



Business Support Facility for Resilient Agricultural Value Chains

Guidelines for Call for Applications

Agricultural Value Chains | Matching Grant Fund Call

Implemented by



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List of Abbreviations

ABF	Agri-Business Facility for Africa	GHG	Green House Gas
ACA	African Cashew Alliance	GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
ATVET	Agricultural technical and vocational education and training institutions	GmBS	Gender makes Business Sense
BMGF	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	iCF	inclusive Contract Farming
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development	iDPP	Integrated Development Partnerships with the Private Sector
CBS	Cooperative Business School	IPM	Integrated Pest Management
CA	Conservative Agriculture	ITC	International Trade Centre
CBS	Cooperative Business School	LCU	Local currency unit
CC	Adaption to climate change	LoI	Letter of Intent
CEMAC	Communauté Économique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale	MGF	Matching Grant Fund
CICC	Consultative International Cashew Council	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
CN	Concept note	MOVE	Market Oriented Value chains for jobs and growth in the ECOWAS Region
ComCashew	Competitive Cashew Initiative	MSME	Micro, small, and medium enterprises
EAC	East African Community	OACPS	Organisation of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States
EC	Inter-institutional Expert Committees	PBS	Processor Business School
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States	RCN	Raw Cashew Nut
EU	European Union	REC	Regional Economic Communities
EU-INTPA	European Commission – International Partnerships	ROM	Result-oriented management review
FBS	Farmer Business School	SADC	Southern African Development Community
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment	SNI	Sustainable Nut Initiative
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices	VC	Value chain

SECTION 1:

Introduction

Are you working in the cocoa, maize, or livestock (cattle, sheep, goats) sectors in a member state of the Organisation of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (OACPS)? Are you from the private sector, with a high interest in resilience, competitiveness, or direct supply linkages with off-takers for sustainability?

Do you have an innovative idea that makes the above-mentioned value chains less fragmented, more inclusive, particularly for women and youth, sustainable, and profitable? This also includes innovations for by-products of the sectors.

Does your business need support to access finance?

Then this is a unique opportunity for you to realize your goal!

This document summarizes key steps to follow in applying for the Matching Grant Fund focusing on cocoa, maize, or livestock (cattle, sheep, goats), where you may obtain funding to realize your ideas in a better (faster, more efficient, more effective, more sustainable) way and contribute to fostering your respective sector.

Kindly continue reading for more information. Additionally, please ensure to have a close look at the Readiness Programme of the value chains' Matching Grant Fund and all related documents that you can find here:

<https://www.agribusiness-facility.org/funding.html>

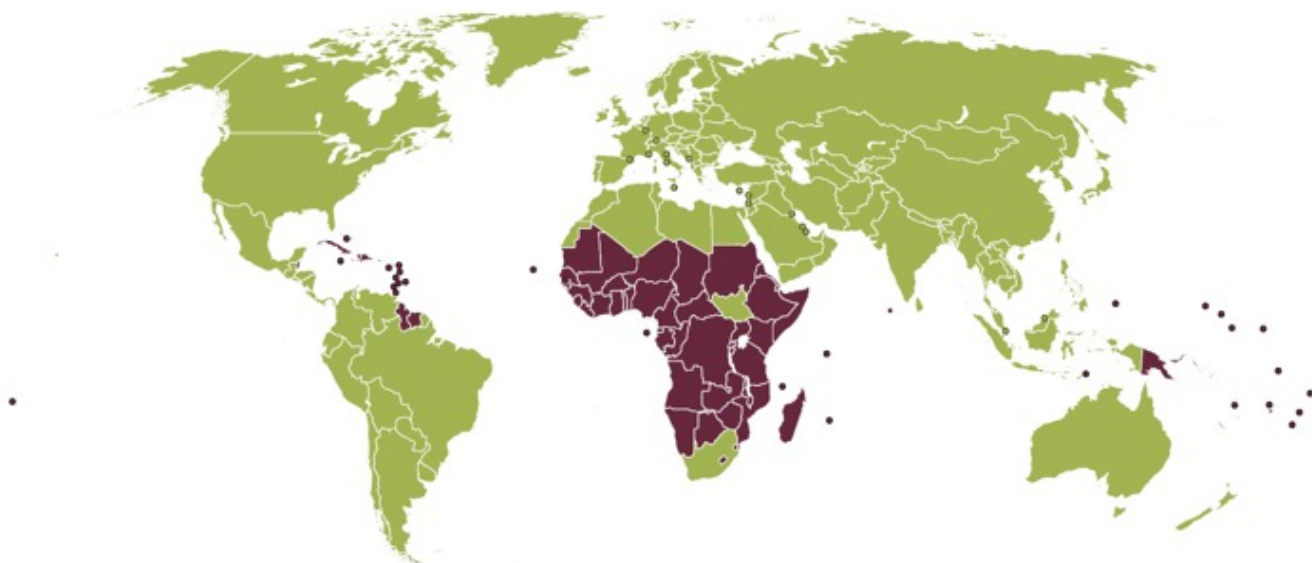


Figure 1: Map of current OACPS member states

SECTION 2:

Overview of the Matching Grant Fund (MGF)

This section offers a quick overview of the Matching Grant Fund. For further details on each part, please keep reading the document.

