Capacity strengthening Initiative for Fellows from National Agricultural Research Systems of West and Central Africa (Associate Program Fellows)

Call for Application

Opening of the call: 11th March, 2015
Closing of the call: 10th April, 2015

1. CORAF/WECARD has received support from development partners for the implementation of its Strategic Plan (2007-2016).

2. The intention of the Executive Secretariat (ES) of CORAF/WECARD is to use part of these funding to support the Capacity strengthening Initiative for the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) Scientists (Associate Program Fellows). The objective of the Associate Program Fellows is to put in place a capacity strengthening program allowing three (03) agricultural research stakeholders of NARS to stay at the ES of CORAF/WECARD in order to strengthen their capacities in coordination and facilitation of regional research and the management of knowledge delivered through agricultural research.

3. The expected results are:

   • Knowledge of NARS stakeholders improved in the following areas: (i) revised Strategic Plan (2007-2016) and Second Operational Plan (2014-2018) of CORAF/WECARD; (ii) key research areas covered by the priority programs of CORAF/WECARD; (iii) development and management procedures of regional projects; (iv) management of competitive grant and commissioned mechanisms; (v) administrative and financial procedures of CORAF/WECARD and; (vi) management of relationships with CORAF/WECARD partners.

   • The procedures, results and lessons learnt from the management of regional projects coordinated by CORAF/WECARD capitalized;

   • A capacity strengthening model of NARS stakeholders within a sub-regional organization developed;
• A distance learning model focused on stakeholder capacity strengthening in regional research management established.

4. In the framework of the 2015 Edition of Associate Program Fellows, CORAF/WECARD undertakes to support three (03) Fellows for a stay of 12 months within its programmes and units at its headquarters in Dakar, Senegal, with possibilities to travel in the sub-region of West and Central Africa.

Any researcher or a lecturer aged 40 years at most, with potentials enabling him or her to benefit from capacity strengthening for agricultural research and development can apply.

The candidate must have a PhD in Agronomy, Animal Science, Rural Sociology, Rural Geography, Agricultural economics, Natural resources, Statistics, Biometrics, or any other discipline in relation with agricultural research for development. The candidate must have an aptitude to analyze and capture results from various reports, collate data and information from various sources to generate synthetic reports. He or she must be bilingual (English and French). **Applications from women are encouraged.**

5. Interested candidates should send their application comprising: (i) a Curriculum Vitae and certified copies of their degree or certificates; (ii) a written permission of the Director General of their Institution showing their approval and indicating that their salary and other advantages will be maintained during their stay in CORAF/WECARD; (iii) an expression of interest (maximum 2 pages) explaining how the internship will be useful to them and to their Institution and; (iv) an indication on their availability to begin within one month after their notification by CORAF/WECARD, if he or she is successful.

6. Interested candidates can obtain supplementary information on documents from the CORAF/WECARD Director of Research and Innovation, Dr Aboubakar Njoya [a.njoya@coraf.org] and during the following hours: 8h30 to 12h00 and 15h00 to 17h00 GMT. For more information, please find attached the terms of reference of the mission.

7. The candidates selected will benefit a round trip air ticket from the home country, a monthly allowance of 900,000 FCFA (Nine hundred thousand FCFA/month), a computer, an office with furniture, and health insurance covering the 12 months duration of their stay, starting from 1st June, 2015.

8. Expressions of Interest should be submitted electronically to rh@coraf.org and addressed to the Executive Director of CORAF/WECARD, 7 Avenue Bourguiba, Dakar, Senegal, no later than 10th April, 2015, at 17h00 GMT.
Capacity Strengthening Initiative for NARS Scientists in West and Central Africa (Associate Program Fellows)

Concept note

1. Introduction

The West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD) is one of the four Sub Regional Organizations of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA). The Association constitutes member National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) in 23 countries in West and Central Africa (WCA). These countries cover a total area of over 11.5 million km² with a population of over 433 million of which 70 percent depend on agriculture. CORAF/WECARD has a clear role in enabling and supporting the development of an Integrated Agricultural Research for Development (IAR4D) system characterized by institutional diversity and that generates the required scientific knowledge and information appropriate to the demands of the sector across the sub-region. The roles of CORAF/WECARD have also expanded to include agricultural extension, education and training.

