

Call for Expression of Interest

Recruitment of individual consultants for Training courses on “Innovation platform for agricultural development: setting and facilitating an innovation platform in West Africa”

Opening Date: April 1, 2021

Closing Date: April 15, 2021

CEI No. 03-2021

1. West Africa (WA) and the Sahel region are home to about 387 million inhabitants, which represents over 5% of the world's population. The average annual growth rate of the population in WA stands at 2.7% against an annual agricultural productivity growth of less than 2% (CORAF, 2017). Much of the concern over feeding Africa by 2050 relates to the relative slowing down of food production in the face of rapidly growing populations. Food demand is projected to increase, especially in the growing urban centers of West Africa to about 60% to 80%, but agricultural yields are not keeping pace, with gaps estimated to be 75% of potential yield. As the population grows and fields shrink from generation to generation, farmers must produce more food on less land. As a result, African farmers have faced an inexorable pressure to intensify their production (Jayne et al., 2016).
2. Intensification of production requires increased use of agricultural inputs such as improved seeds, fertilizers, etc. Despite the efforts of stakeholders, the use of Agri-inputs remains low with negative consequences on agricultural productivity in West Africa. CORAF with support of USAID is implementing a national project entitled Partnership for Agricultural Research, Education and Development in West Africa (PAIRED). Under this initiative, CORAF with its partners will fostered establishment of Innovative scaling framework for Agri-input Technologies and Innovations in West Africa to insure sustainable scaling and adoption of best-bet agriculture technologies and innovations. In this regard, CORAF solicits the services of appropriate consultants to develop and deliver national training course on “Innovation platform for agriculture development: governance, facilitation and monitoring, evaluation and learning”.
3. CORAF is inviting individual consultants for national training courses on Innovation platform for agricultural development: governance, facilitation and monitoring, evaluation and learning.

4. Interested consultants from Benin, Mali, Senegal, Niger, Nigeria, and Ghana will benefit from the health environment associated with the pandemic. Interested Consultants can obtain further information from the CORAF Executive Secretariat by email at : c.sobgui@coraf.org.
5. The consultants will be selected in accordance with the rules set out in the CORAF Administrative, Financial and Accounting Procedures Manual.
6. The training will be conducted by an individual consultant for each country. If there is not qualified national consultant for a given country, the mission may be entrusted to a consultant from among the others already chosen and obtaining the best score. The time allocated for the consultation is 7-10 days. The provisional training to start these training programs will be between April and May 2021 at the earliest.
7. The selection criteria for Consultants will relate to the elements in the table below.

General Selection Criteria

Criteria
At least 7 years of experiences in Integrated Agriculture research for development
Good knowledge of innovation systems and a good experience of multi-stakeholder process establishment and management
Familiar with the Integrated Agricultural Research for Development (IAR4D) approach and the management of value chains
Track record in training on Integrated Agricultural Research for Development in West Africa
Knowledge of agricultural research and development in West and Central Africa within the overall global development context
Good command of French for Francophone countries and English for English speaking countries and national from Mali, Benin, Niger, Senegal, Mali and Nigeria

8. Applications of the individual consultant for each country 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.

Expressions of Interest (EoI) must be submitted by e-mail to the following address: procurement@coraf.org not later than **April 15, 2021 at 12:00 GMT**.

CORAF Executive Secretariat reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the EoI or cancel the EoI process at any stage without assigning any reason(s) whatsoever and without incurring any liability to the applicants. For more information, please consult the attached terms of reference of the mission.

Dr Abdou TENKOUANO
Executive Director of CORAF

**Partnership for Agricultural Research, Education and Development in West Africa
(PAIRED)**

Cooperative Agreement AID-624-A-17-00002

Concept note

**National Training course: “Innovation platform for agriculture
development: setting and facilitating an innovation platform in West
Africa”**

Introduction

CORAF has catalyzed the development and adaptation of an impressive basket of technologies and innovations (T&Is) that could positively transform agriculture in the region of West and Central Africa. However, the deployment of such T&Is has not massively occurred, and the tipping point signaling agricultural transformation appears elusive. There is a growing consensus among key stakeholders such as ECOWAS and a host of Development Partners including USAID that the effective scaling up of the already existing technologies will make a massive impact on livelihoods and overall economic growth in the region. As the designated Technical arm of ECOWAS, CORAF has therefore prioritized scaling of agricultural technologies in its current Strategic Plan (2018 – 2027) and is taking the lead to coordinate national initiatives in scaling agricultural technologies.

Rice, millet, Sorghum and maize are the major staple crops of most of the population in West Africa and account approximately for about 50% of the daily calories' intake in the region. However, the region remains a net cereal importer to insure food security due to poor agricultural productivity.

Poor access to quality seeds and fertilizers and poor adoption of good agricultural practices (GAP) are among the causes of poor agricultural productivity in WA. Therefore, increasing quality input use per farmer due to technologies adoption to boost output per farmer is more than a necessity. For agriculture to prosper, farm inputs need to be available, affordable, accessible, and of good quality. In addition, lack of reliable information on available quality Agri-inputs constitute another major barrier to technology use and adoption. Hence, the transformation of agricultural sector in WA requires the use of modern communication approach to bring change in farmers live.

