



CORAF/WECARD

Non Staple Crops Programme Manager

FULL TIME – BASED IN DAKAR, SENEGAL

REF: 01/CW-DP/SE/10

Call opening : August 23, 2010

Call closing : September 15, 2010

WHO WE ARE

Created in March, 1987 upon a call of the Conference of African and French Directors of Agronomic Research, it became the Conference of Directors of Agricultural Research in West and Central Africa in 1995, then the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development in 1999. CORAF/WECARD is now one of the four Sub-regional Organizations (SROs) in Africa under the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), which brings together 22 National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS)¹.

In February 2006, key CORAF/WECARD stakeholders reviewed the CORAF/WECARD Strategic Plan of 1999-2014 and recommended its revision. A revised strategic plan initiated in June 2006, was completed and endorsed by the CORAF/WECARD General Assembly in May 2007. This new Strategic Plan (2007-2016) aims at achieving the goals of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme [CAADP], which is a translation of the New Project for Africa's Development (NEPAD), a vision of African Heads of States and Governments, spearheaded by the African Union. The Plan also aims at implementing the Agricultural policies of the Regional Economic Communities of West and Central Africa (ECOWAS, UEMOA, ECCAS and CEMAC). Within this context, CORAF/WECARD's strategic intentions are articulated in its *Vision* and *Mission* statements.

CORAF/WECARD's Vision is for a sustainable reduction in poverty and food insecurity in WCA through an increase in agricultural-led economic growth and sustainable improvement of key aspects of the agricultural research system.

¹ Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo

CORAF/WECARD's Mission is to provide *Sustainable improvements to the competitiveness, productivity and markets of the agricultural system in West and Central Africa by meeting the key demands of the sub-regional research system as expressed by target groups.*

The new *Plan* makes a clear commitment to delivering a series of *Results* which encompass conventional research, and the use, *inter alia*, of innovation platforms, policy, capacity strengthening and knowledge management, with the involvement of broad-based stakeholders; an approach termed *Integrated Agricultural Research for Development* [IAR4D].

CORAF/WECARD's Operational Plan (2008-2013), designed to implement the revised Strategic Plan, and is underpinned by a centrally managed and programme-based approach. The institutional basis for the use of programmes lies in the CAADP framework, which stresses the need for a shift towards a more holistic and integrated approach rather than the development of technology packages. The notion is further reinforced in the FAAP, which provides the guidelines for CAADP implementation.

This approach represents a paradigm shift away from the previous project and network-based mechanism with its diffuse and varied management structures and levels of accountability.

The principal advantages of the new approach include:

- *Excellent opportunities for inter-programme linkages and planning* – All programmes are integrated into the Strategic Plan, and as each has its own Manager to act as a focal point, cross-fertilisation of ideas and initiatives become easier. The central location of some of these positions further increases opportunities for the informal exchange of ideas.
- *More effective monitoring, evaluation and learning* – With a single Manager responsible for a collection of prioritised projects within any one programme, monitoring of implementation becomes better structured and more efficient. This in turn allows important lessons learned to be shared between Programmes and for both positive and negative experiences to build stronger sub-regional agricultural research; informal capacity strengthening.
- *Simplified streams for knowledge and information* – Information from projects flows more easily through the programme structure, allowing better intra- and inter-programme sharing, as well as providing a general information and knowledge source for all stakeholders.
- *Independence from undue non-programme influences* – The Programme Managers and Programmes will be directly responsible to CORAF/WECARD, through the new governance structures. This greatly reduces the likelihood of conflicts of interest arising from projects or programmes which are directly sponsored or supported by non-CORAF/WECARD organisations. The ultimate aim is to have full core funding allowing CORAF/WECARD to recruit Programme Managers and allocate resources to sub-regional priorities identified through stakeholder consultation and other demand-driven processes.
- *Clear lines of accountability* – CORAF/WECARD, through the Secretariat and other governance structures, will act as a point of contact for funds and other resources. Sub-regional initiatives will be channelled through this system with clear, harmonised systems of accounting and reporting.
- *Strengthened corporate cohesion* – Having developed both *Strategic* and *Operational Plans* through an extensive process of stakeholder consultation, the direction and focus of the sub-regional effort in agricultural research is now clearly understood. This provides a strong cohesive force for existing and future initiatives with participating stakeholders able to see clearly how their inputs at project level

relate to programmes, delivery of results and overall achievement of specific and general objectives.

- *Clear focus for resource mobilisation and development partners* – By creating specific programmes which respond to clearly identified priorities, development partners are better positioned to understand precisely what is happening in the sub-region and how it relates to the achievement of objectives. Although CORAF/WECARD is keen to encourage core funding, the programme approach also allows more focussed support from development partners, if this is preferred.
- *Ensuring that all work conducted is coherent with the new Strategic Plan* – By identifying prioritised programmes which are all contributing to the delivery of CORAF/WECARD's strategic *Results*, it is clear how new and current initiatives are addressing the delivery and objectives of the sub-region.

Currently, there are eight new Programmes in the Portfolio. This number may, however, increase or decrease as demands and needs vary. The new programmes fall into the following three broad categories:

Technical research – around four Programmes: [1] Livestock, Fisheries and Aquaculture; [2] Staple Crops; [3] Non-staple Crops; [4] Natural Resource Management; and [5] Biotechnology and Biosafety - which use an integrated research approach based on systems and commodities, but employing new holistic and participatory methodologies.

Policy research – around one Programme: [6] Policy, Markets, Trade, Institutions and Socioeconomics - which, through research, identifies and responds to key issues preventing achievement of improved markets, competitiveness and productivity.

Efficient research delivery – around two Programmes: [7] Knowledge management and [8] Capacity strengthening and co-ordination - to improve access to information and knowledge management, including research into mechanisms and methodologies.

