

Version of 20/02/2020, changes in yellow becoming effective as of publication in the Staatscourant

Order of the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of 14 November 2019, nr. MINBUZA-2019.731514, laying down administrative rules and a ceiling for grants awarded under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006 (Drylands Sahel Programme)

The Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation;

Having regard to articles 6 and 7 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grants Decree;

Having regard to article 5.1 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006;

Orders:

Article 1

1. The administrative rules appended as an annexe to this Order apply to grants awarded on the basis of article 5.1 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006 in the area of food security within the framework of the Drylands Sahel Programme, from the date on which this Order enters into force up to and including 30 November 2030.
2. A grant ceiling of €100 million applies during the period referred to in paragraph 1, on condition that sufficient funds are made available by the budget legislator.

Article 2

For efficiency reasons, a grant will only be awarded to one applicant. Of all applications that meet the criteria set out in the administrative rules referred to in article 1 (a), only the application that best meets the criteria will be eligible for a grant.

Article 3

Applications for the Drylands Sahel Programme grant may be submitted from 9.00 CET on 2 January 2020 until 17.00 CET on 27 March 2020, using the application form stipulated by the Minister and accompanied by the documents stipulated in the form.¹

Article 4

This Order enters into force on the day after the date of the Government Gazette in which it appears and lapses with effect from 1 December 2030, with the proviso that it continues to apply to the grant awarded prior to that date.

This Order and its accompanying annexes, excluding the appendices, will be published in the Government Gazette. The appendices to the annexe will be published on the internet.²

¹ The application form can be downloaded as of 6 December 2019 from:

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/ontwikkelingssamenwerking/documenten/publicaties/2019/10/30/subsidieregeling-drylands-sudan-sahel-program-dssp>

² <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/ontwikkelingssamenwerking/documenten/publicaties/2019/10/30/subsidieregeling-drylands-sudan-sahel-program-dssp>

K. van der Heijden

Director-General for International Cooperation

For the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development

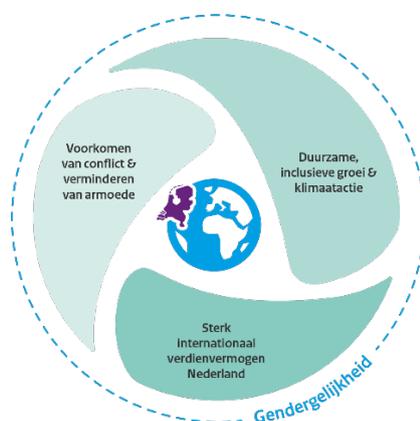
Grant Policy Framework for the Drylands Sahel Programme

1. Background

This grant policy framework provides guidance for the assessment of grant applications under the Drylands Sahel Programme (DSP). With regard to the Sahel the foreign trade and development cooperation (BHOS) policy document ‘Investing in Global Prospects’¹ states on page 43 that the Netherlands plans to set up integrated programmes in the field of food security, water and climate action around small urban growth centres’, focused on access to basic services (food, water and sanitation, and renewable energy); employment and income opportunities, especially for young people; protection against flooding, water scarcity and pollution; and sustainability of rain-fed farming and livestock raising (SDG 2), especially by increasing market orientation and reducing vulnerability to land degradation and climate change. Where possible, activities will be aligned with the African-led Great Green Wall Initiative against land degradation and desertification. This policy intention has subsequently been reflected in the Multiannual Country Strategies (MACS) of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger² as well as in the policy letter on food security of 6 June 2019 (‘Op weg naar een wereld zonder honger in 2030: de Nederlandse inzet’, Parliamentary Papers 33625, no. 280)³. To ensure the greatest possible return on public resources, there will be a call for grant proposals. From the applications submitted in response to this call, one applicant will be selected to elaborate a complete programme and, if the latter is approved, will receive the DSP grant. The specific conditions that applications must meet are set out in this grant policy framework and are based on the policy frameworks for BHOS programmes in the areas of food security, water and climate in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. The grant policy framework is available in English online.⁴

Soil degradation and foreign trade and development policy

The Netherlands and developing countries have a shared interest in worldwide sustainability and inclusive



growth. The combined foreign trade and development cooperation agenda addresses these issues in accordance

¹ <https://www.government.nl/documents/policy-notes/2018/05/18/investing-in-global-prospects>

² <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/ontwikkelingssamenwerking/documenten/publicaties/2019/10/30/subsidieregeling-drylands-sudan-sahel-program-dssp>

³ <https://www.government.nl/documents/parliamentary-documents/2019/10/29/food-security-letter-to-the-parliament>

⁴ <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/ontwikkelingssamenwerking/documenten/publicaties/2019/10/30/subsidieregeling-drylands-sudan-sahel-program-dssp>

with the Rio conventions on climate change, biodiversity and desertification and with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) via three closely connected objectives, with gender equality as an overarching objective, as depicted in the figure above..

