

Recruitment of an individual consultant to support CORAF for regional training on fall Army Worm management practices

Opening Date: June 17, 2021

Closing Date: July 1, 2021

CEI No. 20-2021

A new Cooperative Agreement signed between the USAID and CORAF in June 2017 is facilitating the implementation of a program named Partnership for Agricultural Research, Education and Development (PAIRED) in West (and Central) Africa. The program with three components: (i) CORAF Capacity strengthened for effective coordination of agricultural research and development in West Africa (ii) Innovative scaling framework for Agri-input technologies and innovations established in West Africa and (iii) Use of quality Agri-inputs in West Africa increased is being implemented within the framework of the current Strategic Plan (2018-2027) and associated Operational Plan (2018-2022) of CORAF. The Strategic Plan encompasses three Priority Intervention Domains (PID) namely (i) Agriculture, food, and nutrition security; (ii) Policy, institutions, markets, and trade; and (iii) Gender, youth, and social equity. To ensure appropriate interventions for the PIDs, the following Activity Pillars (AP) were identified: (i) Establishing Communities of Practice on scaling T&Is for sustainable impact; (ii) Integrated regional capacity strengthening in agri-food research and innovation; and (iii) Knowledge management and Foresight. Under PID 1, a key thematic area identified by stakeholders to be addressed within CORAF's IAR4D framework is the Management of foreign invasive pests which falls under Component 2 of PAIRED.

Currently, the Fall Army Worm (FAW) (*Spodoptera frugiperda*) is causing devastating effects on maize production and threatening the livelihoods of millions of poor smallholders across sub-Saharan Africa. At the present time, the pest has become global, having spread from its native American distribution to Africa and Asia since 2016. In its larvae stage and in the absence of natural control or good management, it can cause significant damage to crops. The rapid spread and concerns about potential yield losses are major public concerns in several countries especially in Africa, where food security remains a development challenge. The recurrence of the incidence of invasive diseases and pests across national borders calls for a concerted regional effort to manage such threats. The need to better prepare for, and respond to, emerging biological risks is capital at regional and country levels and has been articulated into one of the major pillars, namely, foresight and anticipation, of the 2018-2027 Strategic Plan of CORAF. Foresight and anticipation require the setting up and operation of a robust framework for containing emerging biological risks through strategic collaboration.

Sustainable pest management practices adapted to West and Central Africa countries' socio-economic-environmental contexts need to be identified or developed, tested and upscaled to mitigate the potential impact of FAW on crop production and food security in areas already subjected to high level of vulnerability to food insecurity and malnutrition. Optimal approaches

to manage FAW need to be identified and upscale through constant capacity building of regional stakeholders.

CORAF is therefore inviting applications from qualified consultants to help develop training materials on optimal FAW management and to conduct regional training of agricultural stakeholders on FAW management.

The tasks to be performed as well as other information relating to the consultancy are detailed in the attached terms of reference

The consultant will be selected according to the selection method based on the Consultant's qualification in accordance with the rules contained in the CORAF Administrative, Financial and Accounting procedures manual

General Selection Criteria

- Minimum qualification: A Master's degree in Plant Protection, entomology or any other related field. A PhD will be an advantage;
- Proven knowledge of pest control in West Africa with at least 8 years working experience in the agricultural sector particularly in the management of emerging productivity bio-risks;
- Experience in training of trainers
- Excellent analytical skills and experience in working with national and sub-regional organizations;
- Good knowledge of agricultural development in West Africa as well as the portfolio and interventions of ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS with regards to pest control;
- Excellent communication skills and perfectly bilingual (French-English).

Interested consultants can obtain additional information from the CORAF Executive Secretariat by sending correspondences to c.sobgui@coraf.org.

Consultants interested in this call must submit an Expression of Interest to procurement@coraf.org highlighting their suitability based on the above criteria and a detailed CV, not later than July 1, 2021, at 5:00 pm.

Dr Abdou TENKOUANO
Executive Director of CORAF

Terms of reference

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Background

The recurrence of cyclical shocks linked to climate change scenarios and the crises that result from it increase the vulnerability of the poorest households, especially small agricultural and pastoral producers. Among the shocks, the negative impact of crop pests and diseases on agricultural production and on the trade in products eligible for export occupies an important place. Transboundary plant pests and diseases can spread easily in several countries and reach epidemic proportions. Their emergence and upsurge can cause huge losses to crops and pastures, threatening the livelihoods of vulnerable farmers and the food, health, safety and nutrition security of millions of people. Further, the coronavirus COVID-19 threatens devastating impacts on food security, poverty, and nutrition, particularly in developing countries. The COVID-19 pandemic represents an unprecedented disruption to the global sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) related issues, economy and world trade, as production and consumption are scaled back across the globe and WCA especially.

