

## CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

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**Recruitment of an individual consultant to conduct a Regional Training on Distinctness-Uniformity-Stability (DUS) and Value for Cultivation and Use (VCU) of Candidate Plant Varieties for Release**

For breeders and members of National Variety release Committees

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**Opening Date: 29 April 2021**

**Closing Date: 17 May 2021**

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**CEI No. 09-2021**

CORAF has received funding from USAID/West Africa to implement the “Partnership for Agricultural Research, Education and Development (PAIRED)” program. A portion of the program resources is earmarked to support the Regional Seed and Seedling Committee in West Africa and in the Sahel for the implementation of harmonized regional seed regulations on seeds and seedlings quality control, certification and marketing in West Africa (C/REG.4/05/2008 of ECOWAS and Regulation No. 03/2009/CM/UEMOA).

This support to CORAF is consistent with the provisions of Article 4 of the Cooperation Agreement for seeds, between ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS, signed in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on June 4, 2018 and which entrusts CORAF with implementing the harmonized regional seed regulation, for five (5) year period, renewable.

Under this mission, CORAF works closely with its regional partners, notably CILSS, through the Sahel Institute (INSAH), which administers the regional electronic data management platform for the development of the Regional Catalog of Plant Species and Varieties of West Africa and the Sahel (CREVAOS). This platform should allow for the online registration, on a permanent basis, of plant varieties released by the Member States of the three regional organization. During the edition of the previous catalogs, the national experts identified several weaknesses in the platform which is currently being improved. However, the weaknesses identified in the regional electronic platform are coupled with technical weaknesses among national actors. As a result, the plant varieties registered in the national catalogs of some country of West Africa and the Sahel did not meet the requirements of the harmonized regional seed regulations. According to the regulations, if a plant variety is to register in the national catalog of plant species and varieties, it must meet a number of technical requirements to be met by the candidate varieties released, i. e. conformity with the requirements for (i) the Distinctness-Uniformity-Stability testing, known as " DUS testing

", and with (ii) the Value for Cultivation and Use (VCU) testing, known as " VCU testing". The lack of information on some important traits is an indication that the required tests have not been carried out in accordance with the regulations.

It is against this background that CORAF has issued this Call for Expression of Interest (CEI), to recruit a consultant, expert in conducting the required testing (DUS and VCU), to deliver a regional training for breeders and members of the National Seed Committees (NSC), responsible for the release of plant varieties, which ultimate goal is to: *"improve the quality of the national catalogs of the countries of West Africa and the Sahel, and therefore, the Regional Catalog of Plant Species and Varieties"*

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

The Executive Director of CORAF is inviting individual consultants with required qualification as described in the Termes of references to apply for this recruitment.

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

The Consultant will be selected according the "consultant qualification method" following the rules contained in the Administrative, Financial and Accounting Procedures Manual of CORAF.

### General Selection Criteria

Criteria
Hold a PhD or a Master degree in Plant Breeding, Agronomy, Seed Technology or any other related field. He/she should:
1. Have proven knowledge of agricultural research and development and seed systems in West Africa and the Sahel. He/she should have worked for at least : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– For Ph.D holder 7 years in the agricultural research and development sector, including at least 6 years of proven experience in plant breeding and plant genetic resources management.</li> <li>– For Master holder 10 years in the agricultural research and development sector, including at least 8 years of proven experience in plant breeding and plant genetic resources management</li> </ul>
2. Good knowledge of Regulation C/REG.4/05/2008 and UEMOA Regulation N°03/2009/CM/UEMOA, on the harmonization of rules governing quality control, certification and marketing of plant seeds and seedlings [in West Africa and the Sahel];
3. Demonstrate proven knowledge of the procedures for the registration of varieties in the national/regional catalog of plant species and varieties (conduct the testing for Distinctness- Uniformity -Stability or Identification - DUS testing, and the testing for value for Cultivation and Use - VCU testing)
4. Track record in conducting trainings on seed and agricultural sector in West Africa
5. 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.