In the West African Sahel and Sudano-Sahel climate zones, there is an interconnected, complex relationship between poverty, conflict, instability, declining agricultural productivity, soil degradation, climate change, water scarcity, population growth and unemployment (particularly among young people). Moreover, government policy and legislation concerning land and water use and agricultural development are weak, as is enforcement; government officials' interventions in conflicts over land use are seen as one of the root causes of the current tensions and instability.⁵ Agriculture (both arable and livestock farming) is part of the problem as well as part of the solution. Productivity is low, water and fertile land are in short supply, and soils are degrading as a result of too short crop rotation periods, overgrazing and increasing drought (desertification). At the same time, investments in agriculture and in nomadic and sedentary livestock raising, which together provide work for 80-90% of the population, can have a profound effect on poverty reduction and development, especially in view of the increased buying power and expanding markets in small urban growth centres.⁶ Women play a crucial role in this respect. Their role is key in natural resource management and achieving food security, particularly in places where young men are leaving the countryside. For this reason, increasing access to and control over the means of production (land, manure, water and credit) and knowledge is essential.

2. Parameters of the Drylands Sahel Programme

Experience with land rehabilitation and management shows that agroforestry and soil and water conservation techniques can unlock significant potential for regeneration,⁷ that could not only combat degradation, but also contribute to raise farmers' (including women) productivity and incomes. This is not only a matter of technology, however. There are crucial enabling conditions, such as:

- Land and water management institutions that promote land and water (user) rights as well as land and water use planning;
- Market access must be enhanced through value chain development, improved storage, processing and infrastructure, and farmer cooperation .

The overarching objective (impact) that the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation ('the Minister') is pursuing with this grant instrument is ecologically sustainable land use in arable farming and nomadic and semi-nomadic livestock raising, resulting in sustainable production and higher incomes for farmers and livestock raisers, including women, in a coherent area within the agro-ecological Sudano-Sahel zone of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger.

*Framework for the Theory of Change*⁸

To achieve this impact, a theory of change should be developed that indicates how change will be brought

⁵ Tor A. Benjaminsen & Boubacar Ba (2018): 'Why Do Pastoralists in Mali Join Jihadist Groups? A Political Ecological Explanation', *Journal of Peasant Studies*, DOI:10.1080/03066150.2018.1474457.

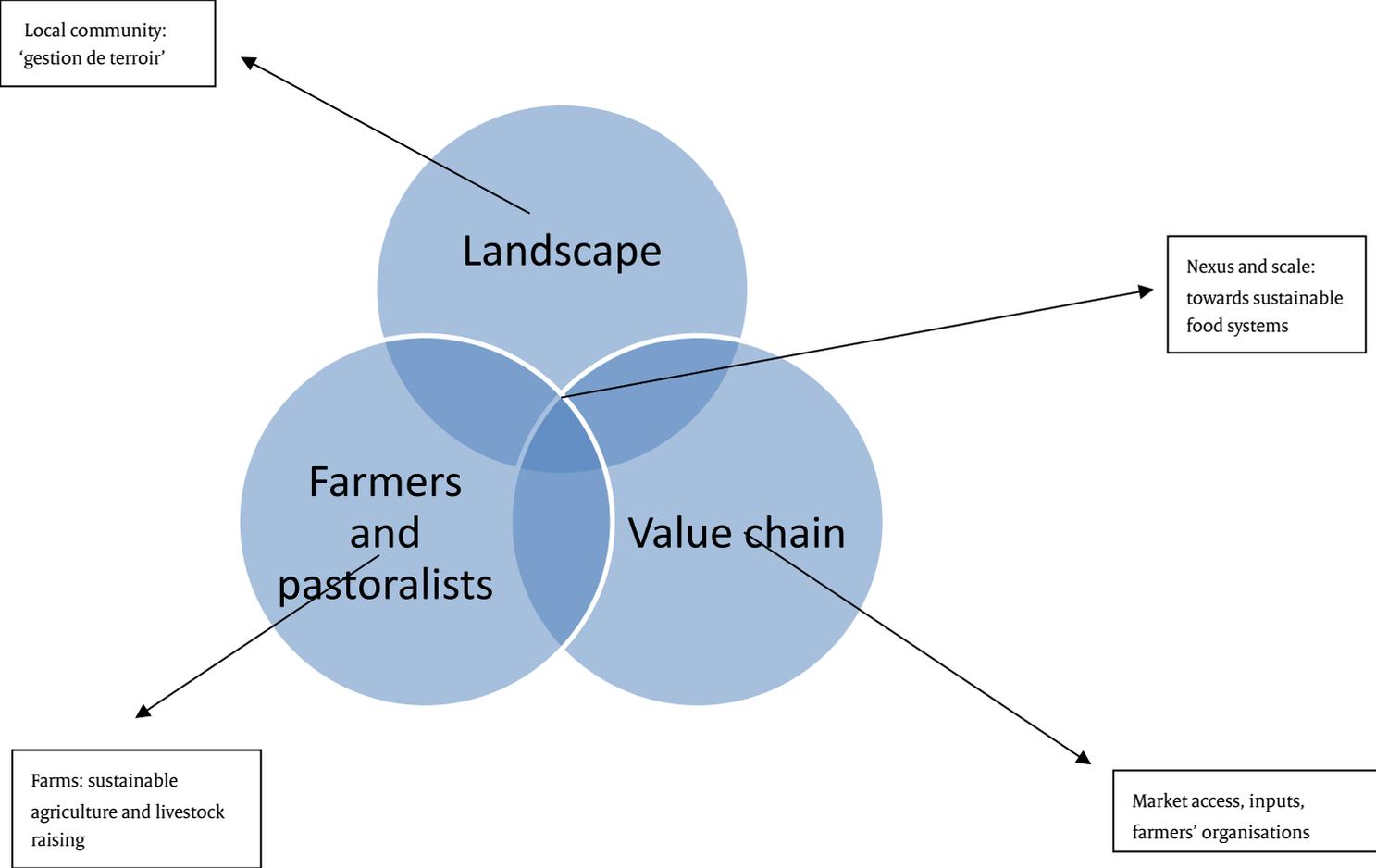
⁶ Cilliers et al. (2019): *Prospects for the G5 Sahel Countries*.

