



## **DRY GRAIN PULSES Collaborative Research Support Program (CRSP)**

### **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued by Michigan State University, the Management Entity of the Dry Grain Pulses CRSP, with a Management Office in 321 Agriculture Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824, USA. Website: <http://www.pulsecrsp.msu.edu/>; Email: [dgpcrsp@msu.edu](mailto:dgpcrsp@msu.edu) or [widders@msu.edu](mailto:widders@msu.edu). The Dry Grain Pulses CRSP is funded by the [U.S. Agency for International Development](#) under the Grant No. EDH-A-00-07-00005-00.

**Important Dates:**      Date of issuance: October 12, 2007  
                                    Deadline for receipt of “Expressions of Interest to Participate:” October 26, 2007  
                                    Deadline for receipt of questions of clarifications: November 2, 2007.  
                                    Deadline for receipt of Proposals: November 30, 2007

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The Dry Grain Pulses Collaborative Research Support Program (CRSP), managed by Michigan State University under a five-year award from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), invites proposals for collaborative research, outreach and capacity building projects on beans and cowpeas that will generate mutual benefits to developing countries and the U.S. Proposals must target the global themes, topical areas and geographical regions as described in this RFP, in furtherance of the development goals of USAID’s Office for Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade.

Projects are to be led by a U.S. university with collaborative activities subcontracted to Host Country institutions (e.g., National Agriculture Research Systems (NARS), agriculture universities, NGOs, etc.), IARCs and other U.S. institutions. “Lead” universities submitting project proposals must have predominant capacity to provide scientific leadership to the proposed research and training activities, a commitment to build the capacity of the partner developing country institution(s), an institutional vision for contributing to the sustainable development and economic growth of the host countries in accord with USAID Mission Strategic Objectives, and a willingness to partner with the Management Entity in the achievement of the Dry Grain Pulses CRSP’s global goals. Eligible “lead” universities include U.S. land-grant universities, colleges, and minority-serving institutions as defined by the Title XII legislation of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (and its subsequent amendments).

Approximately nine multi-institutional and multi-disciplinary projects addressing the global themes of A) Reducing production costs and risk, B) Increasing utilization, C) Improving performance and sustainability of value-chains and D) Building institutional capacity will be funded under this RFP. The total award period of funded projects will be 30 months with the possibility of a 24-month extension contingent upon acceptable performance, availability of funding and relevance of project focus. Total financial support for individual projects will range from approximately \$300,000 to \$450,000 for the 30-month period.

### **FOCAL AREAS FOR RESEARCH, OUTREACH AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

The overall goal of the Dry Grain Pulses CRSP is “poverty alleviation and nutritional and food security through sustainable development of dry grain pulse value-chains.” The technical priorities of the Dry

Grain Pulses CRSP (here-to-after called the “Pulse” CRSP) are embodied in the following four Global Themes:

**Global Themes of Pulse CRSP:**

- A. To reduce bean and cowpea production costs and risks for enhanced profitability and competitiveness.
- B. To increase the utilization of bean and cowpea grain, food products and ingredients so as to expand market opportunities and improve community health and nutrition.
- C. To improve the performance and sustainability of bean and cowpea value-chains, especially for the benefit of women.
- D. To increase the capacity, effectiveness and sustainability of agriculture research institutions which serve the bean and cowpea sectors and developing countries.

Successful proposals will put forward an innovative research, capacity building and outreach plan that results in the generation of technologies, practices, knowledge and/or recommendations addressing a **minimum of two priority “Topical Areas”** outlined below under the four Global Themes. **At least one of the two topical areas must address Global Theme D, “Capacity building and sustainability of agricultural research institutions.”** Proposals for multi-disciplinary research, training and outreach activities aligned with three or more Topical Areas under multiple Global Themes will be given high consideration.

The Pulse CRSP will be comprised of a coherent portfolio of projects meeting the evaluation criteria (see page 12), targeting strategic developing countries in Africa and Latin America (see page 7), and selected to achieve the program’s four Global Themes. **Topical Areas** are recommended areas for research inquiry to address priority constraints under the respective Global Themes. The ultimate portfolio of selected projects may not necessarily include activities under all the Topical Areas identified in this RFP. It is also important to recognize that the text under each of the following Topical Areas is provided for illustrative purposes and is not intended to be prescriptive of the technical focus of proposed projects.