In West and Central Africa, these general causes are associated with the notorious weakness of the SPS framework of the countries, the lack of synergy and harmonization of interventions at regional level, the low valuation of expertise existing scientific and technical support for phytosanitary and sanitary policies and programs and poor capacity building strategy. Regional technical institution including CORAF has key role to play in order to address these challenges if ones want to help agriculture achieve its full production potential.

Agriculture is key to economic growth, poverty reduction and food and nutritional security in Africa. Agricultural technologies have the power to drive economic development and improve food and nutritional security around the globe. Sustainable alleviation of poverty in West and central Africa (WCA) can only be achieved by enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of African agriculture. However, agriculture in WA is facing a number of challenges. In addition to poor access to quality inputs, climate change associated with erratic rainfalls and emergence of diseases and exotic pests are putting the region under the risks of not meeting its development goals including food security. Fall Armyworm (FAW) *Spodoptera frugiperda*, a moth that is native to tropical and subtropical regions of the Americas is among one of these exotic pests that can dramatically affect agriculture productivity in West Africa.

FAW originated from America where it is recognized as one of the most damaging crop pests. It prefers to feed on cereals, particularly maize which is a major food crop in West Africa. The arrival and rapid spread of FAW is therefore seen as a major threat to agricultural productivity, food and nutrition security in the region. FAW was reported for the first time in Africa in 2016 (Goergen et al. 2016, Cock et al. 2017), discovered in northern Nigeria, the pest has already managed to spread to at least 40 African countries. In the past two rainy seasons, FAW has

devastated many farms across the region with losses in millions of dollars. The threat of FAW looms over the region and this has alerted Governments across the region as well as a range of development partners and the scientific community.

Sustainable pest management practices adapted to West and Central Africa countries' socio-economic-environmental contexts need to be identified or developed, tested and upscaled to mitigate the potential impact of FAW on crop production and food security in areas already subjected to high level of vulnerability to food insecurity and malnutrition. Optimal approaches to manage FAW need to be identified and upscale through constant capacity building of regional stakeholders.

It is of paramount importance to build regional capacity on optimal approaches to manage FAW in West and Central Africa. The need to better prepare for, and respond to, emerging biological threats like the FAW has been articulated into one of the Priority Intervention Domains: Knowledge management and Foresight of the 2018-2027 Strategic Plan of CORAF. Efficient management of FAW invasion and other Bio-Risks requires to have a pool of up-to-date qualified plant protection specialists and extension workers. There is therefore important to build the capacity of regional stakeholders on proven integrated management of FAW practices in maize and other affected crop production.

CORAF is far advanced in facilitating the establishing of a coordination mechanism that makes it possible to pool resources and to prevent stakeholder organizations from duplicating efforts so there will be a coherence of concerted efforts and the capitalization of synergies. In this regard, CORAF chairs the Bio risk Management Facility (BIMAF) which is a consortium of key technical institutions across the region with a range of expertise to tackle challenges from emerging bio risks associated with climate change.

The present terms of reference specify the conditions under which CORAF seeks to recruit a consultant (short term), Specialist in plant protection, to help develop training materials on optimal FAW management and to conduct regional training of agriculture stakeholders on FAW management.

Main Objective

The main objective is to provide to plant protection specialist an important foundation for an efficient and harmonized FAW pest management approaches for better control of the infestation in the region.

Specific objectives

The specific objectives are:

- Package information and knowledge on the management of invasive pest and specifically FAW
- Organize regional TOT for stakeholders on best practices to combat FAW

Expected results

- Packages of best practices to combat fall army worm available
- Regional stakeholders trained on FAW control

Methodology

The Consultant will work in close collaboration with the PAIRED project manager as well as the senior Scaling specialist. The consultant will make an inventory of up-to-date best practices in FAW management, compile them to produce a training manual and organize regional training for key stakeholders in the region on innovative approach to manage FAW.

Qualifications of the consultants

- Minimum qualification: A Master's degree in Plant Protection, entomology or any other related field. A PhD will be an advantage;
- Proven knowledge of pest control in West Africa with at least 8 years working experience in the agricultural sector particularly in the management of emerging productivity bio-risks;
- Experience in training of trainers
- Excellent analytical skills and experience in working with national and sub-regional organizations;
- Good knowledge of agricultural development in West Africa as well as the portfolio and interventions of ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS with regards to pest control;
- Excellent communication skills and perfectly bilingual (French-English).

Reporting

All reports, notes and minutes prepared by the consultant must be written in French or English. The documents to be presented must be in hard copy and in electronic format in Word, Excel or PowerPoint.

Duration and period of the consultancy

Total number of payable days for the consultancy is 15 days (5 days for training preparation, 2 days for booklets finalization, 6 days for training delivery for French and English speaking countries and 2 days for the development of training report) spread over a 2-month period.

Submission of documents

Applicant should submit a covering letter and a detailed CV by email through procurement@coraf.org not later than July 1, 2021, at 5:00 pm.