⁷ See Reij et al. (2016) and WRI (2015).

⁸ A theory of change defines all the building blocks that, taken together, are required to reach a given long-term goal. It presents the underlying analysis, assumptions, preconditions and intended results – outputs, outcomes and impact – in a logical manner. The theory of change serves

about at three interlinked levels: the farm (farming families), the value chain (farmers’ organisations) and the landscape (local communities and governments). The path towards these changes and the achievement of sustainable results goes by way of institutions – public authorities, farmers’ organisations and associations, cooperatives, traditional leaders, etc. – that are capable of organising lasting collective agreements, actions and services. As this institutional landscape is context-specific, the theory of change must include an explicit contextual analysis. The same applies to gender: it too requires a context-specific analysis as part of the theory of change.

In general, the desired changes can be described as follows:



Farm:

Change: from current practices (soil erosion and depletion, overgrazing) to integrated soil fertility and pasture management, including soil and water conservation (stone rows, soil cover, water harvesting), increase in soil organic matter content (composting), natural regeneration (trees, shrubs), controlled grazing and logging, agroforestry, crop rotation, improved seeds and fertilisation (micro doses).

Assumption: farmers and livestock raisers (including women) will adopt sustainable practices when the benefits in terms of higher productivity, income and resilience become clear to them.

as a basis for defining interventions at each step of the process, and makes clear what role each of the stakeholders plays. The change process is based on assumptions. The theory of change indicates what outcome the chosen strategy leads to and how this contributes to the objectives that have been set.

Value chain:

Change: from (semi-)subsistence production below the poverty line to selling surpluses on local and small-city markets; improved access to inputs; higher income and potentially better nutrition.

Assumption: there is access to existing markets with sufficient buying power.

Landscape:

Change: from weak/uncertain/non-existent agreements on land and water use and landscape and river basin management to collectively agreed, inclusive land rights and sustainable land and water use arrangements, and implementation of these arrangements for arable and (semi-)nomadic livestock farming (as well as forestry and fisheries where appropriate).

Assumption: local stakeholders have and recognise shared interests in improved landscape management.

Synergy:

Change: synergistic effects because improvements on farms, in value chains and in landscape management reinforce one another, resulting in more sustainable food systems.

Assumption: there will be sufficient impact at all levels (farm, value chain and landscape).

To bring about these changes and achieve robust results, the DSP will have a duration of 10 years. In an initial five-year phase, the grant funds should be used to build the necessary structures, capacity and trust, and to develop, test and improve working methods and strategies. These efforts should manifestly build on knowledge and experience acquired in recent decades. In the second phase, the emphasis will shift to expanding and scaling up approaches and interventions of proven worth and to embed them in institutions, with a view to sustainability (devising an exit strategy). Close cooperation with national and local governments on the basis of their policy frameworks will be crucial for the projects' ownership and lasting impact. It will also be vital to achieving the overarching objective of Dutch efforts in the Sahel: a strengthened social contract between citizens and government.

Results and indicators

The DSP will make a direct, quantifiable contribution to the following objectives of Dutch policy on food security, water, climate, private sector development and stability:

- Small-scale food producers have doubled their productivity and income.
- Beneficiaries' diets are adequate and sufficiently diverse.
- Farmland has been converted to sustainable use.
- Water is used sustainably and equitably, meeting the needs of all sectors and of the environment.
- Water is used efficiently in agriculture.
- Humans and natural ecosystems are less vulnerable to current and expected impacts of climate change thanks to increased resilience and/or reduced exposure.
- The business climate has improved.
- The private sector is developing.
- Government policy and legislation on sustainable land and water management have improved, as has legislative enforcement.
- Conflicts over land use are being resolved and becoming less frequent.