**A. Topical Areas under the Theme of “Production Cost and Risk Reduction”**

The competitiveness of bean and cowpea value-chains is contingent upon the ability of the production sector to grow and supply grain in adequate quantities, with the desired quality attributes, and at competitive prices in domestic, regional and/or global markets. Topical Areas under this theme, which contribute to lower costs of production and minimize risks for resource-poor farmers and traders of beans and cowpeas, include:

1. Genetic Improvement for Increased Productivity and Yield Stability: The planting of improved varieties of beans and cowpeas with resistance to biotic and abiotic stresses, desired agronomic traits, and stable high yield potential in distinct agro-ecological zones is a sustainable and cost-effective approach for resource-poor small-scale farmers to increase crop productivity and reduce risk. Although gains have been made over the past two decades in genetic improvement, high yielding varieties are still needed for specific agro-ecologies and market classes. The Pulse CRSP seeks innovative research proposals that will utilize modern tools of molecular genetics (i.e., gene sequencing and mapping, identification of molecular markers, etc.) for “biotechnology” applications (i.e., molecular fingerprinting, identification of pathogens, marker-assisted selection, gene introgression, etc) as well as traditional breeding techniques to develop new varieties of beans and cowpeas for production by small-scale resource-poor farmers in Africa and Latin America.
2. Integrated Crop Management: Resource-poor farmers must have access to knowledge regarding effective integrated crop management (ICM) approaches to reduce production costs, effectively

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manage production risk factors, and increase cropping system sustainability through conservation of the natural resource base. Consideration of long-term sustainability, including soil quality improvement and conservation of biodiversity, must be reflected in all production management decisions including cultivar selection, meeting the mineral nutrient requirements of the crop, adoption of integrated pest management practices, and the implementation of appropriate cropping systems (i.e., crop rotations, inter-cropping, etc.). The Pulse CRSP seeks proposals for research on appropriate and sustainable integrated crop management approaches to increase the productivity of beans and cowpeas on low fertility soils and control economically important pests for agro-ecosystems where these crops are grown.

3. Mitigating Effects of Low Soil Fertility and Drought: Low soil fertility and drought persist in being the primary constraints to increased pulse productivity in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. New cost-effective and sustainable approaches are needed to address these recalcitrant production constraints. The redesign of root architecture and genetic improvement of root and whole-plant physiological traits afford promise in mitigating the effects of these abiotic stress factors. ICM approaches (i.e., conservation tillage, crop rotation, green manures, low input fertilization strategies, etc.) which enhance the efficiency of nutrient and water uptake and utilization by bean and cowpea crops would be worthy areas of inquiry.

4. Grain Quality: The quality of bean and cowpea grain produced by resource-poor farmers is a frequent constraint to competitiveness in regional and global markets. Multidisciplinary research and outreach projects that contribute to improvements in grain quality attributes for trade are needed. Important quality factors of potential focus include cooking time, seed coat integrity and color retention, incidence of insect and disease damage, composition of nutritional constituents, and food processing attributes.

5. Sustainable Seed Systems: Farmer access to quality seed of improved varieties of beans, cowpeas and related pulses at an affordable cost presents a challenge to increasing productivity. The fact that pulses are self pollinated, enables farmers to retain seeds for planting from one season to another, and reduces private sector incentive for investment in seed system development. Proposals investigating approaches and interventions to improve farmer access to improved seeds of beans and cowpeas are invited. Potential objectives for research and outreach activities under this Topical Area include: a) to develop sustainable seed multiplication and dissemination systems for pulse crops, b) to increase access to affordable quality seed by resource-poor (especially women) farmers in developing countries, and/or c) to formulate appropriate seed system policies that promote conservation of biodiversity.

## **B. Topical Areas under the Theme of “Increasing Utilization”**

Increasing global consumption and utilization of beans and cowpeas are necessary for growth of value-chains. Research is needed to expand markets for bean and cowpea grain, fresh plant parts (e.g., leaves, fresh pods, immature seeds, etc.), processed foods, and ingredients. Suggested Topical Areas for research, training and outreach that contribute to increased utilization include:

1. Health and Nutritional Attributes: Obesity and associated chronic diseases are reaching epidemic proportions in many developing countries, especially among urban populations. Nutritional research indicates that regular pulse consumption reduces the risk of chronic diseases including cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and cancers plus enhances satiety, thus providing a food-based solution to a growing global health crisis. Worthy areas of inquiry might include identification of bio-active compounds in beans and cowpeas that provide specific health benefits, increasing understanding of the functional properties of these constituents, and enhancing the content and activity of health promoting compounds through plant breeding, cultural management and/or processing. Research

proposals are also sought to better understand the nutritional contributions of beans and cowpeas to growth and cognition of young children and the slowing of the progression of HIV to AIDS.

2. Consumer Attitudes and Preferences: For continued increases in global bean and cowpea consumption and utilization, food processors and producers need to understand and respond to shifts in consumer attitudes and preferences. In both developed and developing countries, the demographic of consumers is changing. In general, potential pulse consumers of tomorrow will be younger, live in urban areas, lead a fast-paced life, and tend to associate beans and cowpeas with traditional diets of the poor. Research is needed to understand dietary attitudes and food preferences of target populations, especially urban poor which constitute a major market for bean- and cowpea-based foods in the future. Such information will give direction to public/private sector education and promotional programs to change the image of pulses and to food processing entrepreneurs regarding demand for value-added bean/cowpea-based food products.