Expressions of Interest (EoI) must be submitted by e-mail to the following address: [procurement@coraf.org](mailto:procurement@coraf.org) not later than the **17 May 2021 at 4:00 p.m GMT**.

**Dr Abdou TENKOUANO**  
**Executive Director of CORAF**

**TERMS OF REFERENCES:**

**REGIONAL TRAINING ON DISTINCTNESS-UNIFORMITY-STABILITY (DUS) AND VALUE FOR CULTIVATION AND USE (VCU) OF CANDIDATE PLANT VARIETIES FOR RELEASE**

For breeders and members of National Variety release Committees.

## I. Introduction

CORAF has received funding from USAID/West Africa to implement the “Partnership for Agricultural Research, Education and Development(PAIREd)” program. A portion of the program resources is earmarked to support the Regional Seed and Seedling Committee in West Africa and in the Sahel for the implementation of harmonized regional seed regulations on seeds and seedlings quality control, certification and marketing in West Africa (C/REG.4/05/2008 of ECOWAS and Regulation No. 03/2009/CM/UEMOA).

This support to CORAF is consistent with the provisions of Article 4 of the Cooperation Agreement for seeds, between ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS, signed in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on June 4, 2018 and which entrusts CORAF with implementing the harmonized regional seed regulation, for five (5) year period, renewable.

Under this mission, CORAF works closely with its regional partners, notably CILSS, through the Sahel Institute (INSAH), which administers the regional electronic data management platform for the development of the Regional Catalog of Plant Species and Varieties of West Africa and the Sahel (CREVAOS). This platform should allow for the online registration, on a permanent basis, of plant varieties released by the Member States of the three regional organizations.

During the edition of the previous catalogs, the national experts identified several weaknesses in the platform which is currently being improved. However, the weaknesses identified in the regional electronic platform are coupled with technical weaknesses among national actors. As a result, the plant varieties registered in the national catalogs of some country of West Africa and the Sahel did not meet the requirements of the harmonized regional seed regulations. According to the regulations, if a plant variety is to register in the national catalog of plant species and varieties, it must meet a number of technical requirements to be met by the candidate varieties released, i. e. conformity with the requirements for (i) the Distinctness-Uniformity-Stability testing, known as " DUS testing ", and with (ii) the Value for Cultivation and Use (VCU) testing, known as " VCU testing ". Such tests are used to establish the identity of the candidate variety and define its use, in terms of its agronomic, technological and environmental value. The lack of information on some important traits is an indication that the required tests have not been carried out in accordance with the regulations.

It is against this background that CORAF has issued this Call for Expression of Interest (CEI), to recruit a consultant, expert in conducting the required testing (DUS and VCU), to deliver a regional training for breeders and members of the National Seed Committees (NSC), responsible for the release of plant varieties, which ultimate goal is to: *"improve the quality of the national catalogs of the countries of West Africa and the Sahel, and therefore, the Regional Catalog of Plant Species and Varieties"*.

## II. Objective

The Consultant is expected to deliver a regional training session for breeders and members of NSCs in the conduct of technical testing for DUS and VCU of candidate varieties for registration into the national catalogues of plant species and varieties, in accordance with the provisions of the harmonized regional seed regulations.

### III. Expected results

The expected results of the consultation are as follows:

- a) The capacity of breeders and NSC members to understand the release process of candidate plant varieties under the Harmonized Regional Seed Regulations is enhanced.
- b) Breeders and NSC members have gained a better understanding of the Testing Guidelines as a reference document for conducting DUS testing of a particular crop, including the need to complete the mandatory asterisked traits for regional harmonization of variety descriptions.
- c) Breeders and NSC members have gained a better understanding of multi-location VCU protocols, including the need to report on: (i) yield and its components, (ii) biotic and abiotic yield consistency factors (YCFs), (iii) technological value, and (iv) environmental value, which are the *raison d'être* of VCU for any crop other than fruit and vegetable.