Indirectly, and in a manner that is only approximately measurable, the programme will contribute to the objective:

- A strengthened social contract between government and citizens and increased stability.

The following indicators can be used to make the Dutch contribution clear at output and outcome level:⁹

Output (annual results):

- Number of small-scale food producers¹⁰ (male/female/young)¹¹ reached directly¹² with activities (technologies/products/services) designed to raise productivity and income
- Number of people for whom more and better food has become available
- Number of hectares of farmland (disaggregated for agriculture and grazing) directly reached with activities (technologies/products/services) aimed at increasing ecological sustainability
- Number of river basins/landscapes with a management plan
- Number of small-scale infrastructure projects for land and water management carried out with stakeholders
- Number of people (male/female/young) supported in the development of income-generating activities
- Number of farmers' groups/organisations/cooperatives, and total number of member beneficiaries, supported
- Number of public servants actively involved in project activities
- Number of conflicts (local/national/regional) that have been addressed
- Number of dialogues organised to manage (local/national/regional) conflicts
- Number of people (female/male) trained in conflict resolution skills

Outcome (change measured from baseline):¹³

- Number of small-scale food producers (male/female/young) that have made progress towards earning a living income
- Number of small-scale food producers (male/female/young) that have made progress towards closing the yield gap
- Number of children with access to and consuming a more complete and varied diet
- Number of female small-scale food producers who have made progress towards having more of a say
- Number of small-scale food producers (male/female/young) who have become more resilient to climate and other shocks
- Number of hectares of land (disaggregated for agriculture and grazing) where sustainable agro-ecological practices and efficient water use have been instituted
- Number of hectares of land (disaggregated for agriculture and grazing) that have been made more resilient in agro-ecological terms to climate change and other shocks
- Number of small-scale food producers (male/female/young) who have been given more secure land use

⁹ These are standard indicators from the BZ results framework for food security, water, climate, private sector development and stability. Grant applicants can explain on which of these standard indicators their proposed programme will yield results. They may also add situation- and context-specific indicators of their own as they see fit.

¹⁰ 'Small-scale food producers' refers to households that make a living and can subsist partly or entirely from arable farming and/or livestock raising (nomadic or sedentary) and/or fishing and/or non-wood forestry.

¹¹ Disaggregated by sex (male/female) and age (older or younger than 35).

¹² 'Reached directly' means that individual beneficiaries have been actively participating in programme activities.

¹³ Using internationally standardised, validated methodologies.

rights

- Number of river basins/landscapes that are managed more sustainably, including through fair distribution of water
- Number of farmers' groups/organisations/cooperatives strengthened, and total number of member beneficiaries
- Number of direct jobs supported in SMEs
- Number of improvements to legislation
- Number of public servants whose capacity to effectively implement policy has been increased
- Demonstrable changes in beneficiaries' perception of and/or behaviour towards violent groups/organisations
- Number of beneficiaries who report that they have access to viable livelihoods, as alternatives to those offered by extremist groups

The interconnection between the different outcomes can be shown, quantitatively, using the percentage of beneficiaries reached who profit simultaneously from several different effects, and qualitatively, by explaining the significance of these cumulative effects. These two measures can serve as a proxy for the synergistic effects that can contribute to transformations towards sustainable food systems.

No exact targets can be set in advance for each indicator, given that the extent of the output/results depends on the anticipated impact. The total results, and thus in due course the total outcome, is expected to be lower in the first period (of building up and developing) than in the second period (of expanding and scaling up). As an indicative goal, the DSP is aimed to reach and have effects on between 0.5 and 1.5 million small-scale food producers in the first five-year period, and between 2 million and 5 million in the second period.

3. DSP grant awards: an overview

The Minister is providing €100,000,000 in grant funding under the DSP for a period of 10 years. These resources count as ODA.¹⁴ The amount will be provided in two phases: €52,000,000 for the period from November 2020 to December 2025 and, subject to a positive evaluation and on the basis of a detailed scaling-up strategy, €48,000,000 for the period from January 2026 to October 2030. For efficiency reasons, only one applicant will be eligible for a grant under this grant policy framework.

The process of selecting the grant recipient will comprise two steps:

1. Applicants must apply for the entire amount available. The proposal should include a theory of change and, for the initial five-year period, an overview of the allocation of expenditure to the different cost categories and an overview of the programme's objectives, activities, intended results and expected effects. For the remaining five-year period, the proposal should indicate how and to what extent, building on approaches that have proven their worth during the first five years, on effective interventions and on functioning institutions, the programme will be expanded and scaled up, and how its lasting impact will be ensured (with a view to an exit strategy). All applications will be assessed according to the criteria laid down in this grant policy framework. To be selected for the second phase of the selection process, an applicant must in any case satisfy all of the threshold criteria and obtain sufficiently high scores on the qualitative criteria.
2. Of all applications that meet the criteria only the applicant that best meets the qualitative criteria will be invited to submit a fully elaborated programme. This programme will be assessed by a group of experts on the basis of the criteria included in these administrative rules and, if necessary, on the basis of additional

¹⁴ <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/officialdevelopmentassistedefinitionandcoverage.htm>.

criteria to be shared with the selected applicant before the elaboration of the programme proposal. After this assessment, the grant can be awarded.