Taking successful development proven T&Is to scale is critical if WA is to alleviate poverty and make the required gains in the fight for improved agricultural productivity, incomes, and nutrition. Despite several interventions in WA, the growth rate of agricultural productivity is still low. CORAF has demonstrated in recent years that the use of more systematic and innovative approaches can foster T&Is adoption, overcome productivity improvement barriers and unlock West Africa's agricultural potential.

PAIRED in the long run is targeting of reaching millions of farmers with information that helps them assess and adopt cutting edge technologies and innovations. Achieving this ambitious result will require the use of evidence-backed, cost-effective training and extension methods that are highly accessible to small-scale farmers; strategies that enable them to learn about, evaluate, and adopt new T&Is. Farmers have different information and training requirements at each stage of the adoption process.

Closing the productivity gap is not possible without new ways of making actors along the agriculture value chain to work together across the boundaries of farm, business, government, science and civil society. Innovation platform have become a preferred mechanism for dealing with today's critical agriculture and scaling challenges, such as access to improved Agri-inputs, market linkages, access to credit and financial institutions, post-harvest managements...

Training staff in charge of facilitating innovation platforms and implementing scaling up initiatives is important, as lack of adequately trained human resources is often a major constraint to scaling up. Therefore, quality trainings are recommended as an essential component of scaling up process, helping to transmit procedural and technical expertise to key staff who will be in charge of scaling process including training of trainers (ToT) of

national stakeholders. This training course aims at allowing key staff to understand the importance and challenges of agricultural innovations and scaling process and to enable participants to understand the concept of Innovation Platforms and multi-stakeholder partnership. It will help participants to improve their ability to establish a functional multi-stakeholder platform, strengthen their facilitation skills, governance and M&E capacities.

Innovation platforms must be designed, established and facilitated based on a sound rationale for technologies and innovations deployment and adoption. This is based on a good understanding of the local context, with a clear purpose and vision based on principles of transformative change and systems thinking. Key factors for success of an innovation platform include (i) a good facilitation which creates condition for individuals and groups to challenge themselves in the quest for new approaches and collaborative learning, (ii) a good governance which makes the innovation platform more transparent and trustworthy and (iii) an effective monitoring and evaluation system for regular feedback allowing programs to be adjusted as they are expanding in the light of well-understood experience.

Objective

The main objective of this training is to strengthen capacity of West Africa agriculture stakeholders in innovation platform facilitation, governance and monitoring, evaluation and learning to insure efficient contribution of innovation platforms to scaling up of technologies and innovation in the region.

Expected results

By the end of this training, trainees will feel confident in designing, establishing, facilitating and monitoring and evaluating innovation platforms in which diverse stakeholders are able to meet, interact, share experiences, share tasks to carry out activities needed for T&Is scaling up to take place.

The main expected results are:

- Better understanding of concept and rationale of innovation platform and multi-stakeholder partnerships;
- Enhance capacity to analyze different types of multi-stakeholder partnerships in terms of issues at stake, the stakeholders, their interests, relations, conflicts...
- Understand the importance of system thinking and multi-stakeholder involvement for successful platforms
- Better knowledge of what is needed to design and establish an efficient and trustworthy innovation platform governance framework
- Improve facilitation capacity and communication skills
- Enhance monitoring, evaluation and learning skills in the context of innovation platform framework
- Enhance the capacity to establish a functional platform

Methodology

Consultants will develop in partnership with PAIRED's scaling specialist an appropriate training curricula and tools for the workshops. The training curricula and the tools will be validated beforehand by the PAIRED project team. In each country, consultant and participants will participatively identify the challenges face by existing innovation platforms and propose solution to overcome them.

The training will be delivered in each target country in French for francophone countries and in English for English speaking countries. Target countries are Niger, Benin, Senegal, Mali, Nigeria and Ghana.

Participants

Participants will be from PAIRED target countries.

Period of completion of the national workshop

The training workshop should be organized during the months of April and May 2021 according to PAIRED's agenda.

Qualifications of the consultants

Education

- Master or PhD in agronomy, agro-economy, socio-economy or any related fields.

Experiences

- At least 7 years of experiences in Integrated Agriculture research for development;
- Must have a good knowledge of innovation systems and a good experience of multi-stakeholder process establishment and management;
- Familiar with the Integrated Agricultural Research for Development (IAR4D) approach and the management of value chains;
- Have a good experience in training groups of diverse actors and facilitating learning on innovation systems specifically on governance, facilitation and monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) of innovation platform and multi-stakeholder partnerships;
- Demonstrate a strong background in training in social change, communication for development, innovation platforms and multi-stakeholder establishment, facilitation, governance and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL);
- Fluency in French or English.

Consultant's task

- Develop training modules to achieve the expected results;
- Conduct national training;
- Produce a training notebook for participants;
- Produce a training report.

Funding

All the activities, meeting, travel, operational cost will be covered by PAIRED's project.

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