



Competitive Agricultural Research Grant Scheme Call for Project Concept Notes (PCN)

Title of call

Natural Resources Management Research and Development

Purpose of call

Implementation of Actions to Achieve Food Security and Reduce Poverty in West and Central Africa - Critical Attributes of CAADP Pillar 4

- 1. Call identification number:** CW/CGS/04/PCN/NRM/01/2010
- 2. Publication date:** 1st September, 2010
- 3. Total amount available for call:** US\$ 1 million (maximum budget of one project should not exceed US\$ 500,000)
- 4. Project period:** 3 years
- 5. Submission of PCN:** Deadline for submission of PCN is 30th September, 2010 at 17H00 GMT.

Signed and officially stamped printed hard copies of PCNs could be sent by post, hand-carried, express courier or by e-mail to the CORAF/WECARD Executive Secretariat at the following address:

The Director of Programmes, CORAF/WECARD,
7 Avenue Bourguiba, BP 48 Dakar RP, Senegal
E-mail: secoraf@coraf.org
Website: www.coraf.org
Telephone: +221 33 869 96 18

Project Concept Notes sent by fax will not be processed.

- 6. Notification date of decisions resulting from evaluation process:** 30 November, 2010, addressed to the Project Coordinator of each PCN submission
- 7. Language:** Project Concept Notes may be submitted in French or English.

8. Call description

8.1. Broad themes

In order to contribute to the broad objective of enhanced agricultural productivity and food security while maintaining the natural resource base in West and Central Africa, this competitive research grant call seeks to mobilize the requisite strengths, expertise and resources to implement research on the following two broad priority research themes emanating from a CORAF/WECARD scoping study validated by stakeholders:

1. Sustainable intensification and diversification of agriculture in West and Central Africa
2. Biodiversity (plants, livestock, and fisheries) conservation and improvement in West and Central Africa

8.2. Focus of the research call

This call focuses on the following two research sub-themes that were ranked as top most priority under the two broad themes mentioned above:

- Integrated soil fertility management (under the first broad theme)
- Use and improvement of genetic resources (under the second broad theme)

Integrated soil fertility management and the proper use and improvement of genetic resources in a changing climate could contribute to higher agricultural productivity that is environmentally sustainable.

The progressive reduction in fallow periods in the face of rapid population growth in West and Central Africa (WCA) is making restoration of soil fertility difficult with adverse consequences on productivity and welfare of the people. It is becoming increasingly evident that sooner rather than later, farmers and pastoralists in WCA will have to contend with intensification challenges and particularly maintaining soil fertility against the background of limited inputs. This calls for innovative practices especially in the use of local resources while taking advantage of market opportunities, which may lead to an increase in the use of inputs. At the same time, however, the use of these resources requires careful evaluation with regards to both environmental and economic considerations.

The proper management and sustainable use of biodiversity need to be taken into account in relation to any agricultural production system that might be developed for the region, particularly in view of increasing intensification of production. There are proven advantages of biodiversity in our farming systems, including dietary diversity, improved nutrition, effective use of growth factors in mixed systems, pest and disease resistance, etc. The unsustainable management and use of biodiversity is, however, threatening the existence of these valuable resources and consequently their beneficial effects on livelihoods of the people in the region. There still remain vast numbers of valuable biodiversity that have yet to be discovered while species that are known to be valuable are currently being underutilized. Adequate knowledge of biodiversity coupled with appropriate conservation and improvement of both flora and fauna of the region will lead to numerous benefits, particularly improvement in income and welfare of the people of West and central Africa.

Research proposals should tackle several of the following key issues under each sub-theme and in an integrated manner as much as possible.

Theme 1: Sustainable intensification and diversification of agriculture in West and Central Africa

Sub Theme: Integrated soil fertility management

- How could appropriate vegetation and land use maps be developed and effectively utilized in targeted farming systems?
- What potential opportunities exist in crop residue management for soil fertility improvement?
- What are the dynamics of crop rotations in soil fertility management?
- How could the combined use of various nutrient sources and amendments for improved productivity be optimized?
- How can the use of locally available phosphate rock be optimized?
- What innovative options could lead to effective control of soil loss by water and wind erosion?
- Is agroforestry a viable option for sustainable intensification of agriculture?

