

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Recruitment of two (2) individual consultants for the technical and economic analysis and the definition of appropriate mechanisms and conditions for the operationalization of the national Seed Sector Support Fund in the countries of ECOWAS and the Sahel.

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Opening Date: 3 May 2021

Closing Date: 17 May 2021

CEI No. 11-2021

In West Africa, agriculture sector represents approximately 35 percent of the region's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 60 percent of the active labor force. Therefore, the sector is committed to achieving food security and broad-based economic growth in the region. However, despite the progress made, the sector is pending not fulfilling its goal unless measures are taken quickly to improve, inter alia, the low performance of sector in general and the agri-input subsector including seeds in particular.

Quality seeds form the basis of crop production and the key issues to be addressed for significant contribution of seed system to agricultural output are availability, quantity, quality and affordability of improved seed varieties at the right time and for the right price.

From breeding through to variety release, production of different seed classes, quality control and certification, the seed Industry requires substantial and long-term financial investment. Moreover, seed activities are carried out by different direct actors whose actions and missions are linked: (i) the National Directorates for Agricultural Seeds and Seedlings (seed administration, quality control and certification), (ii) the Agricultural Research Institutes and Universities of Agriculture (Breeding, variety maintenance, production of breeder and foundation seeds), (iii) the National Councils or Committees for Seeds and Seedlings (regulation and release of varieties) and (iv) the private seed actors (seed companies, seed producers or producer organizations, seed suppliers etc.)

In West African, the seed sub-sector, just like the agricultural sector as a whole, is facing constraints in terms of sustainable funding. Actually, the sector is denied private funding as banking and microfinance institutions mistrust the agricultural sector. Public funding, while being often available, is not long-term funding and does not always encompass the entire sector and its diversity.

Therefore, in order to address the funding needs of the different links of the value chain, the regional Regulation C/REG.4/05/2008 on the harmonization of rules governing quality control, certification and marketing of seeds and seedlings in the ECOWAS region provides in Article N10, sub-paragraph 2 that each Member State shall establish a national seed committee and a Seed Sector Support Fund (SSSF). This Fund will be a sustainable mechanism that will allow access of actors to funding tailored to their activities. However, the regional regulation does not specify the nature of the Fund, nor the mechanism for its operationalization, and therefore leaves it up to the Member States to decide.

Unfortunately, it should be noted that despite overall significant progress made towards the implementation of the harmonized community regulation, Member States have made very little progress in setting up the national Seed Sector Support Fund. Some countries like Togo, Burkina Faso, Mali issued decrees establishing such Fund, but they fail to walk the talk as to the effective establishment and operationalization. There are many reasons for this, including (i) lack of a clear vision of the Fund's architectural and institutional model, as well as its modus operandi, (ii) the unwillingness of the Ministries of Finance in some Member States because of the large number of existing funds, etc.

The Executive Director of CORAF is inviting individual consultants with required qualification as described in the Termes of references to apply for that assignment on **the technical and economic analysis and the definition of appropriate mechanisms and conditions for the operationalization of the national Seed Sector Support Fund in the countries of ECOWAS and the Sahel.**

Interested consultants may obtain further information from the Executive Secretariat of CORAF by sending an email to : y.diallo@coraf.org.

The Consultants will be selected according the “consultant qualification method” following the rules contained in the Administrative, Financial and Accounting Procedures Manual of CORAF. **The consultants in their application are invited to specify the position for which they are applying.**

This assignment will be performed by the selected qualified consultants. The time allocated to the consultancy is 30 paid days for each consultant. The consultancy is expected to range from **June to July 2021.**

General Selection Criteria

▪ Expert 1: Agro-economist/Economist - Head of the Mission.

Criteria
Hold a university degree (at least Master/Engineer) in Agribusiness, Economics.
At least minimum of eight (08) years of experience in agricultural investment, agricultural policy analysis..
Proven knowledge in business management, and additional Knowledge in financial analysis
Knowledge un seed sector including private seed business management
Good command of French or English

▪ Expert 2: Seed specialist

Criteria
Hold a university degree (at least Master/Engineer) in Seed policy, Seed sciences, Agronomy with a good knowledge of the regional seed sector (actors, institutions, operation and organization of the seed value chain)
At least five (05) years relevant experience in research and /or development in the seed sector in West Africa and the Sahel.
Proven knowledge in seed production, seed quality control and seed business management.
Good command of French or English

Applications of the individual consultants will be evaluated based on the criteria mentioned above and the selected consultant will be invited for further discussion and negotiation.

Consultants interested in this call must submit an Expression of Interest highlighting the execution and experience of similar contracts and a detailed CV with specification for the position they are applying.

Expressions of Interest (EoI) must be submitted by e-mail to the following address: procurement@coraf.org not later than the **17 May 2021 at 16:00 GMT**.

