

## CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

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### **Recruitment of an Individual Consultant to assess the quality approach component of the level of maturation of National Centers of Specialization into Regional Centers of Excellence for Research and Development in West Africa**

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**Opening of the call: November 10, 2022**

**Closing of the call: November 21, 2022**

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**CEI No. 27-2022 – RELAUNCH1**

- 1- The Food System Resilience Program (FSRP) is a flagship regional investment program (US\$850 million) aimed at building food system resilience in West Africa through a strategic regional approach. The Program will fund investments in three mutually reinforcing thematic areas: (1) Digital advisory services for agriculture and food crises prevention and management; (2) Sustainability and adaptive capacity of the food system productive base (sustainable land and watershed management, agro-ecological approaches); and (3) Market integration and trade (development of the regional staple food value chain). Each area will be led by a mandated regional institution (AGRHYMET, CORAF, and ECOWAS) to ensure coordination and build sustainable capacity.
- 2- The ultimate goal of this activity is to support the centers in their conversion process into ECOWAS RCoE. Specifically, it involves conducting an assessment to identify the gaps between the current states of the centers and meeting the agreed-upon maturation criteria, while making recommendations for investments to ensure that they are satisfied.

It is in this context that CORAF is recruiting a consultant to assess the quality approach component of the level of maturation of National Centers of Specialization into Regional Centers of Excellence for Research and Development in West Africa.

**Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la Recherche et le Développement Agricoles**  
**West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development**

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- 3- The tasks to be carried out as well as other information relating to the conduct of the mission are detailed in the terms of reference below.
- 4- The Executive Director of CORAF invites interested candidates ("Individual consultant") with the required profile as indicated in the terms of reference, to express their interest in this call for proposals.
- 5- Interested candidates should provide an expression of interest and their update CV detailing the references concerning the execution and experience of similar services.
- 6- It is brought to the attention of the candidates that the provisions of paragraph 3.14 of the "World Bank Procurement Regulations for Investment Project Financing Borrowers" of July 2016, revised in November 2017 and in August 2018 ("The Regulations"), relating to the World Bank's rules on conflict of interest are applicable.
- 7- Candidates will be selected according to the procedure for the employment of individual consultants as described in the "Bank's Procurement Regulations".
- 8- Interested candidates may obtain further information on any working day from the CORAF Executive Secretariat at [n.lamien@coraf.org](mailto:n.lamien@coraf.org) and copy [procurement@coraf.org](mailto:procurement@coraf.org).
- 9- Applications must be submitted by e-mail to [procurement@coraf.org](mailto:procurement@coraf.org), no later than **November 21, 2022 at 17h00 GMT**.

**Dr. Abdou TENKOUANO**  
**Executive Director**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Terms of Reference of an Individual Consultant to assess the quality approach component of the level of maturation of National Centers of Specialization into Regional Centers of Excellence for Research and Development in West Africa**

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#### **1. Background**

The Food System Resilience Program (FSRP) is a flagship regional investment program (US\$850 million) aimed at building food system resilience in West Africa through a strategic regional approach. The Program will fund investments in three mutually reinforcing thematic areas: (1) Digital advisory services for agriculture and food crises prevention and management; (2) Sustainability and adaptive capacity of the food system productive base (sustainable land and watershed management, agro-ecological approaches); and (3) Market integration and trade (development of the regional staple food value chain). Each area will be led by a mandated regional institution (AGRHMET, CORAF, and ECOWAS) to ensure coordination and build sustainable capacity.

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

Specifically, the program will help to increase the food system resilience in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and Togo (under Phase 1); Ghana, Chad, and Sierra Leone (under Phase 2) through investments in regional risk management, staple food trade and sustainable production base.

Sub-component 2.1 envisages the strengthening of national research systems through the consolidation of National Centers of Specialization (NCoSs). A total of 9 NCoSs were established under the West African Agricultural Productivity Program (WAAPP) from 2007 to 2019, including: (i) Roots and Tubers in Ghana, (ii) Rainfed, Irrigated and Deepwater Rice in Mali; (iii) Dry Cereals in Senegal; (iv) Fruits and Vegetables in Burkina Faso; (v) Plantain in Côte d'Ivoire; (vi) Aquaculture in Nigeria; (vii) Maize in Benin, (viii) Livestock in Niger and (ix) Mangrove Rice in Sierra Leone.

In the process of supporting the NCoSs in their maturation into RCoEs, CORAF commissioned two evaluations on the level of maturation of these NCoSs into RCoEs based on the criteria defined at the Lome I workshop in 2014. At the end of the evaluations, it was found that: (i) the NCoS on Dry Cereals in Senegal and the NCoS on Roots and Tubers in Ghana met the eligibility criteria for becoming Regional Center of Excellence; (ii) the NCoSs on Rice in Mali, on Livestock in Niger and on Maize in Benin met the criteria for becoming Regional Center of Specialization; while (iii) the remaining NCoSs still need time to finalize their migration process towards RCoS and RCoE.