3. Influencing Decision Makers: The experience of certain countries indicates that pulse consumption tends to decline when consumers are presented with greater food choices (e.g., resulting from the emergence of supermarkets) and have greater disposable income for food purchases. Due to the association of pulses with traditional diets, there is a general lack of appreciation for the health and nutritional benefits of eating pulses. To reverse such trends, public and private sector interventions to influence decision makers are justified. Research is needed to link health consequences with dietary shifts away from beans and cowpeas and the projected long-term costs to society for consequent increases in health care costs. Investigations into the cost/benefits of investments in public initiatives that promote the integration of locally produced pulse crops into public health and nutrition education programs, food assistance programs, and feeding programs (e.g., school lunch programs) in terms of increased productivity and reduced health care costs would be important. Policies that might result from such studies would bring societal benefits as well as generate increased demand for bean, cowpea and related pulses in domestic markets.

4. Urban Consumer Access to Value-Added Pulse Foods: Urban consumers, which represent the largest market segment for pulses and value-added foods, demand affordable, nutritious, processed, convenience foods and ingredients with appropriate flavors and textures for the local pallet. In developing countries with emerging food industries, food science and nutrition research is needed to add knowledge on the functional (including biochemical and physiological) characteristics of bean and cowpea grain and processed products. Multi-disciplinary studies are also needed on value-chain economics, food distribution chains, market basket surveys, and the relationship of culture with food and diets to identify niches for bean/cowpea-based food products in urban markets. In response to the growth of cottage industries managed by women entrepreneurs which prepare consumer ready food products in many African and Latin American countries, appropriate food processing technologies (e.g., extrusion, etc.) are needed to enable these enterprises to be productive and profitable.

### **C. Topical Areas under the Theme of “Performance and Sustainability of Value-Chains”**

Successful commodity value-chains that extend from producer to consumer are characterized by strong and interconnected sub-sectors which understand the importance of consumer demands and markets as driving forces. In order to achieve improved performance and sustainability of bean and cowpea value-chains, the Pulse CRSP seeks projects that integrate the following Topical Areas with research addressing either production (Theme 1) or utilization (Theme 2) constraints. The goal of requiring a value-chain approach in this CRSP is to ensure that research is relevant, demand-oriented and leads to development impacts. Suggested Topical Areas include:

1. Understanding constraints to smallholder pulse farmer participation in markets and trade: Due to the globalization of grain trade, producers and traders in developing countries need to be able to

identify regional and global market opportunities for beans and cowpeas as well as position themselves to be more competitive in ever changing domestic markets. The objectives of activities under this topical area are: a) to link producers to local, regional and international markets, and b) to ensure that research outputs have effective demand from end-users. The expectation is that the knowledge and technologies generated by the Pulse CRSP will be adopted either by small-scale farmers or processors to add value to pulse products in markets. The Dry Grain Pulses CRSP invites proposals for innovative research, capacity building and outreach projects that achieve these objectives and promote smallholder farmer (including women and indigenous groups) participation in markets and trade. Proposals are especially welcome that address this topical area by focusing on a specific output to be generated under another topical area.

2. Identifying "weak links"/constraints in the functionality of dry grain pulse value-chains: Bean and cowpea value-chains involve many actors dealing with these commodities, ranging from agricultural input industries to the final consumer, via production, transportation, processing, and marketing. Research and outreach activities are needed to address constraints that will strengthen the value-chain and ensure that buyers and sellers are linked throughout the chain. Projects under this topical area should not only describe strategies for identifying “weak links” in the value-chain but also seek to explain how the proposed activities will provide direction for further research and developmental activities.

3. Identifying strategic public sector interventions to alleviate constraints or market failures in partnership with other public and private sector institutions: One of the goals of research on value-chains is to identify weak links caused by market failure. Such failures result in insufficient private sector incentive to participate in meeting the needs of certain members of the value-chain due to the nature of the commodity or its market. The Pulse CRSP invites proposals to identify and implement strategies for appropriate public sector involvement in strengthening pulse value-chains (e.g., adaptive research, outreach, training, linking producers/processors to technologies, etc.).

#### **D. Topical Areas under the Theme of “Capacity Building and Sustainability of Agriculture Research Institutions”**

For CRSP research to achieve long-term development impacts, strong and responsive public-private sector institutions are needed with a commitment to serve the dry grain pulse sectors. In many developing countries, critical institutions lack the human resources, infrastructure, and capacity to provide the needed assistance. In recognition of the importance of building institutional capacity and sustainable agricultural research institutions, the Pulse CRSP considers this theme to be “cross-cutting.” Therefore, **all project proposals must address at least one of the Topical Areas described below.** The Pulse CRSP also invites stand-alone proposals addressing two or more topical areas under this Global Theme (D).