Dr Abdou TENKOUANO
Executive Director of CORAF

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Recruitment of two (2) individual consultants for the technical and economic analysis and the definition of appropriate mechanisms and conditions for the operationalization of the national Seed Sector Support Fund in the countries of ECOWAS and the Sahel.

A. Introduction.

In West Africa, agriculture sector represents approximately 35 percent of the region's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 60 percent of the active labor force. Therefore, the sector is committed to achieving food security and broad-based economic growth in the region. However, despite the progress made, the sector is pending not fulfilling its goal unless measures are taken quickly to improve, inter alia, the low performance of sector in general and the agri-input subsector including seeds in particular.

Quality seeds form the basis of crop production and the key issues to be addressed for significant contribution of seed system to agricultural output are availability, quantity, quality and affordability of improved seed varieties at the right time and for the right price.

From breeding through to variety release, production of different seed classes, quality control and certification, the seed Industry requires substantial and long-term financial investment. Moreover, seed activities are carried out by different direct actors whose actions and missions are linked: (i) the National Directorates for Agricultural Seeds and Seedlings (seed administration, quality control and certification), (ii) the Agricultural Research Institutes and Universities of Agriculture (Breeding, variety maintenance, production of breeder and foundation seeds), (iii) the National Councils or Committees for Seeds and Seedlings (regulation and release of varieties) and (iv) the private seed actors (seed companies, seed producers or producer organizations, seed suppliers etc.) In addition to the diverse range of actors (private, public, NGOs) involved therein, the seed sector remains under strong regulation aiming at a harmonious, more sustained and sustainable seed system, including the strengthening of the technical and financial capacities of the actors in the sector.

Regrettably, the West African seed sub-sector, just like the agricultural sector as a whole, is facing constraints in terms of sustainable funding. Actually, the sector is denied private funding as banking and microfinance institutions mistrust the agricultural sector. Public funding, while being often available, is not long-term funding and does not always encompass the entire sector and its diversity.

Therefore, in order to address the funding needs of the different links of the value chain, the regional Regulation C/REG.4/05/2008 on the harmonization of rules governing quality control, certification and marketing of seeds and seedlings in the ECOWAS region provides in Article N10, sub-paragraph 2 that each Member State shall establish a national seed committee and a Seed Sector Support Fund (SSSF). This Fund will be a sustainable mechanism that will allow access of actors to funding tailored to their activities. However, the regional regulation does not specify the nature of the Fund, nor the mechanism for its operationalization, and therefore leaves it up to the Member States to decide.

Unfortunately, it should be noted that despite overall significant progress made towards the implementation of the harmonized community regulation, Member States have made very little progress in setting up the national Seed Sector Support Fund. Some countries like Togo, Burkina Faso, Mali issued decrees establishing such Fund, but they fail to walk the talk as to the effective establishment and operationalization. There are many reasons for this, including (i) lack of a clear vision of the Fund's architectural and institutional model, as well as its modus operandi, (ii) the unwillingness of the Ministries of Finance in some Member States because of the large number of existing funds, etc.

This Terms of Reference have been drawn up to recruit two individual consultants to assist CORAF, Permanent Secretary of the Regional Seed and Seedlings Committee for West Africa and the Sahel (CRSPA0) in conducting a technical and economic feasibility study as well as defining the conditions for the operationalization of the Seed Sector Support Fund (SSSF) in the UEMOA-ECOWAS-CILSS Member States.

B. Objectives of the Mission

▪ Overarching Objective

The overarching objective of the mission is to conduct a technical and economic analysis as well as to define the conditions for the operationalization of a support fund for the sustainable funding of activities in the national seed sector of UEMOA-ECOWAS-CILSS countries in accordance with the provisions of the regional Regulation C/REG.4/05/2008.

▪ Specific Objectives

- i) Analyze the funding constraints facing the national seed sector;
- ii) Highlight the relevance of establishing a Seed Sector Support Fund;
- iii) Analyze the baseline situation for the establishment of the national Seed Sector Support Fund in member states: Existence/non-existence - Strengths and Weaknesses – Opportunities and Risks

Building on the successful models of the Seed Sector Support Fund and/or other similar funds,

- iv) Propose at least two scenarios for an appropriate mechanism of sustainable funding for the seed sector benefiting all actors in the seed value chain which shall include:
 - *the architectural arrangement of the mechanism (Support Fund): objectives-mission-beneficiaries?*
 - *the status of the Support Fund (public institution with legal personality and financial autonomy? Private Management Agency? or Public-Private Partnership)*
 - *the institutional arrangement, as well as the appropriate steering, management and operating methods*