Purposes for which the grant may be used

The grant is to be used to implement a programme in three countries (Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger) that contributes to achieving the goals set out in this grant policy framework (see chapter 3). The funds should to the greatest possible extent benefit small-scale food producers, the DSP's ultimate target group. Indirect costs should be kept to a minimum.¹⁵

Duration

The grant period will run from 1 November 2020 to 30 October 2030, divided into two phases as explained above. The grant will be prepaid in instalments on the basis of liquidity forecasts.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will commission an external evaluation, to be conducted in the autumn of 2024, of the results achieved up to that time and of the chances of successful realisation of results in the second phase. If the outcome of this evaluation is sufficiently positive, the costs of the activities to be conducted in the second phase will be eligible for funding. With a view to this second phase, an overview of the activities, objectives, intended results, anticipated effects and liquidity requirements for the period from 2026 to 2030 should be submitted together with the annual plan for 2026. After this overview has been approved, the remaining grant will be prepaid in instalments. The instalment prepaid in the last year of the grant period will not exceed 80% of the funds requested for that year. The final settling of accounts will take place after the definitive grant amount has been determined.

Reports to the Minister about the implementation of the grant project and the results achieved should continue through October 2030. A final report must be submitted after the grant period has ended so that the definitive grant amount can be determined. The grant recipient must comply with the grant obligations and objectives for the entire grant period (2020-2030). The rules laid down in this grant policy framework will apply throughout this period.

Requirements at the end of the grant period

Unless the grant programme is extended, any resources left at the end of the grant period will flow back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This will be laid down in the grant decision.

4. Who is eligible for a grant?

Type of organisation

- Dutch¹⁶ and non-Dutch organisations with legal personality under civil law (including NGOs,¹⁷ knowledge institutions and companies) and a good track record in the development of small-scale dryland agriculture.
- Organisations may apply independently or join a consortium of organisations, one of which submits the application as lead party on behalf of the consortium. A consortium is a framework for cooperation between two or more organisations, as defined above, that have concluded a partnership agreement with a view to implementing the activities for which a grant is requested. All parties in the consortium should contribute to the project's final objectives and deliver demonstrable added value, both individually and

¹⁵ For a definition of 'indirect costs', see appendix 2 to the budget model for this grant framework, which must be used to draw up the budget accompanying the application.

¹⁶ 'Dutch' means: an organisation established in the Netherlands, subject to Dutch law and having its registered office in the Netherlands.

¹⁷ 'NGO' means: a not-for-profit organisation neither established by a public authority nor connected to a public authority either de facto or under its constitution, which possesses legal personality under civil law in the country where it has its registered office.

collectively, for instance with regard to the selected themes. If the application is approved, the lead party is the grant recipient and, as such, bears full responsibility towards the Minister for implementation of the proposed activities and compliance with the obligations in respect of the grant.

- An organisation may submit only one DSP grant application as a lead party or independent applicant, but may be a co-applicant in other applications submitted on behalf of a consortium by another organisation acting as lead party. If an organisation submits more than one application as either a lead party or an independent applicant, only the first application submitted will be considered. Any applications subsequently received will be rejected.
- Local and other governments, intergovernmental organisations and organisations in which a public authority is the sole shareholder are not eligible for a grant, and cannot therefore be an applicant, lead party or co-applicant.

5. Selection procedure and allocation of resources

Criteria for assessing DSP grant applications

The provisions of the General Administrative Law Act, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grants Decree and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006 are fully applicable to the assessment of DSP applications and the ultimate award of the grant. Applications will be assessed in accordance with the above legislation and pursuant to the criteria set out in this grant policy framework. There are two sets of criteria: threshold criteria and criteria assessing the quality of the organisation and the applicant's or consortium's track record, and the proposal submitted.

The assessment and selection process will take place in two stages.

1. First, the applicant applies for the entire grant amount (see chapters 4 and 11). All applications will be assessed according to the criteria laid down in this grant policy framework. An applicant must in any case satisfy all of the threshold criteria, and obtain sufficiently high scores on the qualitative criteria in order to be eligible for the next stage.
2. Only the applicant whose application best, and sufficiently, meets the qualitative criteria will be invited to elaborate the proposal into a complete programme. This programme will be assessed by a group of experts on the basis of the criteria included in these administrative rules and, if necessary, on the basis of additional criteria to be shared with the selected applicant before the elaboration of the programme proposal. After this assessment, the grant can be awarded, possibly with an obligation to make certain modifications to the programme.

