CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Recruitment of three firms/Cabinets for the training of FSRP project actors in the implementation and facilitation of innovation platforms

Opening: 02/08/2023
Closing: 17/08/2023

CEI N° 028-2023

The Executive Secretariat of CORAF (West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development) is based in Dakar, Senegal. It has received financial support from the World Bank through the Food System Resilience Program (FSRP) which is a flagship regional investment program aimed at strengthening the resilience of the food system in West Africa through a strategic regional approach. This program will fund investments in three interrelated thematic areas: (1) Digital Advisory Services for the prevention and management of agricultural and food crises; (2) Sustainability and resilience of the productive base of the food system (sustainable land and watershed management, agro-ecological approaches); and (3) Market integration and trade (regional staple food value chain development). Each area is led by one of the following mandated regional institutions: AGRHYMET, CORAF, and ECOWAS) to ensure coordination and build sustainable capacity.

The Innovation Platform (IP) mechanism stems from the IAR4D approach and brings together the different actors (producers, processors, traders, transporters, researchers, extension agents, bankers, insurers, etc.) of a value chain around a problem to be solved. It allows for the establishment of multi-actor partnerships that facilitate the resolution of the various constraints faced by the value chain in its expansion needs. IPs have proven to be real places for mutual learning and support and for incubating Technologies and Innovations (T&I). Thus, the actors are informed of the existence of research products. At the same time, researchers are informed of the needs of potential users. In addition, each actor is informed of the difficulties or constraints faced by the different segments of the value chain and together they reflect on ways and means to overcome these constraints.

CORAF Executive Secretariat intends to use part of the resources made available to recruit three consulting firms specialized in training on the integrated research for development approach using the multi-actor process for agricultural value chain development. The first firm/study office selected will intervene in three (03) countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger), the second in two (02) countries (Chad and Togo) and the third in the two (02) other English-speaking countries namely (Ghana and Sierra Leone).

The Executive Director of CORAF invites firms or groups of consultants who meet the qualification criteria as indicated in the terms of reference to express their interest in this call for proposals.

Firms/groups of consultants interested in this call must submit an expression of interest indicating that they are qualified to carry out such services (Understanding of the terms of reference, Methodology, References of execution of similar contracts in the last 10 years, CVs of proposed key experts, etc.).

Firms will be selected according to the selection method based on the consultant's qualifications in accordance with the rules set out in the CORAF Manual of Administrative, Financial and Accounting Procedures, following the selection criteria contained in the attached terms of reference.
Interested firms/group of consultants may obtain additional information from the CORAF Executive Secretariat by sending a letter to Mr. Niéyidouba LAMIEN, n.lamien@coraf.org and copy to procurement@coraf.org.

Expressions of interest should be addressed to the Executive Director of CORAF and submitted by e-mail to procurement@coraf.org no later than 17:00 GMT on August 17th, 2023.

Dr Abdou TENKOUANO
Executive Director of CORAF
Introduction

Food demand in West and Central Africa, particularly in the growing urban centers, is expected to increase by about 60-80% by 2050, but agricultural yields are not keeping pace with the increase in demand. This disconnect between local food supply and food demand is believed to be the result of an agricultural sector that is 80% comprised of small family farms that have little use of or access to innovative technologies and modern means of production and therefore are unable to increase their production sufficiently in quantity and quality to keep up with demographic change, high urbanization, and associated dietary changes.

The Food System Resilience Program (FSRP) is a flagship regional investment program aimed at building food system resilience in West Africa through a strategic regional approach. The program funds investments in three mutually reinforcing thematic areas: (i) Digital advisory services for the prevention and management of agricultural and food crises; (ii) Sustainability and resilience of the productive base of the food system (sustainable land and watershed management, agro-ecological approaches); and (iii) Market integration and trade (regional staple food value chain development). Each area will be led by a mandated regional institution (AGRHYMET, CORAF, ECOWAS) to ensure coordination and build sustainable capacity.

The Program Development Objective (PDO) is to: "Strengthen the management of risks inherent in regional food systems, improve the sustainability of the production base in targeted areas and develop regional agricultural markets."

Specifically, the program contributes to increasing the resilience of food systems in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and Togo (Phase 1); and Ghana, Chad, and Sierra Leone (Phase 2) through investments in regional risk management, basic food trade, and sustainability of the production base.

Subcomponent 3 will modernize national agricultural extension services in West Africa.

Following a mapping of modern extension tools and approaches, capacity building of actors on the use of these modern tools and approaches is planned. Approaches such as innovation platforms (IPs) have been proven to accelerate technology adoption during the implementation of WAAPP. CORAF has therefore proposed to use this approach in the context of the WAAPP.

The Innovation Platform (IP) mechanism stems from the IAR4D approach and brings together the different actors (producers, processors, traders, transporters, researchers, extension agents, bankers, insurers, etc.) of a value chain around a problem to be solved. It allows for the establishment of multi-actor partnerships that facilitate the resolution of the various constraints faced by the value chain in its expansion needs. IPs have proven to be real places for mutual learning and support and for incubating Technologies and Innovations (T&I). Thus, the actors are informed of the existence of research products. At the same time, researchers are informed of the needs of potential users. Moreover, each actor is informed of the difficulties or constraints faced by the different segments of the value chain and together they reflect on ways to overcome these constraints. The deployment of research T&I will take place primarily in countries of concentration of FSRP in West Africa, namely Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Chad.