Objective of the MGF	<p>Enhance the capacities and skills of the value chains stakeholders (producers, processors, off-takers and MSMEs) to attract finance and investments, in particular geared towards the resilience of cocoa, maize, or livestock (cattle, sheep, goats) value chains in all 79 OACPS member states.</p>
What do we mean by innovative resilient agricultural value chain projects?	<p>Business approaches, business models, or best-practices owned by the private sector that will support the sustainability of targeted value chains and their segments. Segments are input supply, primary production, trade, and processing.</p> <p>Ideally, approaches are replicable and scalable in order to maximize impact, equality, and value.</p>
Who can apply for the MGF?	<p>Lead applicants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processing companies • Agricultural producer organisations (Farmers organisations) • Off-takers of the main final product of the value chain and/or its by-products <p>Consortium Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Sector Foundation • Private or public research organisations • Agricultural technical and vocational education and training institutions (ATVET) • National extension organisations (public and private) • Business development services • Financial institutions • Civil society actors • Processing company / Agricultural producer organisations / Farmer organisations
	<p>At least one partner in the project needs to be a national / local partner (e.g., an MSME, Farmer Organisation, or similar).</p> <p>Please note that proposals on the cocoa value chain (VC) from the following countries: Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon will not be eligible for this call since those countries are already being supported through the EU Sustainable Cocoa Initiative (SCI).</p>

Eligibility criteria for the lead applicant

- Legally registered entity with the mandate to enter into binding commercial and cooperation agreements
 - Contribution to the project of at least 50% (in cash and/or in kind) depending on the fragmented or innovative nature of the VC
 - Annual turnover of at least twice the amount of the contract
 - Evidence of tax payments in the last 2 years for the lead applicant
-

Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

- 75% of the promoted business entities in agriculture, processing, or service provision apply resilient practices
 - 50% of the activities promoted should be led by women
 - 50% of activities should be led by youth
 - 60% of supported innovative projects successfully reduce CO₂ or store CO₂ on the ground in line with internationally recognized standards
 - Additional resources are mobilized by the project applicant or consortia
-

Business Activities under the MGF



Capacity building of value chain actors (including primary producers) through:

- Technical trainings (such as Good Agricultural Practice (GAP), Adaptation to and/or Mitigation of Climate Change (CC), Conservative Agriculture (CA), Agroforestry and Improved Planting Material)
 - Entrepreneurial trainings (Farmers Business School (FBS), also possible with a focus on climate change (FBSClimate), Cooperative Business School (CBS), Processor Business School (PBS), Gender Makes Business Sense Plus (GmBSplus), mitigation of climate change)
 - Other innovative approaches in the following topics: Contract farming / Supply Chain linkages, diversification (e. g. intercropping, bee keeping, agroforestry, etc.), production and / or use of renewable energy, waste recycling / upcycling in commercial products, use of by-products, processing of the main product of the value chain, vertical business linkages (supply linkages), optimized supply management and logistics (transport) including communication, traceability, digital solutions, ecotourism / agrotourism, empowerment of women and youth, certification (Organic, Fairtrade etc.), digital services (weather forecast, traceability), integrated Pest Management (IPM), soil fertility management, post-harvest management, carbon credit, mechanization, innovations in new product development
-

Project duration and size

Maximum of 24 months after contracting and contribution through GIZ up to 200,000 €, depending on the proposal

MGF process steps

1. Readiness programme in English and French (online preparation for pre-qualification) for potential applicants during the process of the call
 2. Call for concept notes (will be open for 9 weeks)
 3. Assessment of concept notes by an interinstitutional expert committee
 4. Support for full proposal development on a demand basis
 5. Evaluation and decision for the MGF contract
 6. Contracting using the partnership agreement template
 7. Implementation, support, M&E cycle, and reporting
 8. Audit and closure
-

SECTION 3:

Background

The Agri-Business Facility (ABF)

The Agri-Business Facility (ABF) is a project commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation (BMZ) and co-funded by the EU under the Cotonou agreement with OACPS. The project is being implemented by GIZ. Its goal is to enhance the larger scale impact of support measures that private and public entities and development programs provide for agribusiness MSME in Africa. ABF advises and supports development programs, national or regional organisations and companies upon their requests in the following areas:

- Advise partner organisations on the implementation and management of proven and new, innovative agribusiness trainings according to their needs.
- Training of students and professionals at selected agricultural vocational schools and training centres as multipliers for tried-and-tested agribusiness training approaches (completed in May 2023).
- Evidence-based recommendations and good practices from professional skills, policy dialogue, and innovation on climate-resilient and low-emission value chains, as well as access to finance, are used for broad-based scaling and South-South cooperation.
- Multi-stakeholder partnerships implement bankable, competitively qualified funding projects for sustainable, low-emission, and climate-intelligent value chains.



Agri-Business Facility for Africa



Proven agribusiness trainings include the Farmer Business School (FBS), Cooperative Business School (CBS), and Processor Business School (PBS), and their adaptations to climate resilience (e.g., FBS^{Climate}, and Gender makes Business Sense Plus (GmBS^{plus}). Further information on the approaches can be found at

<https://www.agribusiness-facility.org>.



Parties interested in scaling-up successful agribusiness trainings can build on proven impact models, cost-effective approaches, standard tools, networks of practitioners, and certified Master Trainers. Support and tool kits cover strategic clarification, economic and investment analysis, diversification, adult training, planning, M&E, budgeting, and contracts.



Business Support Facility for Resilient Agricultural Value Chains project

The “Business Support Facility for Resilient Agriculture Value Chains” is a joint action to support African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) agricultural value chains’ development. It is co-financed by the European Union (EU) under the Cotonou Agreement with the Organisation of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (OACPS) and by the Federal Ministry of Development and Economic Cooperation (BMZ) and implemented by two projects of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

The aim is to develop and improve the capacities of players in the cashew¹¹, cocoa, maize, and livestock (cattle, sheep, and goats) agricultural value chains in the 79 OACPS member states to promote investment. This applies to low-emission and climate-resilient practices. Activities will be carried out in the following three areas: (1) Skills for agribusiness, (2) The Matching Grant Fund, (3) South-South exchange.

The Business Support Facility for Resilient Agricultural Value Chain project covers the period from March 1st, 2023, until February 28th, 2027.