The allocation of resources will take place by means of a call for proposals. All applications will be assessed according to the same criteria. Of the applicants whose applications satisfy these criteria, only the one that best meets the qualitative criteria will be eligible for a DSP grant, provided that the complete programme developed by the applicant amply satisfies the criteria in these administrative rules and any additional criteria to be shared with the selected applicant before the elaboration of the programme proposal.

6. Timetable

Applications for the DSP grant may be submitted from 9.00 CET on 2 January 2020 to 17.00 CET on 27 March 2020. Applications submitted after the date and time stated above will be rejected. Applications received in good time will be assessed according to the threshold criteria after 27 March 2020. If an application fails to meet one

or more of the threshold criteria, it will be rejected and will not be processed further. Applications that satisfy all of the threshold criteria go on to the check of the quality of the organisation and the applicant's or consortium's track record (organisational and track record check), and of the quality of the proposal (proposal check). A decision on the applicant selected to elaborate a complete programme will be made by **15 May** 2020 at the latest.

The selected applicant must submit a fully elaborated programme proposal by **21 August** 2020 at the latest. A decision on this full proposal will be made by **16 October** 2020 at the latest.

7. Threshold check

Applications that fail to meet all of the threshold criteria will be rejected and will not be assessed further.

1. The activities for which a grant is requested should be based on a theory of change developed by the applicant aimed at achieving the DSP's general objective: ecologically sustainable land use in arable farming and in nomadic and semi-nomadic livestock raising, resulting in sustainable production and higher incomes for farmers and livestock raisers, including women, in a coherent area in the Sudano-Sahel zone of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger.
2. The applicant must be an organisation which possesses legal personality under civil law. For applications on behalf of a consortium submitted by a lead party, both the lead party and all co-applicants must have legal personality under civil law.
3. The applicant or, in the case of an application on behalf of a consortium, the lead party has not submitted another DSP grant application as applicant or lead party.
4. In the case of a consortium, the application must include a partnership agreement signed by all consortium partners (the lead party and all co-applicants), with a view to implementing the activities for which a grant is requested and in any case laying down:
 - how each of the consortium partners will contribute to the consortium's activities;
 - how decisions are made within the consortium;
 - how costs and risks are shared among the consortium members;
 - how the consortium members will ensure that the lead party fulfils the obligations towards the Minister in respect of the grant, including responsibility for the joint aggregated reports (including IATI-compliant reports);
 - how the consortium members will keep each other informed about, in particular, their financial health;
 - how the partnership can be adapted;
 - the role of each of the consortium members in monitoring and evaluating progress in the activities for which a grant has been received.
5. The applicant or, in the case of an application on behalf of a consortium, the consortium must have use of an office in Burkina Faso, in Mali and in Niger, possibly through a consortium member established in one of those countries.
6. In the 2016-2018 period on average at least 25% of the applicant's total annual income must have come from sources other than grants and/or direct contributions from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (including missions). If the applicant is the lead party of a consortium, this criterion applies to the consortium as a whole. Consequently, if one consortium members derives on average less than 25% of its total annual income from sources other than Ministry of Foreign Affairs grants or contributions, this may be offset by another party in the consortium.
7. The applicant or, in the case of a consortium, the lead party must demonstrate that it and, in the case of a consortium, all co-applicants have adopted an integrity policy and that it and they have introduced

procedures to apply that policy. This integrity policy and these procedures should serve to prevent as far as possible any sexual misconduct and other serious forms of inappropriate behaviour towards employees and other individuals during the implementation of the proposed activities by the lead party, its co-applicants and other parties they involve in the activities, and in the event of such incidents ensure that they are investigated and appropriate measures are taken to put an end as promptly as possible to the misconduct or inappropriate behaviour and mitigate the consequences. These procedures must be structured in a way that guarantees prompt reporting of any such incidents to the Minister.

8. The applicant or, in the case of a consortium, the lead party and all co-applicants are in a position to ensure adequate financial management and guarantee effective and efficient implementation of the activities through experience and expertise in relation to activities of the kind for which grant funding is being sought.
9. A. The maximum remuneration of individual management and board members of Dutch applicants, lead parties and any co-applicants, being legal entities or institutions referred to in article 1.3 of the Top Incomes (Standardisation) Act (WNT), complies with the maximum remuneration applying to them by that law, as from the start of the period for which the grant is being requested.
B. From the start of the period for which a grant is being requested, the maximum remuneration of individual managers and board members of other applicants, lead parties or co-applicants must be in reasonable proportion to the seniority of their position and to the organisation's geographical location, size and complexity. Amounts in other currencies must be converted into euros using the Ministry corporate rates (see appendix 3 to these administrative rules) as at 1 January 2020.
10. In the 2016-2018 financial years, expenditure by the applicant or, in the case of an application on behalf of a consortium, by all the consortium members together must have been at least €20 million per year.
11. The applicant or the consortium members together must have gained experience¹⁸ over at least three years in the 2013-2019 period in implementing at least five small-scale agricultural projects in semi-arid regions in least developed countries as defined on the OECD DAC country list. At least three of these projects must have involved the development of subsistence or semi-subsistence farming in the Sahel region, and three must have involved the development of nomadic or semi-nomadic livestock raising in the Sahel region, possibly combined in the same project, in which work has demonstrably been done together with, and within the policy frameworks of, national and/or local governments.
12. The activities for which the grant is being requested must be implemented in a coherent area in the Sudano-Sahel zone of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. At least 20% of the requested grant must be spent in each of these three countries, and no more than 10% of the requested amount may be spent on activities targeting more than one country.
13. The following activities are not eligible for a grant:
 - activities which already receive grant funding or a contribution directly or indirectly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs budget;
 - activities aimed entirely or partly at proselytism;
 - activities of organisations already receiving core funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs budget during the DSP grant period;
 - for-profit activities;
14. The activities must start no earlier than the date on which the grant decision is published and no later