CORAF/WECARD developed its Strategic Plan [2007-2016] following the principles, targets, and focus of the CAADP and the guidelines for implementing it provided by the FAAP, as well as those of the agricultural policies of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in West and Central Africa (ECOWAS, ECCAS, UEMOA and CEMAC). The first Operational Plan [2008-2013] provided a number of important lessons documented in external and internal reviews, and discussed in a number of stakeholder meetings and informal gatherings. The outputs of these reviews and discussions have been incorporated into the Second Five-year Operational Plan 2014-2018 (OP2) that has been approved by the General Assembly of CORAF/WECARD on June 20th, 2014 in Niamey, Niger.

The OP2 is fully coherent with the latest orientations of CAADP and the agricultural policies of the RECs. It continues to follow the FAAP principles and has also taken into consideration the Science Agenda for African Agriculture (S3A) as the principal vehicle and framework for operationalizing the AR4D component of the “Sustaining the CAADP Momentum” with the aim of basing this on country CAADP NAIPs, as well as the FARA Strategic Plan. It is fully aligned with the ECOWAP, and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the Economic Community of Central African States (CAP-ECCAS) adopted in 2013. The focus of OP2 is on CORAF/WECARD organizing itself for successful Result delivery and achievement of outcomes and impacts.

The five (05) Results constitute CORAF/WECARD’s terms of reference for the achievement of its Specific Objective (Broad-based agricultural productivity and markets sustainably improved for target groups):

- Result 1: The development and use of appropriate technologies and innovations increased;
- Result 2: Strategic decision making options for policy, institutions and markets developed and used;
- Result 3: Sub-regional agricultural research system strengthened and coordinated;
- Result 4: Demand for agricultural knowledge by target clients facilitated and met;
- Result 5: Result delivery effectively managed by the Secretariat.
To be more effective and operational, NARS scientists therefore need a better understanding of global and regional issues related to the agricultural and rural sector, a better understanding of CAADP and FAAP, a greater rigor in strategic analyses and a better understanding of procedure requirements of CORAF/WECARD and of technical and financial partners. So, it is critical to continue the capacity strengthening in order to create champions within NARS for facilitating a smoother implementation of many initiatives that will create regional research value to research at national level. It is in this context that CORAF/WECARD launches the second edition of the Associate Program Fellows, after a successful completion of the 1st edition that ended in July 2014.

2. **Objective of CASTINS**

The specific objective of the second edition of the Associate Program Fellows is capacity strengthening, allowing agricultural research actors of NARS to stay at the ES of CORAF/WECARD in order to strengthen their skills in coordination and facilitation of regional research actions and in management of the knowledge produced from agricultural research.

3. **Expected outputs**

- Knowledge of NARS stakeholders improved in the following areas: (i) key research areas covered by CORAF/WECARD programmes; (ii) procedures for the development and management of regional projects; (iii) management of competitive grant and commissioned research mechanisms; (iv) financial procedures of CORAF/WECARD and; (v) management of partnerships of CORAF/WECARD.

- The functioning, the results and lessons learned from the management of regional projects coordinated by the CORAF/WECARD are capitalized.

- A capacity strengthening model of NARS stakeholders within a sub-regional organisation developed.

- A distance learning model focused on stakeholder capacity strengthening in regional research management established.

4. **Methodology**

The selected candidates will be involved in CORAF/WECARD programmes and projects and units that address cross-cutting themes such as monitoring and evaluation, planning and databases management, gender and social development, concentrations with Farmers Organizations, NGOs, the Private Sector, the Universities, and other stakeholders. They will receive during the stay, the mentoring from the Director of Programs, the Director of Knowledge Management and Managers of programmes and units. In the framework of the training, they will have opportunities to travel in the sub-region of West Africa and Central to capitalize experiences on the management of regional projects and programs. At the end of the training, they receive a certificate confirming them as "CORAF/WECARD's Associate Program Fellows".

For this second edition of the Associate Program Fellows, the call will be addressed to researchers or lecturers from NARIs, aged 40 years or less with a potential enabling them to benefit from capacity strengthening for agricultural research and development.

The candidates selected will also receive additional training organized by CORAF/WECARD and administered by external experts in the following areas: (i) Project Management; (ii) Results Based
Management and; (iii) Communication.

5. Conditions of participation
Candidates must have a PhD in Agronomy, Animal Science, Rural Sociology, Rural Geography, Agricultural economics, Natural resources, Statistics, Biometrics, or any other discipline in relation with agricultural research for development. Candidates must have an aptitude to analyze and capture results from various reports, collate data and information from various sources to generate synthetic reports. They must be bilingual (English and French). Applications from women are appreciated.

The Fellowship is for duration of 12 months, starting on June 1st, 2015.