¹¹ The first dedicated call for cashew value chain was launched on the 12 June 2023 and the deadline for submission of concept notes was the 24 July 2023. Further calls may follow.

SECTION 4:

Guidelines for Matching Grant Fund Applications

Objective of the MGF

The overall objective of the Matching Grant Fund is to leverage contributions from partners for the implementation of specific interventions towards the development of the cocoa, maize, and livestock (cattle, sheep, and goats) value chains and build ownership to drive sustainable growth in the respective sectors, strengthen private sector development, and improve the productivity and profitability of stakeholders in all 79 OACPS member states for cocoa, maize, cattle, sheep, and goats VCs.



Please note that proposals on the cocoa VC from the following countries: Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon will not be eligible for this call since those countries are already being supported through the EU Sustainable Cocoa Initiative.

Who can apply for the Matching Grant Fund?

Multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSP), that consist of a lead applicant and its consortium partners, can apply for the MGF. The general idea of MGF is to create a public good that is supporting the existing network the applicant operates in. This can be achieved through knowledge and innovative technologies production based on open access rules or through capacity strengthening of actors on proven agribusiness approaches along the value chain.

Eligible lead applicants (as part of a consortium) are:

- Processing companies
- Agricultural producer organisations, registered or pre-cooperative structures or networks
- Off-takers of the main final product of the value chain and/or its by-products

Consortium partners that are not lead applicants can also include private sector companies, but additionally, they might include public sector institutions and financial institutions. Please find a tentative list below²:

- Private entities also named under lead applicants
- Private Sector Foundation
- Private or public research organisations
- Agricultural technical and vocational education and training institutions (ATVET)
- National extension organisations (public and private)
- Business development services (if they contribute in kind or in cash to the project)

² Please be aware this list is not exhaustive. If you are in doubt, please reach out to us via the following email-address: abf-fund@giz.de

- Financial institutions (if they contribute in kind or in cash to the project)
- Civil society actors

Please note that lead applicants must come from the private sector, whether they are agricultural producers' organisations, processors, or off-takers. In terms of the requirements for a consortium, all partners must be legally recognized and empowered to enter into binding agreements. It is fundamental that each consortium consists of at least one national / local partner (e.g., an MSME, Farmer Organisation or similar).

For the initial application stage, the concept note or short proposal (see Annex 1) and a Letter of Intent (LoI, see Annex 2) from all consortium partners are sufficient. A signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that clarifies the roles, governance structures in the consortium, responsibilities, and contributions of each partner will additionally be required for the finalization of the Matching Grant Fund contract. Pre-existing business linkages between consortium partners prior to the Matching Grant Fund call for pro-

posals should be indicated in the proposal, as it may be beneficial for the application.

All Matching Grant Fund consortium partners must make a specified contribution to the project, which can be provided in cash, in kind, or a combination of the two. The lead applicant is expected to make the largest contribution. Applicants may also wish to enlist external service providers as part of the proposed project.

OACPS members are eligible for cocoa, maize, cattle, sheep, and goat VCs, with three exceptions for the cocoa value chain. In this case, no proposals from the following countries can be accepted: Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Cameroon.³

Consortium Partner versus Service Provider

What is a consortium partner?

Consortium partners are contractual partners in a Matching Grant Fund project that have entered into an official understanding and intend to present a joint project. They make a specific contribution to the project, whether in cash or in kind.

Example: A maize processing company and a national research institute.

What is a service provider?

A service provider delivers a specific service against payment. Service providers are not part of the formal consortium and are not expected to contribute cash or in kind to the project.

Example: a Master Trainer facilitating a proposed training approach or a consulting firm hosting a digital platform as a service provider.

³ Potential applicants need to be from a member of OACPS

Project duration and size

Each Matching Grant Fund project will last up to two years (24 months). A final decision on the duration of the project will be made between ABF and the Matching Grant Fund partners during the proposal review stage. You will find details on the stages below.

The financial contribution through GIZ for each Matching Grant Fund project will be up to 200,000 € for the entire duration of the project, depending on the coverage and proposed impact of the project. If the project focuses on one country or region within

a country, the maximum value it can apply for will be 125,000 €. If it covers a larger frame with subprojects in different countries or several regions, the maximum value will be 200,000 €. For all Matching Grant Projects, the contribution through GIZ would be a maximum of 50% of the total budget. The 50% value would not exceed the 200,000 € above mentioned. To reach a higher contract value, the partner contribution will have to be increased, e.g., to 60%.

For illustration purposes, the table below lists some project sizes and what financial contributions would be expected from GIZ and the partner(s).



Table 1: Example of contract values and breakdown

	Project value (€)	Contribution through GIZ (%)	Contribution through GIZ (€)	Contribution from consortium (€)
Possible	250,000	50%	125,000	125,000
Possible	500,000	40%	200,000	300,000
			(The project is implemented in multiple countries or regions)	
Not possible	450,000	50%	225,000	225,000
			(This exceeds the 200,000 € target contribution provided through GIZ)	(As the contribution through GIZ will only amount to 200,000 € in that case, partner contribution will be 250,000 €)

Thus, the Matching Grant Fund partner(s) will be required to contribute at least 50% of the project's cost. While each consortium partner is required to make a specified contribution, in-kind contributions, such as staff time, will be included in this calculation.

Which project activities will be supported under the Matching Grant Fund?

Proposed project interventions may aim at addressing the following:

- **Enhancing the capacities and skills of the mentioned agricultural value chains' stakeholders, notably producers, processors, off-takers, and MSMEs, to attract finance and investment,**
- Strengthening the competitiveness, upgrading, and viability of agricultural value chain actors in terms of value addition, technology content, and conformance to international standards
- Strengthening the integration of producers, processors, off-takers, and MSMEs into national, regional, and global value chains
- Improving the trade and export competitiveness of the agricultural value chain,
- Setting up an enabling environment for fostering access to finance by agricultural stakeholders through value chain finance
- Promotion of nutrition-sensitive agricultural value chains,

- Encouraging sustainable agricultural practices and improving environmental and climate change resilience.

