

Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la  
Recherche et le Développement Agricoles



West and Central African Council for  
Agricultural Research and Development

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## **CORAF/WECARD Programme Officer FULL-TIME – Based in Dakar, Senegal**

**REF: 02/CW-DP/SE/10**

**Call opening: 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2010**

**Call closing: 31<sup>st</sup> July, 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).

The revision of CORAF/WECARD's Strategic Plan (2007-2016) was completed and endorsed by the CORAF/WECARD General Assembly in May, 2007. This revised plan aims at achieving the goals of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme [CAADP] as well 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.

**CORAF/WECARD's Mission** is to sustainably improve 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.

CORAF/WECARD's Operational Plan (2008-2013), designed to implement the revised Strategic Plan is underpinned by a centrally managed and programme-based approach with the following main advantages:

- Excellent opportunities for inter-programme linkages and planning;
- More effective monitoring, evaluation and learning;
- Simplified streams for knowledge and information;
- Independence from undue non-programme influences;
- Clear lines of accountability;
- Strengthened corporate cohesion;
- Clear focus for resource mobilisation and development partners;
- Coherence of all work conducted with the new Strategic Plan.

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 Socio-economic - 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 coordination - 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.

### **AusAID CONTRIBUTION**

In May, 2008, the Australian Government committed itself to addressing the long term impacts of the global food crisis on developing countries. This commitment was confirmed through a four-year "Food Security through Rural Development Initiative", structured around three Pillars.

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) has been working with the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) in developing a research partnership with CORAF/WECARD that will address the first of these three pillars, which is "Lifting agricultural productivity through increased investments in international agricultural research and development". This partnership will also contribute to the implementation of CORAF/WECARD's strategic plan and CAADP Pillar IV in particular. Research within the context of this partnership will focus

specifically on the improvement of mixed crop livestock farming systems in the sub-humid to semi-arid zone of West Africa.

This partnership is planning for an additional support to the Executive Secretariat in order to facilitate its implementation.

## **VACANCY**

The present vacancy is for the position of **Programme Officer**, who will provide management support to CORAF/WECARD's Executive Secretariat in the implementation of the AusAID-CSIRO-CORAF/WECARD partnership.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Under the authority of the Director of Programme, the main roles of the Program Officer are to:

- Manage the allocation of project resources – human, financial, material, information – in collaboration with the relevant Directions/Units at the CORAF/WECARD Secretariat, so as to ensure that the project teams have all what they need to carry out their work.
- Connect and create synergies between project teams and key stakeholders.

### **Key responsibilities**

#### ***1. Facilitate communication and liaison***

- Develop and maintain strong relationships with research collaborators – at the individual and institutional levels.
- Facilitate project team communication, through meetings, regular contacts and using communication tools.
- Manage daily interactions with clients and provide timely and appropriate information as needed.
- Develop appropriate materials in collaboration with the Communication Unit at the CORAF/WECARD Executive Secretariat, which will facilitate information sharing with the general public (eg web and media material) as well as with key stakeholders (eg local farmers and communities, relevant local authorities, embassies).
- Oversee planning, structure, evaluation and reporting of major project meetings.

#### ***2. Monitor milestones***

- Create, implement, monitor and revise work plans and timelines for project activities and ensure the appropriate allocation of resources.
- Play a central role in project planning, review and evaluation.
- Coordinate project reporting.

#### ***3. Coordinate internal operations***

- Manage internal processes on behalf of the project team e.g. archiving, IT requirements, internal reporting.
- Support project teams so that they comply with organisational policies and guidelines e.g. publication policy, travel policy, social ethics guidelines.

#### ***4. Manage project accounts***

- Track project expenditure with the relevant unit concerned at the Executive Secretariat of CORAF/WECARD, and give feedback to project leaders and teams.

- Ensure that funds are transferred on time from CORAF/WECARD towards project collaborators and consultants, and address any issues related to finance.
- Ensure that clients are provided with acquittal and invoicing information.

### **5. Support the Director of Programmes**

- Manage the daily administration of the project.
- Draft general correspondence and responses to enquiries and field requests for information.
- When required, represent the Director of Programmes at project meetings and workshops.

### **EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS**

- A PhD degree in an agriculturally related topic.
- At least 5 years experience or interest in international development issues and particularly in rural regions of West and Central Africa.
- Experience or interest in farming systems research, education, capacity building and/or sustainable agriculture.
- Demonstrated experience in CORAF/WECARD and its operations, philosophy and approaches and possession of a broad vision of national, regional, international research issues, placing CORAF/WECARD's Programmes and initiatives into this context.
- Capacity to hit the ground running, and bring in ideas for entry points, initiatives that could be pursued, and good networks in the area of the partnership.
- Diplomacy, persuasion and negotiation skills.
- Fluency in both French and English languages.
- Ability to work independently in a range of environments and situations.
- Propensity for working in multi-disciplinary, multi-country teams.
- Willingness to travel extensively within the sub-region and internationally.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills and ability to get your point across to senior government and development partner officials, succinctly and diplomatically, and to be responsive to inputs.
- Well-organised, with good planning and problem-solving abilities.
- Flexible, quick-thinking, and ability to remain calm and positive in response to the challenges of travel and work.
- Skills in writing and editing scientific literature and/or 'general' material
- Skills in data collection, management and/or analysis.
- Computer literate and fully familiar with the Microsoft Office® Suite of software.
- Ability to remember people's names and position.

### **WORKING WITH CORAF/WECARD**

CORAF/WECARD is not just looking to fill a vacancy. Whenever it recruits, it is looking for individuals, who share its values, are adaptable and resourceful, and who will complement the team and contribute to the development of the Organisation.

Salary and remuneration will depend 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. It creates opportunities for continuing formal and informal professional development and training.

### **NATIONALITY**

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

### **LOCATION**

The Programme Officer will be based at the CORAF/WECARD Secretariat in Dakar, Senegal.

### **HIERARCHY**

The Programme Officer will report directly to the Director of Programmes, and comply with the reporting requirements of CORAF/WECARD for its senior management.

### **DURATION**

**A two-year initial contract, subject to positive performance evaluation of the selected candidate for the first year will be proposed.** The renewal is based on execution of the contract satisfactorily judged and on the availability of financial resources of the project.

### **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 emailed to [secoraf@coraf.org](mailto:secoraf@coraf.org)

The application should be received at the CORAF/WECARD Secretariat no later than midnight on the 31st July, 2010. **Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interview.**

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