1. Building and promoting partnerships with key stakeholder organizations (public and/or private sector institutions): The objective of this topical area is to promote the adoption of research outputs (technologies, practices, knowledge, information and recommendations) generated from the three global themes – reducing production costs and risks, increasing utilization, and improving the performance of pulse value-chains. Project proposals addressing the other Global Themes should present a partnership building plan to ensure that the development of knowledge and technology, and its dissemination are closely tailored to the needs of the commodity sector. The design of research projects should integrate development strategies that engage key stakeholders (i.e., government agencies, NGOs, CSOs, farmer organizations, private companies) to enable the generation, financing and dissemination of innovations.

2. Strengthening regional dry grain pulse commodity research networks: Participation of bean and cowpea scientists in regional networks has been effectual in improving research collaboration and

coordination and facilitating the dissemination of improved germplasm. The networks in Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., PRONAF, SABRN, ECABREN) and Latin America and the Caribbean (e.g., PROFRIJOL) have lost much of their international donor support in recent years, even though their role is more justified than ever. As a cross-cutting theme, the Pulse CRSP encourages proposals that provide opportunity for weaker national research programs in strategic countries to network with advanced programs within their respective region. Networking might involve coordinated testing of new technologies through regional trials, the sharing of germplasm, division of responsibilities in collaborative research projects, regional workshops, and joint short-term training activities. The goal is to generate dual benefits--to strengthen the national programs that are part of these regional research networks as well as to increase regional impacts of CRSP research.

3. Training young scientists in the use of modern tools for research, in research program management, and for outreach and service to private and public sectors: Due to scientific advances and the emergence of new research areas, an ongoing commitment is required to prepare NARS scientists with the skills and knowledge to exploit these opportunities. Proposals addressing this topical area should describe innovative and cost-effective training approaches for developing human resources and building institutional capacity in strategic areas of agriculture science that would benefit the bean and cowpea sectors. Proposals should lay-out clear plans for short- and/or long-term training that will contribute to building sustainable capacity of host country research institutions and help them link with bean and cowpea stakeholders. If a training plan requires more than 30 months to complete (e.g., Ph.D. degree program), proposals should outline a strategy for leveraging additional support. If the proposed training plan requires financial support from the Pulse CRSP beyond 30 months, the proposal should include a clear justification, a time-line for completion of the training activity, and a budget (including direct and indirect costs) for the projected costs after 30 months. This information should be included in Section 5 of the Technical Application and should not be part of the budget request for the 30-month period.

## ACHIEVING DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS

The Pulse CRSP aims to achieve concrete development impacts through the implementation of integrated research, training and outreach projects. Specifically, the Pulse CRSP is seeking to fund proposals that will:

- a. Proactively promote the adoption of technologies, practices, knowledge and recommendations that emerge from research,
- b. Conduct research in a manner that creates sustainable capacity for research and outreach through genuine collaboration with host country scientists, training of a new generation of scientists, partnership in the leveraging of new funds, and promoting linkages with stakeholder groups, and
- c. Support the development objectives and initiatives of USAID.

To achieve these goals, successful proposals must meet the following technical considerations:

### **A. Promotion of Research Outputs and Outreach**

- Proposals must present a viable plan for outreach and dissemination of research results with the ultimate goal of achieving developmental impact. Suggested strategies to meet this expectation include the establishment of meaningful partnerships with public, private and NGO entities involved in development activities in host countries, alignment of CRSP projects with planned or existing USAID Mission development programs, or initiatives of host country governments or private sector organizations, and the utilization of innovative outreach approaches (i.e., electronic media, community volunteers, etc.) to facilitate the dissemination of CRSP outputs.

- Proposals must identify expected outputs/materials (benchmarks) from the proposed CRSP project for which to be held accountable. Successful proposals will produce a variety of outputs/materials on development topics over the course of the 30-month award period including technical reports, peer reviewed journal articles, publications dedicated to development issues, and policy briefs. The objective is to make research and findings more accessible to policy makers, development professionals and lay people.