Capacity building activities must include a selection of the below mentioned training topics and areas. Information on the approaches can be found in our readiness programme, which you can find here:

<https://www.agribusiness-facility.org/funding.html>



Please be aware that the readiness programme only includes general information. The exact adaptation of the training material to your specific context (i.e., VC, country etc.) will be done during the project period with support of the existing expertise in the joint action.

1) Technical training for value chain actors

Topics may include Good Agricultural Practice (GAP), Adaptation to Climate Change (CC), Conservation Agriculture (CA), Agroforestry, Improved Planting Material, etc.

2) Entrepreneurial training for value chain actors

Topics may include Farmers Business School (FBS, also possible with a focus on climate change), Cooperative Business School (CBS), Processor Business School (PBS), Gender makes Business Sense Plus (GmBSplus), mitigation of climate change or adaptation to climate change and other entrepreneurial topics.

Additionally, proposed project can include other innovative approaches or value chain promotion approaches⁴, combined with the indicated technical and entrepreneurship trainings, see below:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Contract farming / Supply Chain linkages | • Ecotourism / agrotourism |
| • Diversification (e. g. intercropping, bee keeping, agroforestry, etc.) | • Empowerment of women and youth |
| • Production and / or use of renewable energy | • Certification (Organic, Fairtrade etc.) |
| • Waste recycling / upcycling in commercial products | • Digital services (weather forecast, traceability) |
| • Use of by-products | • Integrated Pest Management (IPM) |
| • Processing of the main product of the value chain | • Soil fertility management |
| • Vertical business linkages (supply linkages) | • Post-Harvest Management |
| • Optimized supply management and logistics (transport) including communication, traceability, digital solutions | • Carbon credit |
| | • Mechanization |
| | • Innovations in new product development |

⁴ Be aware that this list is not exhaustive. Other innovative approaches could be included to achieve the MGF objective and contribute to the KPIs

Which costs are eligible for reimbursement under the Matching Grant Fund?

Only the actual direct costs (with no mark-ups) immediately incurred by the project are eligible for reimbursement, in accordance with the GIZ contribution agreed in the contract. Costs that exceed the percentage of total costs or the upper limit set by the contract will not be reimbursed. Costs incurred outside of the contract term of the Matching Grant Fund will also not be reimbursed. Overhead costs and other lump-sum amounts, imputed costs, amortization and depreciation, allocations to provisions, and profit mark-ups or other costing mark-ups are not eligible for reimbursement.

A detailed budget is required to be handed in with the project proposal in order to set up the contract. You can find the template in the readiness programme here:

<https://www.agribusiness-facility.org/funding.html>



we to which costs are eligible for reimbursement under the Matching Grant Fund, please see Annex 3.





Income & turnover

- Average increased income from supplying agricultural MSME
- Turnover of producer organisations from services provided to their members
- Turnover in processing

Cross-cutting issues

- Contribution to climate resilience (strategy for adaptation and/or mitigation)
- Strengthening women and youth, who should make up 50% of the proposed intervention each, in access to resources, education, business opportunities & linkages, investment-related decision-making and finance

Job creation & producer organisations

- Jobs are created in primary production
- Jobs created in processing.
- Jobs created in services (technical, digital, and financial services)
- Increase the member base of producer organisations (through mergers or unions)

Food security and export

- Contribution to food security via the supply of food (products) to markets
- Contributions to substitute imports of food products or of ingredients for the food industry
- Foreign currency earnings from exports

Innovation

- Technical innovation in primary production ⁵
- Technical innovation in processing for optimization of processing efficiency and quality based on available equipment
- Technical innovation in processing for scaling processing with new equipment
- Innovation in technical services
- Innovation in digital services
- Innovation in business services (information on markets & finance, buyers)
- Scaling of evidence-based approaches, technologies and innovations
- Consolidated sourcing base ⁶

⁵ These innovations aim to improve productivity, sustainability, efficiency, and profitability in primary production systems (e.g. improved seed varieties; precision livestock farming using sensors; organic farming; conservation agriculture; agroforestry; and integrated pest management)

⁶ A consolidated sourcing base in agriculture that involves establishing a unified and coordinated approach to sourcing agricultural inputs, such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, machinery, and equipment, as well as marketing and selling agricultural products.



It is also important to note that including and empowering women and youth within the value chains is one of the key objectives of the Matching Grant Fund. Applicants should indicate in their proposals if there are women and young people represented in the management of the organisation or if they are part of the owners, as this will be looked upon favourably during the selection process. Applicants should clearly explain how they plan to ensure that at least 50% of the project's target group (e.g., training participants, management of the firm or business unit) are women and young people.



Examples of possible projects can be found on our website. Please follow the link:

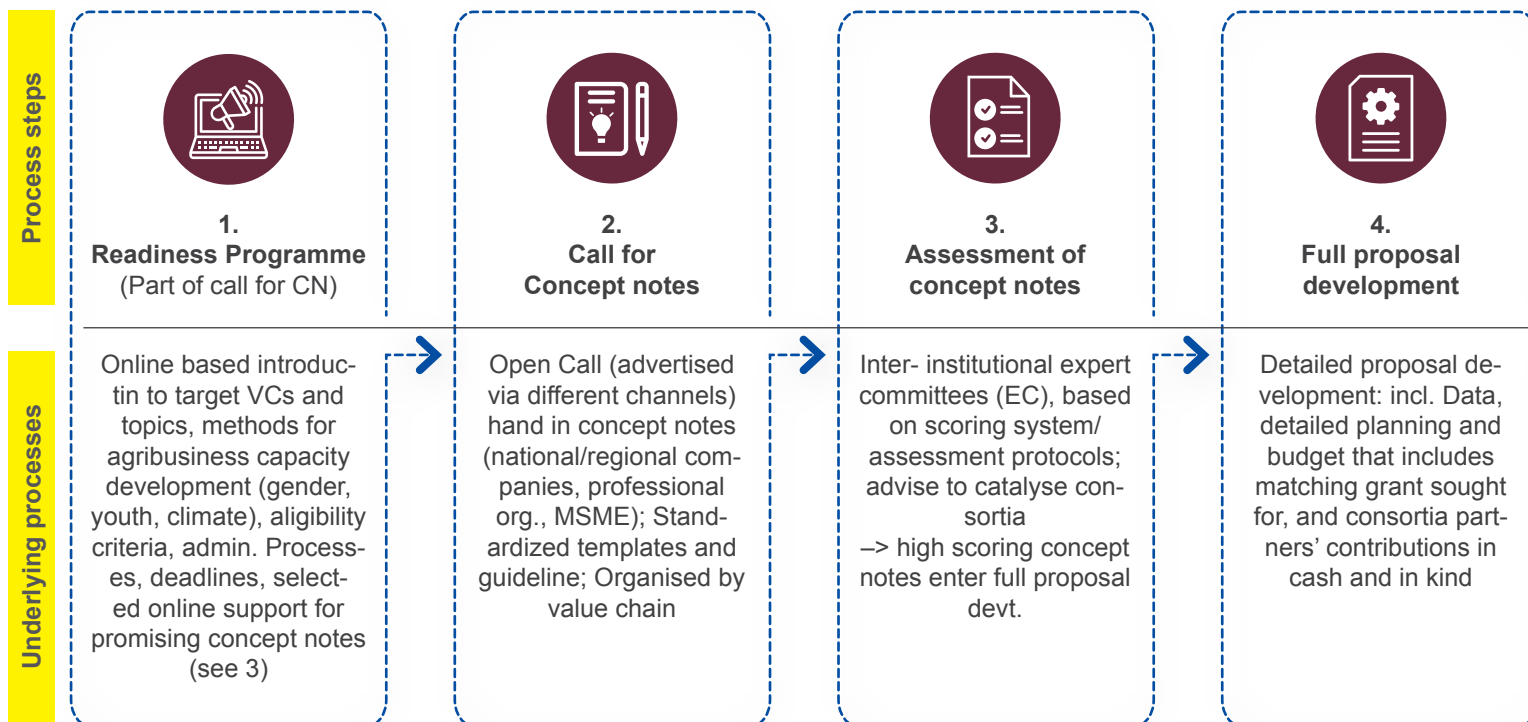
<https://www.agribusiness-facility.org/funding.html>



SECTION 5:

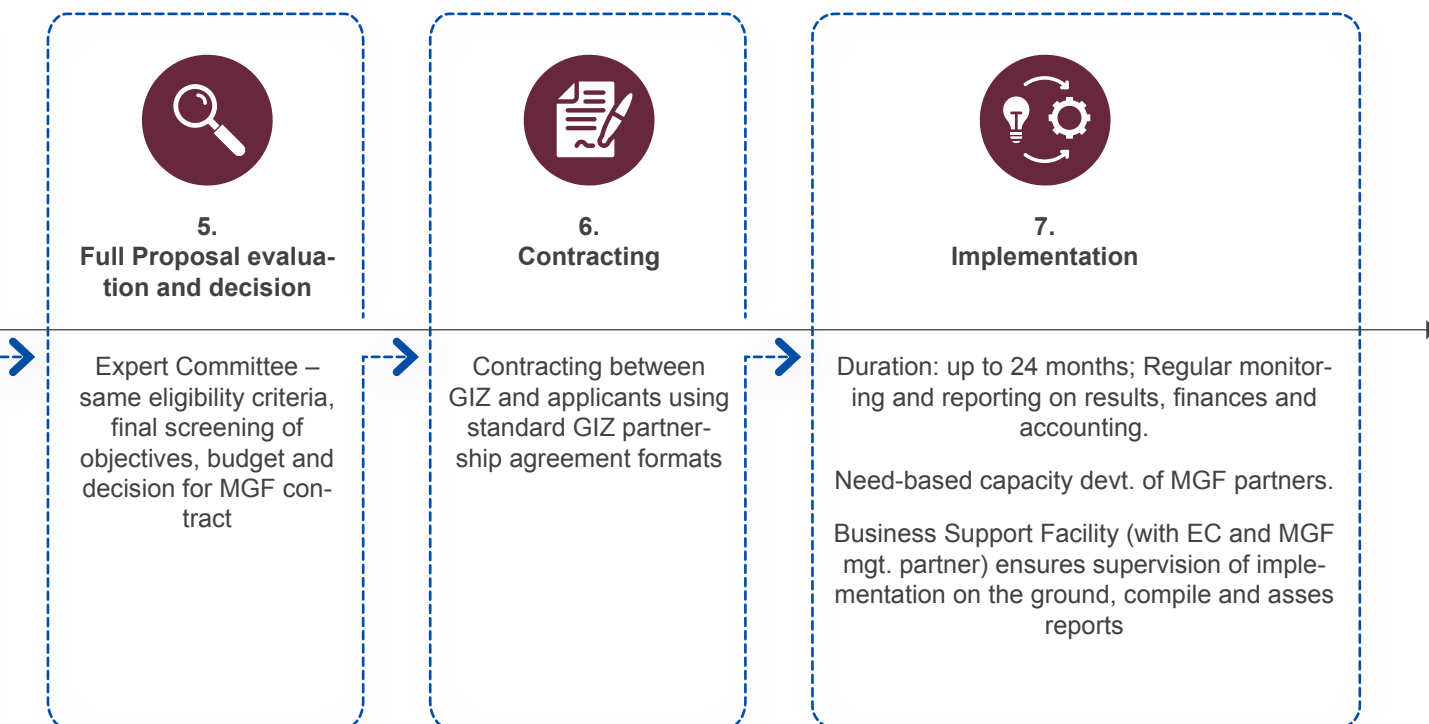
Matching Grant Fund Process

Flowchart of Competitive Matching Grant Fund process



GIZ: Fund Management and Business Support Facility

Source. GIZ



The Matching Grant Fund process will commence with a publicized call for concept notes. The call will last for 9 weeks. Once ABF has received all completed concept notes, they will be assessed and evaluated by a dedicated, independent expert committee. Shortlisted applicants will then be invited to develop a full technical proposal and budget.