### IV. Responsibilities:

The Consultant will prepare and facilitate a **5-day** training module on plant variety release, covering the following key points

- a) **General regulations** on the organization of the Regional Catalog of Plant Species and Varieties of West Africa and the Sahel, under the Harmonized Regional Seed Regulations, with a reminder of the major constraints to registration of plant varieties in West Africa and the Sahel - **(1/2 day)**
- b) **Conduct of DUS Testing** under the UPOV Convention:
  - "General Introduction to the Distinctness-Uniformity-Stability testing and Development of Harmonized Descriptions of Plants Varieties" - document TG/1/3, referred to as "General Introduction" and associated "TGP" documents – **1/2 day**
  - DUS Testing Guidelines for rice (cereal), groundnut (oilseed), cassava (root & tuber) and tomato (vegetable) - **2 days**.
- c) **Conduct of VCU testing**, under the Harmonized Regional Seed Regulations:
  - Multi-location testing protocols (VCU) for rice (cereal), groundnut (oilseed) and cassava (roots & tubers)- **2 days**

For this module, the consultant will be required to prepare PowerPoint presentations and a narrative format document in Word that highlights the key message and more detailed information on the technical materials and references. The narrative format will include an executive summary whereas the main document will feature an introduction, technical chapters with specific messages, a conclusion and bibliographic references.

### V. Duration

The mission will last **23 man-days (WD)** and will include *(i) development of modules (10 days)*, *(ii) conduct of training (5 days)* and *(iii) production of the narrative document (8 days)*. If all the conditions are met, the mission is scheduled to take place over 40 calendar days from **May 20 to June 30, 2021**.

The consultant will work closely with the PAIRED's Agri-Input Expert. He/she will submit the draft of any deliverables, including the module, to CORAF for review before validation of the final version.

## VI. Training methodology

It will be a five-day face-to-face training in one of the ECOWAS Member States. It will combine PowerPoint presentations, discussion and sharing of experiences and practical case studies. (Field visit to observe the distinctness of one or several varieties).

## VII. Languages of training

The language of the training can be English or French. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided.

## VIII. Qualifications

The consultant should have a **PhD or a Master degree** in Plant Breeding, Agronomy, Seed Technology or any other related field. He/she should:

6. Have proven knowledge of agricultural research and development and seed systems in West Africa and the Sahel. He/she should have worked for at least :
  - *For Ph.D holder 7 years in the agricultural research and development sector, including at least 6 years of proven experience in plant breeding and plant genetic resources management.*
  - *For Master holder 10 years in the agricultural research and development sector, including at least 8 years of proven experience in plant breeding and plant genetic resources management*
7. Be able to promote ECOWAS Regulation C/REG.4/05/2008 and UEMOA Regulation N°03/2009/CM/UEMOA, on the harmonization of rules governing quality control, certification and marketing of plant seeds and seedlings [in West Africa and the Sahel].
8. Demonstrate proven knowledge of the procedures for the registration of varieties in the national/regional catalog of plant species and varieties (conduct the testing for Distinctness- Uniformity -Stability or Identification - DUS testing, and the testing for value for Cultivation and Use - VCU testing).
9. Have a proven knowledge of the seed system in West Africa and the Sahel.
10. Be able to communicate easily and to provide high-level expert adult training.
11. Be fluent in French or English, (be bilingual would be an advantage).

## IX. Expected participants

This face-to-face training planned by CORAF should empower participants to update the national and regional catalogs. Participants in this training are therefore urged to really involve in the process of breeding and release of plant varieties.

The target participants in this regional training workshop are:

- a) Experts from national variety release committees,

- b)** Experts from the Official Seed Control and Certification Service (SOC) providing the secretariat of the National Seed Committee (NSC).
- c)** Breeders of the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) developing plant varieties and conducting DUS and VCU testing.
- d)** Depending on the resources available, priorities will be given to participants from countries facing the greatest challenges in the area concerned.

**The selected consultant will have to work closely with the CORAF/PAIRED's Agri-Input Expert. The training programs and didactic tools as well as the narrative paper will be validated beforehand by the PAIRED project team.**