

Agricultural and Rural Development Expert USAID Serbia Big Small Businesses (BSB) activity (Short-term, part-time)

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Big Small Businesses project (BSB) seeks a consultant to analyze the Serbian agricultural/rural sector, comprehending key anthropological and economic data. BSB is a five-year activity implemented in partnership with ACDI/VOCA, J.E. Austin Associates (JAA), CEVES, and the Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation.

In its second year, the BSB Project has launched a set of activities aimed at supporting the agriculture and food sector to empower SMEs and farmers to increase their contribution to the Serbian economy and make rural communities more resilient and sustainable. To gain a better insight into the dynamic features of this sector, the Project wants to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the sector to recognize factors that positively and negatively impact the sector and to identify potential practical measures that authorities, business service providers, and donors should direct towards the sector. The results of such analyses would be presented at key events conducted by project partners (Agro Belgrade, International Grain Forum - Belgrade, Novi Sad Agricultural Fair, etc.) and thus inform farmers, companies, and stakeholders involved in improving rural communities.

Agricultural and Rural Development Expert Assignment:

JAA is seeking an Agricultural and Rural Development Expert for the BSB project funded by USAID. *This is a short-term position for up to 15 days of effort between January 15 and March 15, 2025.*

This consultancy aims to produce a presentation and a document synthesizing key anthropological and economic data about the Serbian rural and agricultural sectors. The research will focus on providing a cross-section of specific indicators critical for understanding the dynamics of the agricultural sector and its socio-economic contributions.

In close collaboration with BSB staff, the consultant shall propose and adopt final parameters or indicators that best illustrate developments in Serbian agriculture over the past 10-15 years. The consultant should suggest relevant sources and documents for the analysis (e.g., expert's previous research, Green Book, National Strategy, Serbian Statistical Office general and agricultural censuses, UN Comtrade, Ministry of Agriculture, local government/provincial sources) and retrieve necessary data to ensure a comprehensive analysis. The data will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Rural Demographics and Farm Structure
- Agricultural Production Data
- Economic Contribution of Agriculture
- Agricultural Export Analysis
- Financing of Agriculture

Specific data will be disaggregated to reflect regional performance and characteristics. The consultant shall analyze and present data in a user-friendly and visually compelling manner. Furthermore, the consultant is expected to provide expert insights/opinions and propose potential strategies for improvement, including agricultural and rural development measures to enhance the state of Serbian agriculture.

The analysis and deliverables will be carried out in two phases: the first will present the state and dynamics of agriculture, and the second will be a more comprehensive document that, in addition to data analysis, will also contain the expert's strategic recommendations.

Qualifications:

- PhD or Master's degree in agricultural policy, agricultural and rural economics, or related fields with expertise in statistical, foreign trade, anthropological, economic, and financial analytics, and local and national strategies analysis.
- Minimum 10 years of proven expertise in the relevant fields in Serbia and the Balkans.
- Familiarity with Serbian statistical databases, agricultural policy documents, and other relevant sources (FAO, UN Comtrade etc.).
- The candidate's participation in the preparation of relevant national documents for Serbia, such as the Green Book or the National Agriculture Strategy, will be considered an advantage.
- Experience in international development projects, project management, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting.
- Experience working with large datasets and databases, identifying patterns, deriving strategic insights, and applying strong analytical and problem-solving skills, with a preference for familiarity with strategy data and statistical analysis concepts.
- Strong communication skills, including report writing.
- High independence, flexibility, and ability to meet strict deadlines.
- Fluent in spoken and written English.

Application instructions:

Please apply online by attaching your CV with the subject line "Agricultural and Rural Development Expert" to tstojkovic@jeaustin.com by 5:00 pm U.S. EST on Friday, January 10th 2025. No telephone inquiries, please. The applications will be reviewed promptly upon receipt, only finalists will be contacted. JAA is an equal-opportunity employer. Women, minorities and people from diverse groups are encouraged to apply. JAA will never request payment or charge a fee to apply for any position. JAA values the protection of your personal data.