During this stage, the ABF team will work closely with the shortlisted applicants to provide on-demand support in refining the concept and to ensure the final proposal meets the contracting requirements and technical MGF criteria. Once the final decision has been made on which projects will be supported, contracts will be prepared by GIZ.

The current call for the Matching Grant Fund is managed by the ABF team. There will be a Matching Grant Fund Expert Committee, which comprises individuals selected based on specific profiles (validated by donors) from partner institutions in respective countries. They will evaluate the concept notes as well as full proposals based on pre-validated objective scoring criteria. The final decision on which projects shall be financed would be taken by the Matching Grant Fund Board, made up of actors from OACPS, EU-INTPA, BMZ and GIZ (being the secretary), as well as the chairperson appointed from the Expert Committee.

Application Process

1. Timeline for the current call:



2. Readiness Program: All documents, including this and further detailed guidelines about the Matching Grant fund application and entire process, will be made available on the ABF, MOVE ComCashew, and partner websites with the launch of the call. General information on training approaches, such as Farmer Business School, will equally be made available to potential applicants for the Matching Grant Fund in this programme. In addition, webinars on the application process will be organized prior to the first call, for which you can register here:

<https://www.agribusiness-facility.org/funding.html>

- Official launch of the call: September 18, 2023 (EN, FR and a late call for Caribbean and Pacific)
- Application process & consortia: September 19, 2023 (EN & FR), 18.10.2023 (EN & FR)
- Capacity Development (including information on face-to-face and online trainings): September 20, 2023 (EN & FR)
- Contract formats & consortia: 04.10.2023 (EN & FR)

Partners will have the opportunity to ask all questions by contacting ABF via

abf-fund@giz.de during the launch of the call.

3. The call for concept notes will be officially announced and circulated through several channels to maximize its reach. It will be published online, building on the accessible resources of the readiness programme, including the standardized templates and guidelines provided. Potential partners and consortia have the chance to submit concept notes that must, however, align with agreed-upon quality and eligibility criteria according to the targeted agricultural value chains.

The concept note will provide information about the prospective partners' interests, with details on the Matching Fund partner or consortium and the proposed interventions. Applicants must hand in a completed concept note by November 10, 2023, to be considered for support through the Matching Grant Fund. The template for concept notes is provided in Annex 1. A signed Letter of Intent is also expected from all consortia partners (see Annex 2).

4. Evaluation of Concept Notes: The received concept notes will be assessed by a designated Expert Committee per value chain.

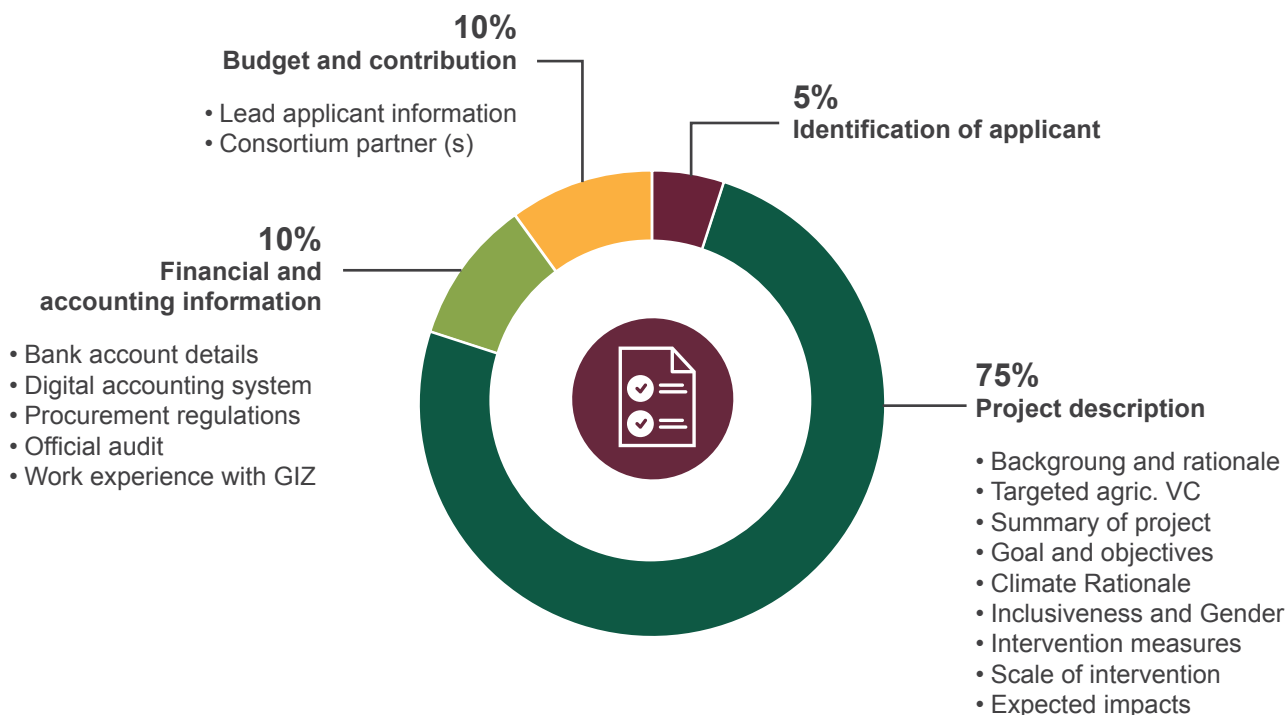
The Expert Committees for cocoa and maize consist of 5 members each, whereas the Expert Committee for Livestock consists of 7 members. The members come from private entities, development-cooperation organisations, and governmental and non-governmental institutions, providing diverse perspectives and expertise to support a fair, impartial, and transparent selection process. The application languages will be English and French. Sub-groups will be constituted for the reading and scoring of concept notes. If needed, simultaneous translation will be provided during the in-person workshop for pre-selection of concept notes and the online sessions for deliberation on the full proposals.

