



The Ambassador's Special Self Help Fund

Guidelines

The Ambassador's Self Help Fund in Botswana provides grants to assist small-scale community development projects. The objective of the fund is to encourage self-reliance within local communities, and to demonstrate the U.S. Embassy's interest in the welfare and social development of Botswana.

Funding priority will be given to projects that include a significant community contribution and/or involvement, plan to generate income or employment opportunities, or address community social concerns. Self Help assistance should lead to ongoing, self-sustaining activities.

There are two main focus areas for Self-Help projects: Water Supply & Sanitation, and Social Services. Details for these two focus areas follow below.

Water Supply and Sanitation

Safe Water Access:

Increase access to water of appropriate quantity and quality for use in households, schools, health facilities, and industrial/commercial facilities through protection of existing water sources, sustainable development of new sources (e.g., well drilling and spring capping); expansion and rehabilitation of water supply infrastructure, such as pumps and distribution systems; implementation of appropriate community-based approaches to design, construction, operation and maintenance.

Basic Sanitation:

Increase access to and use of sanitation services for safe human waste disposal to protect human health and environmental quality. Support innovative approaches to building demand for sanitation-related products and services. Facilitate private sector participation in providing sanitation products and services. Where applicable, promote sustainable solutions for wastewater treatment and reuse.

Water Resources Productivity:

Increase efficiency and promote productive, multiple uses of water in domestic and industrial sectors.

Social Services

Assist special populations which may be vulnerable or at-risk on a temporary or chronic basis. These include groups such as the disabled; orphans, children and at-risk youth; victims of trafficking; victims of gender-based violence; refugees, returnees, ethnic minorities, internally displaced or other socially excluded groups; the elderly; and female heads of household.

The Grant Process

The Self Help Office reviews all applications first. The coordinator will notify each applicant about the status of his/her proposal. If the application does not meet the funding guidelines, the applicant will be informed. If the proposal does meet the grant criteria, the Self Help coordinator will schedule a project visit to discuss the proposal in detail. All projects eligible for funding are reviewed by the U.S. Embassy Self Help Advisory Committee, who, in turn, recommends funding priorities to the Ambassador.

If the proposal is approved, the project supervisor and the American Government sign a contract of agreement. Payment is given in advance. Grantees are responsible for submitting receipts of purchased items to the Self Help Office.

The funded group must provide ongoing project reports and a final project completion report. U.S. Embassy staff will make periodic visits to the project.

Applications may be submitted at any time during the year, but it is best to receive proposals no later than January to be considered for funding during the same year. Grants are generally issued once per year, during May - June. Each grant has a 12 month limit to be completed.

The Self Help office receives many more applications each year than it can fund. Careful and complete preparation of the enclosed form will give your group or institution the best chance to qualify for funding.

Criteria for Application

All applicants must be registered not-for-profit groups, associations, non-governmental organizations, or community based organizations. The groups must be well established, **operating for at least one year**, and have a history of accomplishments.

The fund does not accept requests from individuals, private business enterprises, or government departments or entities.

A project can receive funding only once from the Self Help Fund. The Fund objective is to provide support for projects that will become self-sustaining when the grant is completed. **Organizations must contribute significantly to the proposed project, either through labor, materials, or funds.**

The amounts of the grants vary widely. Grants usually range up to BWP60,000 per project. Larger grants can be considered on a case by case basis. Projects over BWP150,000 cannot be funded. The ability of the group to manage money, the type of project being proposed, and the number of people to benefit will be considered when determining if a project can be funded.

Ideally, projects must generate income and/or employment, and be self-sustaining when completed. Preference is given to projects that:

- introduce new income generating activities,
- promote appropriate technology or energy conservation,
- develop natural resources,
- improve basic economic or living conditions of a community,
- benefit a large number of people,
- involve a significant contribution in labor, materials or money donated by members of the local community,
- are well planned and ready to be implemented.

Projects should be manageable within the means of the community. It should be reasonable to complete the project within one year of signing the contract.

Activities the Self Help Fund CANNOT Support

1. Operating costs (e.g. administrative costs, maintenance costs, or salaries)
2. Purely religious, police, or military activities (not excluding community self help projects sponsored by these organizations)
3. Cost of purchase, operation, or maintenance of vehicles
4. Financing labor costs that can be provided by Government. Also, where the Government has given FAP grants, Self Help is unable to consider further funding
5. Staff or teacher housing and private housing for individuals or families.
6. Sports supplies or equipment to schools and clubs
7. Electronic equipment and school equipment that normally should be provided by the Government.

Self Help requires that the project supervisor obtain approval from the local development committee, tribal authority, local town and/or district council before submission of the application to the U.S. Embassy.

If your project proposal meets the criteria for the Self Help Fund, please complete the attached application form and return it to the following address:

Self Help Coordinator
The U.S. Embassy
P.O. Box 90
Gaborone

The original pro-forma invoices must accompany the application from the intended suppliers. We are unable to accept photocopies or facsimiles.

Should you have additional questions or require further assistance, please contact the Self Help office at telephone number 395 3982 extension 2334, or e-mail SSHBotswana@state.gov.

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