## **B. Collaboration and Capacity Building**

- Projects must involve genuine collaboration between a Lead U.S. university and one or more Host Country institutions (NARS, agriculture universities, NGO, etc.) and other partners as needed (other U.S. universities/colleges, IARCs, private sector development organizations, etc.). Collaboration with multiple Host Country institutions is encouraged because of the benefits accrued by networking, access to resources, and the potential for broad geographical impact.
- As institutional capacity building is a priority global objective of the Pulse CRSP, proposals must present a compelling rationale for the selection of the Host Country institution(s) including evidence of need and interest by the respective institution(s). (To see the needs and priorities identified by some of the host country institutions, please refer to the “Summary of Expressions of HC Institution Needs and Interests” posted on the Pulse CRSP RFP web page).
- Proposals must describe an integrated research, training and outreach activity plan that addresses a minimum of two Topical Areas described in this RFP plus at least one Topical Area under the Global Theme of “building capacity and sustainability of agricultural research institutions.” Successful proposals are expected **to devote at least 30% of project funds to HC capacity building activities (Topical Areas under Theme D).**

## **C. Support of USAID Objectives and Initiatives**

- Proposals must be consistent with USAID’s strategic objectives, goals and requirements as reflected in the *USAID Agriculture Strategy*, *Strategic Framework for Africa*, *USAID Policy Framework for Bilateral Foreign Aid*, and the Strategic Objectives for the respective USAID Missions in host countries of involvement (See Pulse CRSP web page for links to these documents) .
- The Pulse CRSP’s primary geographical focus for achieving development impact is on Sub-Saharan Africa with a secondary focus on Latin America. Proposals will be evaluated, among other criteria, based on the strength of linkages to host countries within the following general guidelines.
  - i. The proposal must focus on at least one USAID-eligible country (i.e., a country where USAID is present) from one of the two focus regions—Africa or Latin America. Project engagement in neighboring countries within the same region or across regions is encouraged. For a list of USAID-presence countries, see USAID’s website: [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov).
  - ii. Recommended countries for future engagement by the Dry Grain Pulses CRSP include: **In Africa: Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania and Zambia. In Latin America: Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras and Nicaragua.** Proposals targeting activities in countries other than the recommended countries must be justified.
  - iii. USAID requires that 25% of the overall Pulse CRSP portfolio activities contribute to achievement of development objectives in Africa established in the President’s *Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA)* (<http://www.usaid.gov/locations/sub-saharan-afrika/initiatives>)

/ieha.html). Proposals that fulfill IEHA objectives and collaboratively engage researchers, policy makers and development professionals in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially IEHA countries, are highly encouraged. Current IEHA countries and regional programs identified are: Mali, Ghana, Niger, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, Kenya, REDSO, WARP and RCSA.

- Proposals must describe a systemic process for engagement of Missions and, where appropriate, of developing country policy makers to ensure complementarities with Mission programs and achievement of developmental goals in the Host Countries. **Cautionary note: The MO will seek USAID country-level concurrence prior to making sub-awards. Non-concurrence by a Mission may result in a project not being funded.**
- **Gender Equity and Other Considerations:** USAID policy requires that gender issues be addressed in all funded activities. To this end, the Pulse CRSP has set a goal to train an equal number of men and women in their long- and short-term capacity building activities and tailor its research and outreach activities so as to provide benefits to women. Proposals must, therefore, present a gender inclusivity strategy; the integration of gender considerations into overall project design and implementation.
- Proposed research, training and outreach activities must meet high scientific standards. Projects that involve multi-disciplinary collaborations and are responsive to identified needs and programmatic priorities of host country institutions, as outlined in the “Summary of Expressions of HC Institutional Needs and Interests” will be given high consideration for funding.
- In compliance with Title XII legislation, proposals should demonstrate dual benefits to both Host Country as well as U.S. agriculture.

#### **BUDGET AND CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR AWARD OF A CRSP PROJECT**

- Each proposal must identify at least one Principal Investigator (PI) from a U.S. institution and one PI from a Host-Country institution. PIs are those individuals that assume the technical leadership and administrative responsibility for the project.
- Proposals must include a budget for a 30 month award with total funding ranging from \$300,000 to \$450,000 as per the “Cost Application Instructions” ([www.pulsecrsp.msu.edu](http://www.pulsecrsp.msu.edu)). Since funding typically will be allocated on an annual basis, budgets should be broken down into three time periods: first 6 months (Period 1), subsequent 12 months (Period 2), and final 12 months (Period 3). As with all USAID contracts, all annual allocations will be contingent upon annual obligations of funding from USAID-Washington to the ME and performance under the provisions of the sub-agreements.
- Proposals must include a budget for each institution participating in the respective project, providing accurate estimates of institutional costs, negotiated administrative rates (e.g., indirect costs), and institutional match. The Pulse CRSP requires that each research project provide cash or in-kind contributions (cost share) on funds received according to the following guidelines:
  - Lead U.S. universities must provide U.S. non-federal cost share as defined by the USAID reference document for cost-share -- 22CFR 226.23.
  - The cost-share requirement for each project is at minimum 25% of the total U.S. costs. U.S. costs include total costs (direct + indirect) budgeted for personnel (staff salaries and fringes, labor cost, consultants), supplies, equipment, travel and non-participant training in the U.S. and a non-HC institution outside the U.S. (e.g., IARCs)