Gender balance and geographical coverage will guide the choice of resource persons for this expert committee from various African, Caribbean, and Pacific regions, with professional experience in technical and managerial approaches, agribusiness and entrepreneurship, agricultural development, private sector organisation and/or institutional development. They will be approached and shortlisted to participate in the Expert Committee.

Scoring systems and assessment protocols are prepared by ABF and MOVE ComCashew and validated by the EU and OACPS. Only high scoring concept notes will be selected and enter the second phase of the readiness programme for full proposal development. The Expert Committee will review all concept notes that are submitted and assign an overall score according to technical criteria. For example, it will be assessed how well each proposed project addresses key challenges in the targeted agricultural value chain. To maximize the chances of your proposed project being shortlisted, please read these guidelines carefully and provide detailed information as required in the concept note template.

How will your proposals be assessed?

The concept notes will be assessed based on the following criteria, as included in the template:



After the assessment by the Expert Committee, GIZ will fulfil its due diligence on the projects and will contact you directly on further steps.

5. Full Proposal Development: Shortlisted applicants will be contacted and asked to submit a full technical proposal and budget using the appropriate template via this link:

<https://www.agribusiness-facility.org/funding.html>

At this stage, you will need to provide more information and additional data for the same eligibility criteria and develop detailed and operationalized strategies. The second phase of the readiness programme will also be open to shortlisted applicants. There you will find further tools and information on proposal design, building modules for the strategy requirements, planning and information on indicators to be achieved, budgeting tools, etc. For the budget, the detailed partner contributions (in cash and in kind) and GIZ contribution sought must be prepared at this stage. Please be aware that a yearly audit will be mandatory for this contract and should be planned for. Regarding cost items, investments can be eligible, while the daily operation costs of ongoing businesses, for instance, would not be eligible. All requested information, including annexes as relevant, needs to be provided to be eligible.

During this stage, commercial and legal eligibility checks will be conducted. In some cases, lead applicants may also have to undergo a reputational risk analysis.

6. Evaluation of full proposals: The Expert Committee will assess and score the full proposals according to the eligibility criteria and prepare an overview of the scores for final approval by the Matching Grant Fund Board. The final decision regarding applications will be issued in a timely manner after the submission of the full technical proposals and budgets and will be communicated in writing to all applicants. Funding for validated full proposals will be provided according to your project category.

The number of projects selected will ultimately be determined by the budget available to ABF, which is active in 79 African, Caribbean, and Pacific Countries (see list above under Section 3). For this reason, shortlisted applicants that are not selected for this call are strongly encouraged to re-apply for Matching Grant Fund support in subsequent calls that will be published.

7. Contracting and Implementation: Following approval by the Board, a suitable contract format will be prepared between ABF and the lead applicant representing the consortium (most likely an implementation agreement). The ABF finance and administration team will also be in contact with you to explain the nature of the contract and answer any questions, in addition to planned webinars and information in the framework of the readiness programme. The Integrated Development Partnership Agreements of GIZ (iDPP) will be closed for all private sector-led applications. As explained above, the private partner must mobilize at least 50% of the total resources needed.

The (lead) applicant shall be legally responsible for the project's implementation and will consult regularly with the ABF project team, who will be available on an ongoing basis to provide assistance. The agreed funding shall subsequently be released to the (lead) applicant to implement the approved activities according to the agreed schedule of disbursement.

In terms of reporting requirements, the lead applicant will be required to provide regular technical and financial reports (bi-annually) that will be focused on the key interventions tied to the constraints that the Matching Grant Fund investment is addressing. An external audit will need to be performed for all private-led projects. Customized requirements related to the specific conditions and set-up of the partners/consortia may be considered and agreed on during the contracting phase.

At the end of the agreed project period, once the final technical and financial reports are received from the lead applicant and the final external audit report has been submitted, ABF will formally close the project.

Data Protection

For Matching Grant Fund applicants, please note that information will only be used internally for the process of partner selection and assessment of proposals and will not be shared without the prior consent of the applicants. Please do not hesitate to contact the Agri-business Facility (ABF) team for further clarification.