To strengthen the link between Research, Extension, Production, and the private sector, CORAF recommends the Integrated Research for Development (IAR4D) approach through the establishment of Innovation Platforms (IP). These platforms are now an effective tool for addressing the socio-economic and institutional problems faced by small-scale producers, particularly in terms of access to new technologies and innovations. The results of the implementation of this approach in the different countries of West and Central Africa, in terms of effectiveness in accelerating the mass adoption of new technologies and innovations, argue for their use on a larger scale for a better impact of technology dissemination.
These terms of reference are proposed for the recruitment of three firms to provide training on the establishment and facilitation of innovation platforms for stakeholders in seven (7) countries (Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Sierra Leone, Chad, and Togo). The first firm will intervene in three (03) countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger), the second in two (02) countries (Chad and Togo) and the third in the two English-speaking countries, namely Ghana and Sierra Leone.

As for the actors to be trained, they are composed of the actors of the existing or future platforms with priority given to women and youth with profiles such as and research Advisory/extension agents; social or economic science researcher youth and women farmers/processors groups facilitator or any other actor who is member of these platforms.

Objective
The general objective is to have a critical mass of skills for the establishment and facilitation of innovation platforms in the FSRP project intervention areas to accelerate the mass adoption of technologies and innovations capable of transforming agriculture in these areas. Specifically, this will involve:

1. To train specialists-facilitators of innovation platforms who will be recognized as champions on:
   (i) IAR4D principles and approach, the innovation platform tool, group facilitation techniques (facilitation, conflict management, lobbying, etc.); (ii) techniques and tools for facilitating multi-stakeholder processes for change; and (iii) guidelines for planning and conducting training on innovation platforms; (iv) monitoring and evaluation, communication, and agribusiness.

2. Conduct, after the basic training, two (2) mentoring and coaching sessions for the trainees to identify champions by IP.

Expected results
- Participants master the key concepts and principles of the IAR4D approach;
- Participants are familiar with the innovation platform tool;
- Participants have a good understanding of the steps involved in setting up an innovation platform;
- The participants have a good knowledge of the integration of the business component in an innovation platform;
- Participants have a good understanding of the management and facilitation of an innovation platform;
- Participants have a good knowledge of techniques for mobilizing financial resources for the life of IPs
- Participants are able to lead multi-stakeholder processes for change;
- Participants have strengthened capacity to document, monitor and evaluate the performance of an innovation platform;
- Participants have mastered and understand the theory of change;
- Participants can develop and conduct advocacy processes.

Methodology
The applicant will propose a detailed methodological approach. However, the following aspects must be considered: emphasis on practice, valorization of participants’ knowledge, interactive exchanges between participants and resource mobilization strategy for the IP to be self-sponsored in short terms.

As far as the training material is concerned, apart from the PowerPoint presentations, the participants will be entitled to complementary literature on the different training themes and a participant's notebook.
Mission of the firm/group of consultants

The first consulting firm selected will work in three (03) countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger), the second in two countries (Chad and Togo) and the third in the two English speaking countries (Ghana and Sierra Leone):

- Develop a training manual to be made available to participants;
- Conduct training missions, then mentoring and coaching of trainees;
- Produce a participants' booklet;
- Produce a report for each training session;
- Produce a mission report at the end.

Selection criteria

1. The firm must demonstrate that it has a pool of qualified experts available to provide the trainings in an appropriate manner. Experts must have strong training in social change, communication for change and multi-stakeholder processes;
2. Proposed consultants should have good knowledge of innovation systems, practical experience in conducting multi-stakeholder processes and be familiar with the IAR4D (Integrated Agricultural Research for Development) approach and value chain management;
3. Experts must have good experience in training diverse groups of stakeholders and facilitating learning on innovation systems based on innovation platform facilitation;
4. The mission team will include a mission leader and at least two French-speaking associate experts.

The mission leader must have:

- Higher education; BAC +5 at least in agronomy, agro-economics, economics, socioeconomics, sociology of organizations; in institutional economics, in knowledge management systems or in innovation systems;
- Proven experience in conducting multi-actor processes, training and coaching innovation platform facilitators;
- Bibliographical references on the subject;
- At least 10 years of experience in the field.

Experience in the countries concerned by the tender is an asset.

Two (02) associated experts must have:

- Higher education in agronomy, agro-economics, economics, socioeconomics, sociology of organizations; in institutional economics or in innovation systems;
- Proven experience in leading multi-actor processes, training and coaching of innovation platform facilitators;
- At least 5 years of experience in the field.

Experience in the countries concerned by the tender is an asset.

Duration of the mission

The mission will consist of 40 working days including 5 days of preparatory mission, 15 days of basic training; 15 days of coaching and mentoring sessions per country and 5 days of reporting spread over a 3-month period.
Outputs of the mission

1. Inception Report, 10 days after signing the contract;
2. Report of the basic training carried out, 10 days after the trainings were held;
3. Report on the 1st mentoring and coaching session in the PRSP implementation countries, 10 days after the mission;
4. Report on the 2nd mentoring and coaching session in the PRSP implementing countries, 10 days after the mission;
5. Global report of the mission, 20 days before the end of the contract.

Demonstrate proven experience in setting up innovation platforms in West and Central Africa with bibliographic references on the subject; At least 10 years of experience in the field. At least 10 years of experience in the field. Experience in the countries concerned by the tender is an asset.