- *identification of potential funding sources and mechanisms;*
- *- the definition of the conditions required and/or the legal provisions for more effective operationalization of the Fund.;*
- *- Estimating a minimum start-up threshold?*

iv) Develop a policy brief to advocate and raise awareness of policymakers and other stakeholders for effective engagement. (maximum 7 pages)

C. Expected Results

The expected results from the assignment are as follows:

- i) Funding-related constraints of the seed sector are analyzed;
- ii) The relevance of establishing a Seed Sector Support Fund sector is demonstrated;
- iii) The conditions for the operationalization of the Fund are defined;
- iv) An appropriate institutional and organizational arrangement is proposed
- v) Funding sources and mechanisms are identified;
- vi) A policy brief for advocacy and awareness raising of policy makers in order to accelerate the effective establishment of the SSSF is developed (maximum 7 pages)

D. Methodology of the Mission

The methodology under this mission shall be inclusive and participatory and consisting of the following:

▪ Scoping Meetings and Validation/ Review of Deliverables

The scoping meetings will be organized with CORAF and for this purpose an ad hoc technical committee will be set up to:

- Share and harmonize understanding of the study's terms of reference, methodology and field data collection tools,
- Review/validate consultant reports.

▪ Literature Review and Secondary Data Analysis

The literature review will be focused on:

- Relevant studies and reports from various similar missions,
- the national and regional texts on seed regulation
- drafts, preliminary drafts of decrees and laws, and orders on the establishment of a SSSF or any other similar fund
- Websites of state and non-state organizations that are/ or could be associated with the purpose of the mission

▪ **Primary Field Data Collection**

Under this activity, appropriate data collection tools will be used, depending on the nature of the data and the particular context of the country and the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some data will need to be complete and collected in all Member States and others in a sample of countries.

In addition to the collection of online data for all 17 countries of the ECOWAS region + Mauritania and Chad on the state of implementation of the Seed Sector Support Fund, the consultants shall provide a detailed analysis of the situation regarding a sample of four countries combining the criteria of (English-speaking countries/French-speaking countries - Existence or not of an initiative for establishing the Fund) - Analysis in the sampled countries will have to cover all state and non-state actors of the seed Industry, (Ministries of Agriculture, Ministries of Finance, Research Institutions and Agricultural Universities, Seed Companies and Seed Producing Associations, Technical and Financial Partners, Agricultural and Commercial Banks, Sectoral Support Funds, etc.)

E. Profile - Qualifications and Experience of Consultants

The team of two experts will consist of:

▪ **Expert 1: Agro-economist/Economist - Head of the Mission.**

He/she should have a university degree (at least Master/Engineer) in Agribusiness, Economics. He/she should have a minimum of eight (08) years of experience in agricultural investment, agricultural policy analysis. He/she should also have knowledge in business management. Additional Knowledge in financial analysis would be an asset.

▪ **Expert 2: Seed specialist**

He/she shall have a minimum university degree (at least Master/Engineer) in seed policy, seed sciences, agronomist with a good knowledge of the regional seed sector (actors, institutions, operation and organization of the seed chain) and at demonstrate at least five (5) year relevant experience in research and /or development in the seed sector in West Africa and the Sahel.

F. Mandates and Responsibilities of experts

▪ **Mandate of Expert 1- Head of Mission.**

- Serve as a point of contact with CORAF for the technical management of the mission
- Ensure coordination of the team's activities,
- Assess investment needs,

- Propose the funding structure and plan
 - Prepare the summary of the thematic reports and the presentation of the final report of the study.
 - Identify and explore the mechanisms for funding, managing and sustaining the fund.
 - Lead the writing of the policy brief for advocacy.
- **Mandate of Expert 2**
 - Establish the baseline situation of the Seed Sector Support Fund in the Member States
 - Explore the institutional anchoring of the Fund's administrative and management bodies,
 - Define the criteria for prioritizing the different beneficiary of the Fund
 - Define the conditions to support each of its links.

G. Expected deliverables

- A report establishing the baseline situation;
- The project document for the establishment of the Seed Sector Support Fund with a sustainable funding scheme.
- A policy brief (maximum 7 pages) to be used for advocacy and awareness raising of policy makers.

Draft versions of all deliverables will need to be validated by the by CORAF and an ad hoc Task force composed by key stakeholders in the seed sector.

H. Duration and Period of the Mission

For the conduct of the mission, the experts will each be given thirty (30) Working/Days paid (W/D) of which:

- 10 W/D days for survey and situation analysis –(baseline)
- 15-W/D for the technical designing of the SSSF business model and its sustainable funding scheme and,
- 05 W/D for development of policy brief.

The duration in terms of calendar day of the mission shall be two months and expected to range from June to July 2021.

The consultants will work closely with the expert in charge of the development of agri-inputs at CORAF.

Interested consultants may obtain further information from the Executive Secretariat of CORAF by sending an email to : y.diallo@coraf.org.