Glossary

Please refer to this glossary for definitions of key terminology:

Key terminology	Definition
Adaptation (related to climate change)	Adaptation to climate change in agriculture refers to the proactive measures and strategies implemented to reduce the vulnerability of agricultural systems and communities to the impacts of climate change. As climate change brings about shifts in temperature patterns, rainfall variability, increased frequency of extreme weather events, and other climate-related challenges, adaptation becomes crucial for maintaining agricultural productivity, ensuring food security, and building resilience.
Bankable	Bankable projects are acceptable to or at a bank. This means the financial service requested is offered by the financial institution, and in this case, a financial service request can be submitted and assessed (i.e., due diligence), and the request and clients are assessed as acceptable for the bank. Bankable projects result in profits. To ascertain this, 3 stages of analysis are indispensable: a. Technical viability, b. Economic viability (i.e., without cost of financing) in the short, medium, and long term; c. Financial viability for the client and bank requested to provide services. This entails the composition (and origins) of investment capital, resources mobilized, management of liquidity (own capital and loans), reimbursement plan, interests, and fees to be paid, profitability after financing, collaterals (different forms), break even with the cost of financing, and sensitivity w/r key parameters of the investment, e. g., prices of crucial inputs, level of interest rates, product prices, and their prospective volatility. Tools and HCD propagated in a MGF and under output 1 of the Action will need to cover these stages in a coherent and user-friendly way.
Blended Learning	Mix of complementary Online and face-to-face formats. It integrates the benefits of both in-person and online learning to create a flexible and engaging learning environment. Blended learning typically involves a mix of classroom-based instruction, independent online learning, and interactive digital resources
Carbon Credit	Mechanism that allows farmers and agricultural entities to earn credits for implementing practices that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions or sequester carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. These credits can then be sold or traded on carbon markets. The concept of carbon credits aims to incentivize sustainable agricultural practices that contribute to mitigating climate change.

Key terminology	Definition
Climate Resilience Practices	Strategies, measures, and actions taken to adapt and prepare for the impacts of climate change. These practices aim to enhance the ability of communities, ecosystems, and infrastructure to withstand and recover from climate-related hazards, such as extreme weather events, sea-level rise, and changing precipitation patterns. (e.g., ecosystem-based approaches; water resource management; climate-smart agriculture; early warning systems; emergency preparedness, etc.).
Competitive matching grant scheme	Funding mechanisms are designed to leverage additional resources by encouraging private or/and public organizations to invest their own funds alongside the grant. In this scheme, a funding entity offers a grant that requires the recipient to contribute their own funds or resources in a matching ratio. It promotes ownership and sustainability of projects while allowing funding entities to extend their reach and support a broader range of initiatives.
Concept Note	A concise document that outlines the key innovative ideas, objectives, and proposed activities of a project. It serves as a preliminary step in the project development process, providing an overview of the project to stakeholders, potential funders, or partners.
Consortium	A consortium refers to a collaborative arrangement or partnership formed by multiple organizations or entities to work together towards a common goal or objective. Consortia are often established to pool resources, expertise, and capacities in order to tackle complex challenges or pursue opportunities that may be difficult to achieve individually. <i>(e.g., of consortiums (1) Farmers' organization and processing unit; (2) Farmers' organization and wholesaler; (3) Farmers' organization and wholesaler; (4) Farmers' organization and NGO; (5) Farmers' organization and Research or extension service; (6) Farmers' organization and ATVETs; (7) Farmers' organization and Financial institution; (8) Farmers' organization, processing unit, and research or extension service; (9) Farmers' organization, processing unit, and Financial institution, etc.);</i>
Key performance indicators (KPIs)	Quantifiable metrics are used to evaluate the performance and progress of a project or specific objectives. be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART), and be regularly monitored and reviewed to drive performance improvements.
Low emission	Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in agriculture is important for mitigating climate change and promoting sustainability in the sector. (e.g., Improved Nutrient Management; Efficient Irrigation; Conservation Tillage; Manure Management; Improved Livestock Management; Agroforestry and Afforestation; Renewable Energy; Waste Reduction and Recycling; Adoption of Climate-Smart Agriculture...etc)

Key terminology	Definition
Letter of Intent	A letter of intent (LOI) is a non-legally binding document that outlines the preliminary agreement or understanding between two or more parties regarding a particular project, collaboration, or business transaction. It is often used as an initial step in formalizing a relationship or partnership.
Multi-Stakeholder Project	Multi-Stakeholder projects (MSP) refer to the consortium built in this call for concept notes. A consortium is made out of a lead applicant (usually a private entity) and the consortia partners. As several entities (private enterprise, public consortia partner etc.) come together to work on a joint effort contributing in cash or kind. Funding from donors through GIZ also forms one part of the resources for the MSP. The MSP works towards a joint public goal by collaborating in transparent manner in the covered intervention area.
Resilience	Resilience in agriculture refers to the capacity of agricultural systems, communities, and ecosystems to withstand and recover from shocks, stresses, and disturbances while maintaining their productivity, functionality, and sustainability. It involves building adaptive capacity and implementing strategies that enable agriculture to thrive and continue providing food, income, and ecosystem services in the face of climate change, natural disasters, market volatility, and other challenges.
Scaling	Process of expanding successful practices, technologies, or interventions to reach a larger number of producers, regions, or markets. It involves taking proven approaches and replicating them on a larger scale to maximize their impact and benefits.
South-South Cooperation	Cooperation amongst partners in the OACPS member states for continuous exchange of, e.g., knowledge and best practices. It involves mutual learning, the sharing of experiences, and joint initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable development, addressing common challenges, and fostering economic, social, and cultural progress.
Strategic Value chain	Key for national or even regional food security or about classical export commodities. It concerns key agricultural commodities that have significant potential for economic growth, job creation, and food security, and it involves implementing targeted interventions to enhance their performance and competitiveness.

Key terminology	Definition
Value chain	<p>The agricultural value chain refers to the full range of activities and stakeholders involved in the production, processing, distribution, and consumption of agricultural products. It encompasses all the interconnected stages and processes from farm to fork.</p> <p>It is characterized by interdependencies, relationships, and flows of products, services, information, and finances among its different stages. Stakeholders need to collaborate and optimize their activities to ensure efficiency, sustainability, and the delivery of quality agricultural products to consumers.</p>
Youth	<p>“Youth” refers to individuals between the ages of 15 and 35 years according to the African Youth Charter</p>

Annexes

Annex 1: Concept note template

Annex 2: Letter of intent template

Annex 3: Guidelines on costs eligible for reimbursement

Annex 4: Excel template for budget and contribution

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