The eight Programmes are managed by **Programme Managers**, who are answerable to a Director of Programmes based also at the CORAF/WECARD Secretariat. Programme Managers are responsible for developing high quality programmes and associated priority projects. They are also responsible for delivering Programme results, which would make significant contributions to CORAF/WECARD's overall objectives. Projects are implemented through the networking of appropriate stakeholders led by NARS-based centres. Project leaders focus on implementation with oversight from appropriate governance structures. The approach places, therefore, strong demands on Programme Managers, whose principal skills are in research management, with an understanding of the general technical research issues covered by their programme.

THE ROLE

The present vacancy is for the position of **Manager for the Non Staple Crops Programme**, who is responsible to guide, support and manage this CORAF/WECARD Programme in full support of the Director of Programmes, the Executive Director and the Governing Board.

We envisage the role having the following requirements:

- A willingness to travel extensively within the sub-region and internationally;
- Taking into consideration the nature of the position which involves mainly management and facilitation, the candidate must show strong skills in financial and human resources as well as programme management.
- The ability to work under pressure and play a facilitation role with multi-stakeholder teams in a multi-donor environment is crucially important.

- The capacity to engage in high level policy dialogue at both local and sub-regional levels.
- Must have a good reference in the area of non staple crops with demonstrated recognition of his/her skills by a vast network of stakeholders at the sub-regional, regional and international levels.

The responsibilities for implementing the Programme will include:

- The establishment and development of the new CORAF/WECARD Programme on **Non Staple Crops** with a portfolio of activities addressing sub-regional priorities including annual and long-term planning, and monitoring of competitive and commissioned projects of the Programme.
- Working in close collaboration with the Institutional Change Management Team that supports the change process related to the implementation of the Operational Plan.
- Preparation of annual budgets of the Programme, monitoring its implementation and participating in the mobilisation of resources.
- Coordinating the Programme within the Executive Secretariat and creating synergies with the other Programme Managers and the Director of Programmes.
- Establishing team spirit and indentifying training skills for Project leaders.
- In collaboration with the Planning and Monitoring and Evaluation Units, carry out quality impact studies of the Programme.
- Representing the Programme for CORAF/WECARD at the national and international levels.
- Carrying out strategic planning with other Programme Managers and the Director of Programmes.

You, like CORAF/WECARD as a whole, will measure your impact in terms of outcomes and not activity. You will play your part in maintaining a constructive working environment and excellent relationships with internal and external clients.

REQUIRED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

The candidate must:

- hold a PhD degree in an agriculturally related topic; and formal management qualifications will be an added advantage;
- have at least 10 years experience of successful management and implementation of research projects and programmes involving non staple crops in West and Central Africa and be able to demonstrate successful delivery and performance, this will include senior management experience with a national, sub-regional or regional agricultural research organisation and the ability to manage institutional and organisational development and change processes and be familiar with both the practice and theory of change management;
- be bilingual in French and English with the ability to write and communicate effectively in at least one of these languages; and failing this, must be fluent in one with the ability to communicate in the second language;
- be computer literate and fully familiar with the Microsoft Office® Suite of software;
- have strong management skills with experience in agricultural research and dealing with requests for impact assessment;

- be a good manager and a team leader, capable and willing to delegate, able to operate in the role of facilitator and mentor to project leader, and support the Director of Programmes;
- be an excellent communicator and have the necessary skills to advise, guide and support Programme development and organisational, institutional and governance changes required.
- be flexible and adaptable to the influences and issues that arise during implementation of the Operational Plan, and innovative and creative in your management and management style;
- be able to exploit to your fullest any information or proposal for strengthening your capacity and improving your skills base;
- be able to demonstrate a good experience of the CORAF/WECARD environment and its operations, philosophy and approaches and possess a broad vision of national, regional, international research issues and be able to position CORAF/WECARD's Programmes and initiatives within this context;
- whatever your background, hit the ground running with success and energy, and bring with you ideas that will constitute entry points and initiatives, which will be of benefit to the organisation, and good networks specifically in the area of non staple crops research.

WORKING WITH US

We're not just looking to fill a vacancy. Whenever we recruit, we are looking for individuals, who share our values, are adaptable and resourceful, and who will complement the team and contribute to the development of the Organisation.

Salary and remuneration will be dependent on the skills, experience and track record of the successful applicant and will be internationally competitive.

CORAF/WECARD invests heavily in creating a culture of quality, professionalism, mutual support and team work. We provide continuing formal and informal professional development and training.

NATIONALITY

The candidate must be a national of a CORAF/WECARD member state.

LOCATION

The Manager of the Non Staple Crops Programme will be based at the CORAF/WECARD Secretariat in Dakar, Senegal.

REPORTING

The Manager of the Non Staple Crops Programme will report directly to the Director of Programmes of CORAF/WECARD and comply with the reporting requirements of CORAF/WECARD for its senior management.

DURATION

This contract will be for an initial period of twelve months, subject to annual performance review. The contract may be renewed based on satisfactory performance.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

If you are interested in applying, please e-mail a covering letter and your detailed CV, which must also include the names and contact details of three of your referees.

The application should be addressed to the Executive Director of CORAF/WECARD, Executive Secretariat, N° 7 Avenue Bourguiba, BP 48 Dakar-RP, Senegal and e-mailed to secoraf@coraf.org. The application should be received at the CORAF/WECARD Secretariat **no later than September 15, 2010**. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interview.

As required by CORAF/WRCARD, the selected candidate will be required to undertake and pass a medical clearance prior to acceptance by CORAF/WECARD.

Further information about CORAF/WECARD can be found at: www.coraf.org