- How to mitigate potential marginalization impacts of technical innovation and market development including inequitable outcomes for households, vulnerable groups and gender inequity?
- What options exist for capacity strengthening of actors/stakeholders for projects under this sub-theme based on the principles of integrated agricultural research for development (IAR4D)¹ or innovation systems perspectives?

Theme II: Biodiversity (plants, livestock, and fisheries) conservation and improvement in West and Central Africa

Sub Theme: Use and improvement of genetic resources

- How to better improve targeting and adoption of biodiversity to farming systems and market opportunities?
- What appropriate mechanisms could be deployed for the collection, in situ and ex situ conservation of the genetic basis of priority, endangered, not-well known, hardly used and/or neglected species?
- What opportunities exist to improve food security through reduction in post harvest losses and value addition of local/indigenous forestry and agroforestry wild species?
- What mechanism can ensure effective monitoring of biodiversity indicators for endemic, endangered and invasive or pervasive species?
- What integrated pest management strategies will ensure preservation of valued biodiversity?
- How can biotechnology be effectively deployed in the conservation, evaluation and improvement of biodiversity?
- How do knowledge systems and innovation platforms operate and how to improve and better understand the social and institutional dynamics and integration of local and scientific knowledge in biodiversity conservation and management
- What options exist for capacity strengthening of actors/stakeholders for projects under this sub-theme based on the principles of integrated agricultural research for development (IAR4D) or innovation systems perspectives?

8.3 Approach

Please note that separate concept note(s) should be submitted for each sub theme.

Proponents might choose to organise their proposals around a specific:

- **agro-ecosystem;**
- **food security or rural development “hot spots”;**
- **high impact technical innovation;**
- **problem or opportunity** identified by development partners or existing innovation platforms including more effective emergency interventions that have improved longer term outcomes in smallholder productivity, participatory assessment of development status and pathways, improved access to information, etc.

All proposals must include the principles of IAR4D in the design and conduct of the proposed research.

¹ www.ICRA-edu.org/objects/anglolearn/IAR4D_concept_paper.pdf

They should also seek, in addition to the traditional logframe, to map out pathways to adoption and impact in terms of rural development outcomes recognising that these outcomes may not be achieved within the initial 3 year time-frame of the project. The proposal should allocate about 30% of the total budget to engaging project staff and key stakeholders in constructing impact pathway, emphasizing stakeholder networks needed to achieve impact, providing the need to both learn and report to donors and establishing a research framework to examine the critical process of change that the project seeks to initiate and sustain (Douthwaite *et al.*, 2008)².

9. Eligibility

The following key criteria should be met for conformity and eligibility of submissions for the competitive evaluation process.

9.1. General and administrative criteria

The research must be carried out in at least three countries in the CORAF/WECARD sub-region

The National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) of the sub-region are expected to lead the projects and work in partnership with Base-Centres/Centres of Excellence, CGIAR centres, and other Advanced Research Institutions. Partnership with agricultural training institutions, especially Universities and/or Faculty and Colleges of Agriculture in the project consortia, should be encouraged in order to respond to project actors' capacity strengthening needs.

The PCN should comply with the format and content stipulated in the CORAF/WECARD Competitive Grant Scheme Operating Manual [**Annex A**], including (inter alia):

- A letter of intent/commitment for collaborators
- A logical framework, which does not go as far as PIPA analysis
- An outline budget

The parent institute or organisation of the applicants should submit an organisational profile [**Annex B**] and should be judged to have the capacity and experience for implementing the proposed work.

9.2. Financial criteria

Expenditure should be linked to direct costs of research and indirect costs should not be more than 10% of the project budget.

The total budget of the project should not exceed the funding ceiling specified in the Call for PCN.

The project budget should be clearly presented and the amount justified with respect to the scheduled activities in the technical proposal.

The project budget should indicate the amount requested from CORAF/WECARD and the amount contributed by other partners/stakeholders (matching funds).

Upon acceptance of PCNs, project teams will be requested to develop full proposals by the end of December, 2010. Some PCNs may be asked to combine in the development of full proposals where applicable. Financial and scientific support will be provided to shortlisted PCNs if necessary, to facilitate the development of full proposals.

² Douthwaite *et al.*, 2008. Participatory Impact Pathway Analysis : A practical method for project planning and evaluation (<http://cigar.ilac.v1779.nc>).

