify the lead consultant and the roles of the team members. The review team should meet the following criteria:

1. Minimum 10 years of experience in leading project/program evaluations, including evaluating food security and rural livelihoods projects.

2. Minimum master's degree in rural development, agricultural sciences, social sciences or related field.
3. The team should include both research expertise as well as practitioner/practical development experience.
4. Knowledge and practical experience in working with rural communities in developing countries.
5. Demonstrate a diversity of expertise amongst team members. Expertise related to agronomy, gender, resilience, and climate smart agriculture is a priority. Other assets include expertise in markets, nutrition, rural household economics in developing countries, or other relevant topics.
6. Excellent analytical and report writing skills.
7. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
8. Experience in qualitative and quantitative methods.
9. Fluent spoken and written English.

The review team will have access to representatives from the Foodgrains Bank, member and partner staff who will provide logistical support. These representatives will only play a supporting role absolutely necessary in order to protect objectivity.

12.0 REVIEW FINANCING

The total budget for this review will not exceed \$60,000 Cdn including consultant fees, travel, and other relevant costs.