The end of the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program (WAAPP), which was the main source of funding, in December 2016 for Series B countries (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria) and Series C countries (Benin, Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Togo and Sierra Leone), in December 2018 for Series 2A countries (Ghana, Mali, Senegal) and in December 2019 for the countries enjoying additional funding for series C (Benin, Guinea, Niger and Togo) did not allow for the full realization of the maturation action plans into RCoE that each NCoS had developed, except for the NCoSs on dry cereals and roots and tubers that were able to obtain the status of Regional Center of Excellence.

Since then, each center has been struggling to exist. The present Terms of Reference are proposed to assess the vibrancy of the centers under phase 1&2 of FSRP for an update of the maintenance/maturation investment plans into Regional Centers of Excellence.

## **2. Objectives**

The ultimate goal of this activity is to support the centers in their conversion process into ECOWAS RCoE. Specifically, it involves conducting an assessment to identify the gaps between the current states of the centers and meeting the agreed-upon maturation criteria, while making recommendations for investments to ensure that they are satisfied.

## **3. Methodological approach**

The complexity of the assessment requires the recruitment of a pair of consultants with expertise that complements each other: technical expertise in research and development and expertise in the management of public organizations and ISO accreditation.

As in previous assessments, the consultants will assess the current state of the centers in terms of infrastructure, equipment and human resources in research, operating methods and scientific production, openness to the sub-region, sustainability, etc.; assess the adoption of a “Quality” approach or the level of Quality maturity in the implementation of the center’s activities and assess the possibility of upgrading to a RCoE; make proposals to improve synergies and complementarities within the cluster of institutions of the center and propose an action plan for ISO certification.

This will require visiting each of the 6 centers under the Phase 1&2 countries of FSRP to conduct interviews with the heads of the center's parent institution, the center's leaders and managers, research teams, scientific and technical partners, users of the research findings, sub-regional and international organizations of interest established in the country.

This assessment is particularly targeted at the centers on (i) Fruits and Vegetables in Burkina Faso; (ii) Rainfed, Irrigated and Deepwater Rice in Mali; (iii) Livestock in Niger; (iv) the new center on bioaggressor management in Togo, the centers on (v) Root and Tuber in Ghana and (vi) Mangrove Rice in Sierra Leone.

#### **4. Expected outputs/results**

The main output of this institutional assessment is the report containing recommendations that meet the above-mentioned objectives, based on the analysis of information gathered from the management and staff, members of the governing bodies, partner institutions and other stakeholders of those centers.

The expected intermediate results are as follows:

- the current state of the institutions being assessed in terms of research infrastructure and equipment, human and financial capacity, ownership of physical infrastructure and assets, programs and activities implemented since the last assessment as well as those underway) is determined;
- the current and future needs of each center;
- the main functions of the institutions are identified and strategies to attain them in the short and medium term are developed;
- the sustainable institutional framework based on the structure, staffing, funding needed to ensure institutional change, funding sources and mechanisms, work processes and procedures, governance, networking and partnership, are reassessed.

#### **5. Duration/term**

The assignment will last for forty (40) man-days over two months. The starting date is November 2022.

#### **6 Profile of the consultant**

The consultant appointed for this assignment should have some of the following qualifications and experience:

- Good knowledge of West and Central Africa and its sub-regional institutions and organizations;
- Strategic planning skills and strong track record in Agriculture and Agricultural Research (agriculture, livestock, fisheries/aquaculture) in relation to economic and social development;
- Experience in the certification of agricultural research and development organizations or in the certification of institutions working in the field of agricultural development in a CORAF member country;
- Be fluent in French or English, and be able to work in the other language.

#### **7. Content of assignment**

The service will include (but not limited):

- Documentation of the current state of infrastructure, equipment, human resources and research programs as well as the quality approach of the cluster's member institutions through the administration of an audit grid of research capacity;
- Identification of gaps in the maturation of the NCoS into RCoE;
- Making recommendations to fill the gaps.

## **8. Reporting**

As part of their assignment, the Consultant shall deliver the following reports:

1. an inception report that briefly details the methodology planned to be used;
2. a progress report, one week after the end of each step listed in the methodological approach;
3. a final report on the whole process taking into account the observations made by CORAF, the different centers and their partners.

Reports written in French or in English will be sent to CORAF Executive Secretariat in electronic format.

## **9. Application procedure and selection**

Applications must be submitted by e-mail to [procurement@coraf.org](mailto:procurement@coraf.org), **no later than November 21, 2022 at 17h00 GMT**.

It is brought to the attention of the candidates that the provisions of paragraph 3.14 of the "World Bank Procurement Regulations for Investment Project Financing Borrowers" of July 2016, revised in November 2017 and in August 2018 ("The Regulations"), relating to the World Bank's rules on conflict of interest are applicable.

Candidates will be selected according to the procedure for the employment of individual consultants as described in the "Bank's Procurement Regulations".