10. Evaluation criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria and sub-criteria:

- Relevance/pertinence: general context and rationale, and the general and specific objectives.
- Scientific and technical quality: state of knowledge, description of project activities, expected results, target groups and methodology.
- Potential impact mapped out through Impact Pathways: social, economic, environmental and gender issues
- Technical implementation plan: logframe and chronogram (Gantt chart)
- Implementation team: professional and technical experience and competence of the team, publication in the project area, and partnership mechanism.
- Budget: contribution of partners, use of funds requested from CORAF/WECARD,

11. Other relevant information

Applicants are requested to visit the website www.coraf.org and refer to the CORAF/WECARD competitive grant scheme operating manual for more details on how to adequately prepare their PCNs.

Annex A: Project Concept Note (PCN)

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| CORAF/WECARD Reference: | Unique reference number provided by CORAF/WECARD |
|-------------------------|--|

NOTE: Contact Details in this section are submitted on a separate sheet

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Project Coordinator | This is the person with overall responsibility for the application to CORAF/WECARD and the implementation of the Project. |
| Address | Contact details for the Project Coordinator |
| Telephone | |
| Fax | |
| e-mail | |
| Collaborator[s] | Collaborating organisations with which agreements have been made. A letter of intent/commitment addressed to the lead institution, which demonstrates the collaborators are an active part of the proposal, must be included with the PCN. |

These following sections are submitted on separate sheets to the *Contact Details*

| | |
|--|--|
| Project Title | The applicant should provide a title, which concisely and accurately describes the scope of the work. |
| CORAF/WECARD Priority Area | This is the specific area that the project addresses. Note that proposals which do not address issues defined by the CORAF/WECARD <i>Call for Proposals</i> will not be processed. |
| CORAF/WECARD Cross-cutting and Core Functions | Which of the key cross-cutting and core functions of CORAF/WECARD, are of particular focus in the PCN. |
| Project Location | The countries for the proposed project – a minimum requirement is for the project to be carried out in at least 3 countries. Only Project Concept Notes that satisfy this criterion will be processed. |
| Total Cost of the Project | Total budget required to implement the full-term project. CORAF/WECARD will indicate in the call for proposals any maximum or minimum budget limits. |
| Duration of the Project | How long will the project last? The maximum period is three years and there is no minimum, unless stated in the call for proposals. |
| Date of PCN submission | The date that the PCN was dispatched to the CORAF/WECARD Executive Secretariat |

Specific Objective of the Project [Guideline 400 words]

What is the justification for the proposed Project? The *Specific Objective* is the impact or change that the Project hopes to achieve by delivering its Results, and provided certain Assumptions hold. It is also stated in summary form in the logframe. It is the reason for the project and should address an identified constraint to the development of the agricultural sector in the sub-region. It should be demand-driven and fall within the regional or country priorities given in the CORAF/WECARD *Call for Proposals* and the Strategic Plan. These are based on some of the key sub-regional and regional targets for the agricultural sector and clearly identified demand from end-users. Background information should include a description of the importance of the constraint[s] that the project is seeking to address and a very brief summary of any significant work already carried out in this area.

Project Results [Guideline 300 words]

What will be the Results of the work? This is what the project will deliver. They are the terms of reference for the project. They are the necessary and sufficient conditions, provided Assumptions hold, for the achievement of the Specific Objective. They must be measurable, and deliverable within the time frame of the Project. They should reflect aspects of the CORAF/WECARD Results identified in its Strategic Plan [see Chapter 7, page **Erreur ! Signet non défini.** of the CORAF/WECARD CGS manual] which in summary cover technology/innovation generation [in the widest sense], policy research, capacity strengthening, and knowledge management. They may be seen as, inter alia, manuals, audio-visual products, agricultural products, infrastructure, marketing or information systems, policy options, institutional change, technologies. Promotion pathways to target organisations and beneficiaries should be identified where appropriate. Target organisations are those formal or informal groups, which will take up the Results of the proposed work and engage in the process of further

increasing the numbers of users of the knowledge, technology or methodology.