- A minimum of 50% of the direct funds must be expended in or on behalf of the Host Country Institutions participating in this CRSP. Higher percentages of funding budgeted for Host Country Institutions, however, will be viewed favorably.
- Budget proposals should include itemized support for degree and short-term training at both U.S. universities and/or advanced institutions around the world. All trainees that come to the U.S. must be in compliance with USAID guidelines for Participant Training (ADS 253—available at: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/200/253.pdf>)
- Proposals that leverage support from private and public sources (i.e., through grants, endowments, in-kind contributions) will be given high consideration. Leveraging provides opportunity to broaden the scope and extend outputs of CRSP projects.
- Upon project selection, Michigan State University will establish “Reimbursable-Cost” sub-contracts with Lead U.S. Partner Universities.
- All sub-contracts with Host Country institutions will be “Fixed-Price Contracts” and will need prior review and approval from the Management Entity, Michigan State University. “Lead” universities have the option of establishing and administering Fixed-Price sub-subcontracts with their collaborating Host Country institutions, or to relinquish the responsibility for sub-contracts with Host Country institutions to the Management Entity. Regardless of who has the contractual relationship, the PI(s) of the Lead U.S. university would retain responsibility for technical oversight and reporting for Host Country activities as per the terms and conditions of the Prime Award with USAID (i.e., in accordance with all Standard Provisions).
- Technical program reporting requirements will include annual workplans and budgets, one or two reports per fiscal year of technical progress toward achievement of specific deliverables (including indicators/benchmarks), and a final technical report summarizing outputs and contribution to developmental outcomes. In addition, PIs may be requested to prepare trip reports and research updates as needed.
- Quarterly financial reports will need to be submitted in keeping with 22 CFR 226.52. These reports must list among other financial information, the total amount expended for each Host Country under the respective awards for the reporting period.
- Research, training and outreach activities implemented under sub-awards will comply with the USAID guidelines and standards regarding environmental quality and sustainability, biodiversity conservation, soil quality, and IPM. In the event that a project under this CRSP proposes to investigate the use of pesticides, Genetically Modified Organisms, or non-indigenous or non-endemic, non-established species, the PIs need to obtain approval via the Management Entity from the EGAT Bureau’s Environmental Officer before the activity is initiated.
- Studies involving human and animal subjects must obtain full review of protocols and approval from the appropriate U.S. Lead university review bodies before implementation in the U.S. and the Host Country.

## PROPOSAL PREPARATION GUIDELINES

### Expressions of Interest

Candidate “Lead” U.S. universities are required to complete and submit an “Expression of Interest to Participate” form to be eligible to submit a full proposal for consideration for funding under the Pulse CRSP. Completed forms received by the MO will be posted on its website at [www.pulsecrsp.msu.edu/](http://www.pulsecrsp.msu.edu/). The purpose of public disclosure of this information is to provide a mechanism by which Host Country institutions as well as other U.S. universities sharing similar topical or country interests will be able to identify those candidate Lead institutions preparing a proposal regarding potential collaboration opportunities.

The Expression of Interest to Participate form can be downloaded from the Pulse CRSP’s website at [www.pulsecrsp.msu.edu/](http://www.pulsecrsp.msu.edu/). Expressions of Interest should be submitted as attachments to an email to [dgpcrsp@msu.edu](mailto:dgpcrsp@msu.edu) no later than **October 26, 2007**.

### Expressions of Host Country Institutional Need and Interest

Agricultural research institutions in priority Host Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America with interest in participating in projects funded through the Pulse CRSP are invited to complete and submit an “Expression of Host Country Institutional Needs and Interests” form. Upon receipt by the MO, these completed forms will also be posted on the Pulse CRSP website for public viewing. The goal is to provide Host Country institutions with the opportunity to declare their institutional needs and priorities for the U.S. seeking to identify countries and institutions with whom to collaborate in areas for which they have research, training and outreach capacity.

Host Country institutions can download the “Expression of Host Country Institutional Need and Interest” form from [www.pulsecrsp.msu.edu/](http://www.pulsecrsp.msu.edu/). The completed forms should be submitted as an attachment to an email to [dgpcrsp@msu.edu](mailto:dgpcrsp@msu.edu) as soon as possible (prior to **October 19, 2007**).

## FULL PROPOSAL

Full proposals will be the basis for the selection of projects for awards in the Dry Grain Pulses CRSP. Full proposals must be prepared according to the following guidelines. Necessary forms to be completed (e.g., Cover Page, Summary Page, Budget forms, etc.) as well as more detailed instructions on budget preparation can be downloaded from [www.pulsecrsp.msu.edu](http://www.pulsecrsp.msu.edu).