¹⁸ In demonstrating and assessing this experience, the applicant or, in the case of an application on behalf of a consortium, the lead party or the consortium members together may also refer to experience gained by members of their staff in a previous job with another organisation.

than 1 November 2020, and end no later than 31 October 2030.

15. The applicant or in case of a consortium the lead party must apply for the full amount of the grant, i.e. € 100 million.

10. Qualitative check

The qualitative check assesses the quality of the proposal and of the applicant/consortium. To be eligible for a grant, applications must in any case obtain satisfactory scores on both parts of the qualitative check (organisational and track record check, and proposal check).

Organisational and track record check: qualitative criteria concerning the organisation and the applicant's or consortium's track record¹⁹

The criteria below are used to assess the quality of the applicant's or consortium's organisation and track record. The track record is assessed on the basis of five case studies, as mentioned under threshold criterion 10. In the case of an application submitted by a lead party on behalf of a consortium, the word 'applicant' below should be read as 'the consortium as a whole'.

1. The extent to which the applicant has successfully carried out projects on the development of subsistence or semi-subsistence farming and nomadic or semi-nomadic livestock raising in the Sahel region, and gained experience that is relevant to the DSP's objectives.
2. The extent to which the applicant has relevant experience of success in reaching small-scale producers (smallholders), including women and the poorest groups.
3. The extent to which the applicant has:
 - the knowledge, staff and resources to ensure funds are used efficiently;
 - networks and experience of collaboration with local organisations and governments in the three countries where the activities are to be implemented.
4. The extent to which the applicant has experience with measuring results, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting, as demonstrated by:
 - standardised indicators based on a sound methodology;
 - a learning organisation;
 - results-based management;
 - evaluations at outcome level;
 - reports, including IATI-compliant reports.
5. In the case of a consortium, the extent to which the partnership is effective (involving synergy between the partners' experience and competences) and efficient (due to the complementarity of their experience and competences):
 - the extent to which a consortium is a suitable vehicle for spending the DSP grant in accordance with the DSP objectives;
 - the extent to which the selection of consortium members will result in efficient and effective implementation of the activities for which grant funding is sought;
 - the extent to which the consortium members, in particular the lead party, have the necessary expertise and influence on decision-making, as well as the organisational capacity to achieve the

¹⁹ Ibid.

DSP objectives.

Proposal check: criteria concerning the quality of the proposal

6. The extent to which the proposed programme's theory of change will contribute to achieving the objectives formulated in this grant policy framework, and the extent to which the proposal convincingly explains how the activities will lead to the intended outputs (the number of farmers (including women) and number of hectares reached) and outcomes (effects in terms of productivity, income, efficient use of water, participation by women, employment, land use rights, river basin management, resilience, institutions and sustainability), and how these results (outputs and outcomes) form a coherent whole.
7. The extent to which an analysis has been made of the institutional landscape and is reflected in the programme's intervention strategy.
8. The extent to which the proposed programme builds on the many earlier interventions, experiences and the accumulated knowledge of sustainable land use in the Sahel.
9. The extent to which an analysis has been made of gender dimensions and is reflected in the programme's intervention strategy.
10. The extent to which local organisations and governments have/have had effective influence on the development and content of the proposal and the programme and on the way the proposed activities are monitored and managed.
11. The extent to which the proposal aims for the activities to have a lasting, sustainable effect on the intended target groups and for the intervention strategy to be institutionally embedded (in view of an exit strategy).
12. The extent to which the applicant or in case of a consortium the lead party uses quantitative and qualitative indicators corresponding to the indicators referred to in this grant policy framework and to the applicant's own theory of change.
13. The extent to which the applicant or in case of a consortium the lead party has or will establish a satisfactory system for risk management.