Research and Development *Activities* [Guideline 300 words]

How will the project be implemented? An outline of the studies, surveys, experiments and *Activities*, which are to be designed and implemented in order to deliver the *Results* of the project. There should be an *Activity* or group of *Activities* associated with each *Result* of the project, the *Activities* defining the action strategy for *Result* delivery.

Holistic methodologies that use novel approaches and combinations of stakeholders in innovative ways are encouraged.

Target Groups and Beneficiaries

Who are the main target groups and beneficiaries of the proposed work? The *target groups* are those closely involved in the implementation of the project whilst *beneficiaries* are beyond the immediate project boundary. Both groups will gain social, economic or environmental advantage from the technology/innovation, methodology or knowledge transfer *Activities* of the work to be supported. The *target group* immediately and the *beneficiaries* after further up-scaling of project *Results*. They may be identified in, for example, the household, the village community or the regional/national community.

Assumptions

Explain particularly significant Assumptions at each level in the logframe. Important assumptions are **external** conditions or are factors over which the project does not have direct, or complete control, but on which the delivery of Results and achievement of objectives depends. See Chapter 2, page **Erreur ! Signet non défini.** of the CORAF/WECARD CGS manual on logframe preparation, for further information.

Financial Summary

The financial summary should take in to account anticipated inflation, and be kept to a minimum consistent with achieving the project *Outputs*.

| ^{1,2} Proposed <i>Activities</i> | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Total |
|---|--------|--|--------|-------|
| Activity 1 | | For <i>process projects</i> an estimated expenditure based on projected <i>Activities</i> is required for years after year 1 | | |
| Activity 2 | | | | |
| Activity ...n | | | | |
| ³ Overheads | | | | |
| ³ Contingency | | | | |
| TOTALS | | | | |

¹ **Rates for travel and subsistence should be according to the institutional norms of the organisations involved with the application. Certified, documentary evidence is required with the PCN that these are official rates.** These should be kept to a minimum consistent with achieving the *Outputs* described in the PCN.

² A full justification for the purchase of equipment will be required in the project proposal.

³ **The total of *Overheads* and *Contingency* should not exceed 15%, and should, in any case, be kept to a realistic minimum.** Where private sector organisations have additional tax liabilities the CORAF/WECARD Executive Secretariat should be consulted.

Annex B: Format for Organisational Profiles

1. ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE – NGOs and Community-based Organisations

NGO and CBO Organisations wishing to act as the coordinating/lead organisation for a proposal should complete the following form. Additional information can be put on a separate sheet and attached to the form. None of the information given here will be disclosed without your consent. **It should be submitted at the same time, but separate from the PCN.**

| | |
|--|--|
| Name of the organisation | |
| Type of the organisation [local, regional, national] | |
| Contact details [address, telephone, fax, email]: | |
| Registration date and serial number with concerned organisation: | |
| Date started to work: | |
| System of book-keeping: | |
| Date of last renewal of the registration: | |

| Description of work | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|-----------------------------------|--------|------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Type of work | Region or area | Household covered /contact person | | | Working period | Fund mobilisation | Source of fund |
| | | Total | Female | Male | | | |
| Past work | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Extra rows may be added as required or details attached on a separate sheet | | | | | | | |
| Present work | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Extra rows may be added as required or details attached on a separate sheet | | | | | | | |
| If you have an internal fund, describe briefly how it is generated. | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| List the major objectives of your organisation mentioned in your organisation's act. | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| How have you analysed the local agricultural and social situation of the area? | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

| |
|--|
| Is there any community or other, contribution to your programme? |
| |
| Explain briefly, what kind of relationship/co-ordination your organisation has with other organisation[s]? |
| |
| Does your organisation give emphasis to gender issues? If yes, at what level [for example, in office staff recruitment, responsibilities of staff, beneficiary's level in participation/decision making/benefiting from the programmes]? |
| |

| Human resource in the organisation | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Name of persons | Position in organisation | Education qualification | Area and number of years of experience |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Extra rows may be added as required or details attached on a separate sheet | | | |
| RECENT PUBLICATIONS [titles and references] by the organisation and its staff | | | |
| | | | |

The size of the boxes on this form has been reduced for presentation purposes. Hard and electronic copies of the forms can be obtained from the CORAF/WECARD Secretariat. The electronic version may also be downloaded from the CORAF/WECARD Website

<http://www.coraf.org>