**a. Proposal Organization and Format:** All proposals must contain the following elements:

### Technical Application

1. Cover page (completed “Cover Page” sheet)
2. Summary page (completed “Summary” sheet)
3. Table of Contents
4. Technical Approach (maximum of eight pages)
  - **Problem Statement and Justification-** Identify constraint or development problem to be addressed within the context of a specific developing country(s) or region. Discuss relevance to Topical Areas of importance to bean and cowpea value-chains. Describe contributions to the global development objectives and themes of the Dry Grain Pulses CRSP. Present justification for research, training and/or outreach strategy to address the constraint. Provide evidence of knowledge of scientific literature.

- Objectives- Identify coherent and concise objectives for the proposed project.
  - Approaches and Methods- Describe research and/or outreach approaches and methods, especially multidisciplinary collaborations where appropriate for each objective. Identify modern cutting-edge research methodologies to be used.
  - Collaboration with Host Country Institutions- Present a plan for collaboration and partnership in achievement of project objectives, including division of responsibilities, ~~and~~ coordination of activities and mutual accountability to ensure success.
  - Benchmarks- Identification of specific outputs to result from the 30 month project. Present a timeline for implementation with specific indicators to assess progress toward achievement of outputs. Include description of benefits to developing country and U.S. agriculture.
5. HC Institutional Capacity Building (maximum of two pages)
    - Plan for sustainable institutional capacity building in consideration of HC institutional needs and priorities. To the extent possible identify type of training (long-term, short-term), disciplinary focus, location of training and candidates for degree training (where they will be from).
    - Strategy for human resource development involving innovative and cost-effective approaches for short- and long-term training.
  6. Contribution to USAID Objectives and Initiatives (maximum of two pages)
    - Contributions of proposed activities to IEHA objectives and USAID's *Policy Framework for Bilateral Foreign Aid* and strategic objectives for agriculture and economic growth in respective Host Countries.
    - Strategy for integration of gender equity, biodiversity conservation, and social, political and environmental considerations and objectives into project design and implementation.
    - Plan for Mission engagement.
  7. Strategy for Achieving Developmental Impacts (maximum of two pages)
    - Present a strategy to ensure that project outputs contribute to development outcomes and impacts in the target developing countries.
    - Plan for outreach to stakeholders, end users and beneficiaries of bean and cowpea value-chains and for the dissemination of outputs.
  8. Annexes (no page limit):
    - Brief Curriculum Vitae of key personnel (Lead U.S. PI, HC PI and other Co-PIs).
    - Letters of willingness to collaborate from HC and other U.S. partner institutions (see the Pulse CRSP RFP web page for a sample letter).
    - Plan for leveraging additional resources towards project objectives.
    - Literature cited.

### **Cost Application**

1. Budget Summary (completed "Summary" sheet)
2. Budget Tables (completed Budget Tabs 1 to 3)
 

Detailed budgets for the three financial obligation periods of the 30 month projects (6, 12 and 12 month periods) identifying both direct and indirect costs, projected U.S. and HC expenses, cost share commitments of participant institutions, and attribution to IEHA objectives and HC

institutional capacity building (See “Cost Application Instructions” and “Budget Form” on the Pulse CRSP RFP web page).

3. Budget Narrative (no page limit)

Explanation of proposed costs in Budget Tables. If a candidate Lead U.S. university desires that Michigan State University administer the Fixed-Price contracts with collaborating Host Country institutions, a formal request for this should be included in the Budget Narrative.

Note that a Lead university’s preference for the contractual arrangement with Host Country institutions will NOT be a factor considered in the evaluation of proposals.

- b. Other Instructions:** Applications must be in English with narrative portions prepared in MS Word with Times New Roman font size 12. The Budget Tables for the cost application must be prepared in Microsoft Excel utilizing the forms available at [www.pulsecrsp.msu.edu/](http://www.pulsecrsp.msu.edu/). Page size cannot exceed 8 ½ x 11” for the technical application and 8 ½ x 14” for the cost application. All pages except for the Cover Page and Summary Sheet must be numbered. Additional required elements include; a) Authorized institutional signature on the cover page and the budget summary page, and b) Evidence of commitment to collaborate in a Pulse CRSP project by HC institutions and other proposed partners with the proposed Lead University.
- c. Proposal Submission:** Full proposals comprised of both the Technical Application and Cost Application must be submitted electronically (as two separate PDF files) by the deadline of Friday, November 30, 2007 as attachments to an email to [dgpcrsp@msu.edu](mailto:dgpcrsp@msu.edu). Two hardcopies (one must be original, un-bound and un-stapled and the other a photo copy) should also be mailed to the Pulse CRSP, 321 Agriculture Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824 and must be received by the due date of November 30, 2007. Proposals that do not meet this deadline or the specified content and format will not be considered. For review purposes, the original hard copy received by the due date will be considered the final submitted version.
- d. Proposal Evaluation:** An External Advisory Panel (EAP) comprised of up to five independent expert reviewers with no conflicts of interest will evaluate the proposals. In consultation with the EAP and the USAID Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO), a portfolio of high quality projects with thematic coherence and appropriate regional and commodity (beans/cowpeas) balance will be selected. The goal is to inform the applicants of award decisions by January 10, 2008. Prior to establishing sub-agreements with Lead U.S. universities, the MO will contact USAID Missions to notify them about the proposed research activities and solicit their input regarding synergies with on-going activities and Mission strategic objectives.

### CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

- a. Technical merit of proposal (50 points)-** Contribution of proposed research and outreach activities to achievement of Dry Grain Pulses CRSP’s Global Themes and Topical Areas; Selection of appropriate Host countries and institutions to carry out the proposed project; Appropriateness of technical approach to address the identified constraint; Excellence of science; Engagement of multi-disciplinary expertise as justified; Qualifications of researchers (PIs); and Feasibility of research design and time-line for implementation.
- b. Collaboration and capacity building (20 points)-** Evidence of commitment to meaningful collaboration ~~with Host Country scientists to ensure successful achievement of project objectives# the implementation of projects~~; Responsiveness to identified needs and priorities of the Host Country institutions; Effectiveness of strategy to develop human resources and build sustainable capacity of institutions in developing countries; Clear plan for long- and short-term training.
- c. Contribution of outputs to development outcomes and impact (15 points)-** Strength of plan to ensure that project outputs lead to development outcomes; Evidence of commitment to partner with

appropriate public and private sector groups, especially stakeholders associated with bean and cowpea value-chains in developing countries, so that outputs (i.e., technologies, recommendations, knowledge, etc.) will be used by constituencies; Identification of specific benchmarks for achieving development outcomes plus indicators to assess progress.

- d. Contribution to USAID objectives and initiatives (10 points)-** Evidence of direct connections between CRSP project objectives and activities and USAID development frameworks/objectives, including Mission strategic objectives; Contribution of research activities to relevant USAID initiatives (e.g., the bilateral framework, IEHA) and priorities (e.g., gender equity, biodiversity, IPM, etc.).
- e. Cost-effectiveness (5 Points)-** Justification of costs in the project budget; Evidence of institutional commitment for cost-share; Potential to leverage support from other private and public sources (i.e., other grants, endowments, in-kind contributions) to broaden the scope and outputs of proposed CSRP research, training and outreach activities.

### **PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION**

Following selection, the Management Office will publicly announce the projects to be sub-awarded, provide constructive feedback from the EAP to U.S. and Host Country (HC) PIs regarding proposed activities, and may enter into negotiations for technical and cost changes in the project to ensure achievement of global program technical and budgetary objectives. Detailed annual workplans and budgets will then need to be prepared for the periods April 1, 2008 – September 30, 2008 and October 1, 2008 – September 30, 2009 for all projects in accord with the approved proposals. These workplans should be developed in consultation with collaborating scientists and institutions (i.e., IARCs), host country stakeholders (e.g., relevant private sector groups such as farmer organizations, grain traders, food processors, etc.), NGOs, end-users (e.g., consumers, etc.) and USAID country Missions to ensure relevancy and appropriateness of research, training and outreach activities. A Global PI Meeting will then be convened in early 2008 by the Management Office to which selected U.S. and HC PIs from all awarded projects to be subcontracted will be invited. The objectives of the Global Meeting are to provide opportunities for PIs to present their workplans for constructive feedback, to network with other scientists and coordinate planned activities, to discuss emerging issues, to formulate strategies for leveraging new resources, to review operational guidelines and policies of the new CRSP, and to plan ongoing interactions with stakeholder groups and country USAID missions. Lead U.S. PIs who after selection do not respond in a timely manner to MO requests and/or cannot participate in the Global PI meeting may be disqualified from participation in the Dry Grain Pulses CRSP.

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS:**

CRSP	Collaborative Research Support Program
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CTO	Cognizant Technical Officer
EAP	External Evaluation Panel
ECABREN	Eastern and Central Africa Bean Research Network
EGAT	Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade
HC	Host Country
IARCs	International Agricultural Research Centers
ICM	Integrated Crop Management
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IEHA	Initiative to End Hunger in Africa
ME	Management Entity
MO	Management Office
NARS	National Agricultural Research System
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PI	Principal Investigator
PROFRIJOL	El Programa Cooperativo Regional de Frijol para Central America, Mexico y El Caribe
PRONAF	French acronym for “Cowpea Network for Africa”
RCSA	Regional Office for Southern Africa
REDSO	Regional Economic Development Services Office for East and Southern Africa
RFP	Request for Proposal
SABRN	Southern Africa Bean Research Network
WARP	West Africa Regional Program
U.S.	United States
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development