Obligations tied to the grant

The grant decision will lay down obligations tied to the grant, which will in any case concern annual plans and reporting. Every year, an annual plan and accompanying budget for the forthcoming year must be submitted, including a statement of liquidity need. Reporting must be based on open data in accordance with the IATI standards that entered into force in 2016. The applicant will be expected to follow IATI developments and adapt accountability procedures accordingly. For more information, please refer to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs publication 'How to use the IATI standard'.²⁰ Organisations whose reporting is not yet IATI-compliant will be given the opportunity to remedy this. A deadline for compliance will be included in the grant decision.

Annual financial and substantive reporting should at a minimum comprise:

- an annual financial report and audit opinion, including a report of findings (all in conformity with the audit protocol that will be included as an annexe to the grant decision);
- information about the geographic distribution of grant fund expenditure;
- a report on results achieved on a number of substantive (non-financial) indicators to be further set out in the grant decision.

²⁰ www.government.nl/documents/publications/2015/12/01/open-data-and-development-cooperation.

11. Application procedure

Grant applications must be drawn up using the form stipulated by the Minister and accompanied by the documents stipulated in the form.²¹ The budget to be submitted with the application must be drawn up in accordance with the model in appendix 2 to these administrative rules. Grant applications may be submitted from 9.00 CET on 2 January 2020 until 17.00 CET on 27 March 2020. Applications submitted after the date and time stated above will be rejected. The applicant bears sole responsibility for ensuring that the application is complete and submitted on time. Applications should be complete and without reservations, signed by an officially authorised signatory (state name and position) on behalf of the applicant. It is not possible to submit a provisional application.

Applications should be submitted in Dutch or, preferably, in English. A Dutch or English translation should be added to annexes written in a language other than English or Dutch. The fully elaborated programme proposal to be submitted in the second stage of the selection process should be submitted in French.

Applications should preferably be submitted by email in PDF format and sent to IGG@minbuza.nl, with 'DSP grant application' in the subject line.

The time when the email is received on the servers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be considered the time of submission. Please note that the email server will reject files larger than 14MB. Such files should be split up into smaller files sent in separate emails. In this case, the time at which the last email is received will be considered the time the application is submitted. If an application is split into several files which are each sent separately, the emails must be numbered, with both the email number and the total number of emails clearly indicated in the subject line.²²

Any technical issues relating to electronic submission are at the applicant's own cost and risk.

Postal applications should be sent to:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Att. IGG – Food Security Division
Postbus 20061
2500 EB The Hague

If you wish to deliver your application personally or by courier, it may be handed in at the Ministry's mail desk (deliveries), Rijnstraat 8, 2515 XP The Hague. The time at which the application is received at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be considered the time of submission.

If an application is sent by standard post instead of registered post, the sender bears the risk of it being received late by the Ministry or not at all. Applications sent by post (apart from those using a 'postage paid' envelope) and postmarked on a date before the application deadline are considered to have been submitted on time, provided they are received no later than one week after the deadline for applications has passed.

²¹ The application form can be downloaded as of 5 December 2019 from <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/ontwikkelingssamenwerking/documenten/publicaties/2019/10/30/subsidieregeling-drylands-sudan-sahel-program-dssp>.

²² E.g. 'email 1 of 5', 'email 2 of 5', etc. up to 'email 5 of 5'.

Applications sent by post using a 'postage paid' envelope are considered to have been submitted on time if they are delivered to the Ministry before 17:00 CET on 27 March 2020. An item is not considered received until it has been recorded by the Ministry's mail department. Incoming mail is not recorded in the evenings or at weekends.

Applicants should not include additional information (such as illustrative books, CD-ROMs, USB sticks or DVDs about their organisation) with their application, as these will not be taken into account when assessing the application.

With regard to the application procedure, particular attention is drawn to article 7, paragraph 3 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grants Decree. If an incomplete application is submitted, the Minister may request a supplement. In this case, the date and time of receipt of the application will be the date and time on which the supplemented application was received. If the application is submitted less than two weeks before the deadline, the lead party runs the risk that, if it is incomplete, the Minister will not use her discretionary powers to request a supplement; this in connection with the time required to check all applications are complete. In this case, no supplement will be requested and the application will be assessed as it stands.

Incomplete or insufficiently reasoned applications may be rejected on the basis of the threshold or qualitative criteria. When filling in the form, it is not sufficient to refer for the sake of brevity to other parts of the application or annexes, unless the application form states that this is wholly or partly acceptable. Incomplete applications may be rejected.

Particular attention is also drawn to article 9 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grants Decree. Applications concerning activities that have already been started at the time that the grant application is submitted will be rejected.

Questions concerning this document or any other matters will only be accepted if they are sent to the email address given above no later than 13 March 2020. If necessary, questions will be aggregated and anonymised and published once a week, with answers, on the Q&A section on <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/ontwikkelingssamenwerking/documenten/publicaties/2019/10/30/subsidieregeling-drylands-sudan-sahel-program-dssp>.

Appendices:

1. Application form – see <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/ontwikkelingssamenwerking/documenten/publicaties/2019/10/30/subsidieregeling-drylands-sudan-sahel-program-dssp>
2. Budget model
3. Corporate rates 2020