



**THE AMBASSADOR'S SPECIAL SELF-HELP PROGRAM**  
APPLICATION PACKET

The American Ambassador to Nigeria's Special Self-Help (SSH) Program provides small grants to community development activities in Nigeria. It is designed to help communities help themselves. Under this program, projects must originate in the community and the community must make significant contributions to the success of the project, such as land, labor, money, materials, ongoing supervision, and other resources. Currently, the American contribution to any one project ranges from USD\$3,000 to \$USD10,000. Smaller requests are also welcome. All funds under the SSH Program are disbursed in Naira. **The Special Self-help program is very competitive and can select only a small percentage of submitted applications.**

**Project Selection Criteria**

The SSH Program assists in improving the economic and social conditions of a community. Self-Help project proposals selected for funding generally incorporate the following criteria. Self-Help projects should:

- Respond to the initiative and aspirations of the local community,
- Involve a significant local contribution in cash, labor or material,
- Be maintained and operated by the local community,
- Improve basic economic or social conditions in the community,
- Benefit a large number of people through high-impact, quickly implemented activities,
- Be completed within 6 months and not require additional funds to maintain, and
- Have visible benefits for the community and be self-sustaining.

These criteria should be used as a guideline for SSH applicants.

**Limitations**

The SSH Program can not provide funding for the following:

- Religious activities (however, many religious organizations sponsor or supervise local community self-help activities that serve community needs rather than religious purposes, and these activities may be eligible for assistance),
- Police or military activities,

- Cultural activities,
- Salaries,
- Scholarships for training or education,
- Office supplies or other expendable supplies,
- Projects in refugee camps or communities,
- Projects involving pesticides, fungicides or herbicides,
- Individually owned businesses or enterprises, or
- **Renovations or repairs.**
- **Purchase of computers is discouraged.**

**Acceptable Projects**

Projects which may be funded by the SSH Program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Small construction projects like school rooms, community centers, health clinics, or workshops,
- Water/sanitation related projects like wells, toilets, or bore holes,
- School equipment or supplies like desks, chairs, blackboards, or library books,
- Communal construction equipment like brick making machines,
- Some durable goods, like a stove or refrigerator for a school, or operating tables for a clinic, or
- Income-generating equipment like weaving looms, sewing machines, or rice-milling machines.

### **The Application**

All requests for funding under the SSH Program should be made on a “Self-Help Project Application” form. Each question on the application must be completed before the application can be considered for funding. Applications should be submitted by February 1<sup>st</sup> to be considered for funding in the coming year.

### **The Agreement**

If a project is selected to receive support, the project director designated on the application form will be notified and must sign an agreement with the United States of America. This agreement explains the responsibilities of each party. The agreement commits funds expressed in U.S. dollars for the project. The SSH Program can not provide additional funds to a project after the agreement has been signed. The community organization responsible for the project must have sufficient financial resources to cover any project costs that exceed the amount provided by the SSH Program. The dollar amount stipulated on the agreement will be converted into Naira before being disbursed to the project director.

### **Payment**

All requests for reimbursement for items already purchased for the project must be accompanied by original receipts for each of the items. Checks are normally issued 4 to 6 weeks after a request for an advance or reimbursement has been submitted to the Embassy. Limited advances may be approved for the purchase of project supplies or equipment. In order to receive an advance, the project director must submit pro-forma invoices from their suppliers. Usually at least 3 invoices showing competitive prices must be submitted to the Embassy to begin the payment process. Funds remaining in an account after an advance has been approved will not be released until receipts against the advance are submitted to account for any outstanding advances.

### **Progress Report**

Project directors are required to submit photographs and progress reports after the initial disbursement has been made and before the remaining funds will be released. Progress reports should discuss work

completed to date, problems encountered, work remaining and schedule, outstanding anticipated costs and estimated date of project completion. A final project report and photographs must be provided to the Ambassador either before or in lieu of a commissioning ceremony.

### **Follow up**

After a project is underway, the Ambassador or his designated representative may wish to attend the commissioning ceremony. Photographs of the project should be submitted to the Embassy to be used in the follow-up report to Washington. Remember that all projects must include plans for posting a sign indicating the U.S. Government’s support. The community should recognize that Embassy representatives may be interested in visiting the site of a Self-Help Project even several years after the project has been completed. Project directors are asked to prepare a follow-up report for the Ambassador on the one-year anniversary of the completion of the project. This follow-up report should discuss how well the project has succeeded in meeting its goals, any difficulties in sustaining the project that may have been encountered, how the community has been affected by the project and what the future of the project is.

**Please send project applications and inquiries for the Ambassador’s Special Self-Help Program to the following address:**

**Special Self-help Coordinator  
United States Consulate General  
2 Walter Carrington Crescent  
Victoria Island  
P.O. Box 554  
Lagos, Nigeria**

**Email: [lagossh@state.gov](mailto:lagossh@state.gov)**

When sending e-mail, please write “Special Self-help application” in the subject line.

## Embassy of the United States Self-Help Project Application

### **General Information**

1. Date of Application \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location of Project (Village/LGA/State) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Type of Project  Well/ Borehole  Health Clinic  Books  Classroom  
 Food Processing  Training Center  Animal Husbandry  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Total Naira Amount Requested \_\_\_\_\_

5. Project Director \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name (underline surname): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

6. Project Committee Members (use attached list if necessary): Name (underline surname)

Full Name	Address

7. Name and address of organization or community sponsoring the project

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8. If the community or project director has submitted other project proposals within the past three years to the U.S. Embassy, other embassies or organizations, please answer the following (use extra pages as necessary, circle yes or no as appropriate):

Project Title	Submitted to	Funded?	Amount (Naira)	Completed?

Project Title	Submitted to	Funded?	Amount (Naira)	Completed?
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

**Project Information**

9. What is the purpose of the project

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10. Briefly describe the project. Include a description of how the project will be managed and who will be responsible for the management. Where will the project get any technical advice or assistance it may require? Who will volunteer to assist in the project and what are their qualifications? (Attach an additional sheet if necessary.)

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11. What are the social and economic benefits of this project to the community?

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12. How many people will benefit from this project?

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13. What are the primary economic and social activities of the community?

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14. Describe all local contributions to the project including those of other sponsoring organizations. Do not forget to include contributions of land, labor, materials, cash or expertise.

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15. Has any work been completed on the project? If so, what work has been done?

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16. Attach a separate paper with a work plan indicating how the project work will be done and who will be responsible for the work. How long will the work take? When will the project be completed? Include a timeline with the workplan. Remember that projects should take no longer than six months to complete.

17. Will weather or other activities in the community, such as holidays, harvesting, or religious ceremonies, affect the project timeline? How?

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18. Attach a detailed budget showing how much each item necessary for the completion of the project will cost. If you have already obtained pro-forma invoices for items as part of your budget planning, attach them as well.

19. How will the project be sustained once SSH funding stops?

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20. Have village or community leaders or local authorities approved your project? If so, who has approved it and how can they be contacted? Please include addresses and phone numbers where possible.

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21. Attach a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of individuals or organizations that can be contacted about this project if different from those listed in items 5 and 6. Also attach a list of the names of community members supporting or assisting in this project and their signatures.

22. Attach a detailed description and a map of how to reach the project site from the nearest state capital.

23. Please attach any additional information you may wish to provide, such as letters of recommendation, reports from other completed projects, pro forma invoices or background information on project participants, at the end of this application.

**Acknowledgement**

I have reviewed the completed application form for SSH funding.  
The application is complete and the answers are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

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(Signature of Project Director)

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(Date)