

Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la
Recherche et le Développement
Agricoles



West and Central African Council for
Agricultural Research and
Development

CORAF/WECARD

Programme Officer

FULL-TIME WORK – Based in Dakar, Senegal

REF:01/SE-CW/DP/2012

Call opening: 1 January, 2012

Call closing: 31 January, 2012

WHO WE ARE

Created in March, 1987 upon a call of the Conference of African and French Directors of Agronomic Research, it became the Conference of Directors of Agricultural Research in West and Central Africa in 1995, then the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development in 1999. CORAF/WECARD is now one of the three Sub-regional Organizations (SROs) in Africa under the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), which brings together 22 National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS).

The revision of CORAF/WECARD's Strategic Plan (2007-2016) was completed and endorsed by the CORAF/WECARD General Assembly in May, 2007. This revised plan aims at achieving the goals of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme [CAADP] as well implementing the Agricultural policies of the Regional Economic Communities of West and Central Africa (ECOWAS, UEMOA, ECCAS and CEMAC). Within this context, CORAF/WECARD's strategic intentions are articulated in its *Vision* and *Mission* statements.

CORAF/WECARD's Vision is for a sustainable reduction in poverty and food insecurity in WCA through an increase in agricultural-led economic growth and sustainable improvement of key aspects of the agricultural research system.

CORAF/WECARD's Mission is to sustainably improve the competitiveness, productivity and markets of the agricultural system in West and Central Africa by meeting the key demands of the sub-regional research system as expressed by target groups.

CORAF/WECARD's Operational Plan (2008-2013), designed to implement the revised Strategic Plan is underpinned by a centrally managed and programme-based approach with the following main advantages:

- Excellent opportunities for inter-programme linkages and planning;
- More effective monitoring, evaluation and learning;
- Simplified streams for knowledge and information;
- Independence from undue non-programme influences;
- Clear lines of accountability;
- Strengthened corporate cohesion;
- Clear focus for resource mobilization and development partners;
- Coherence of all work conducted with the new Strategic Plan.

Currently, there are eight new Programmes in the Portfolio. This number may, however, increase or decrease as demands and needs vary. The new programmes fall into the following three broad categories:

Technical research – around four Programmes: [1] Livestock, Fisheries and Aquaculture; [2] Staple Crops; [3] Non-staple Crops; [4] Natural Resources Management; and [5] Biotechnology and Biosafety, - which use an integrated research approach based on systems and commodities, but employing new holistic and participatory methodologies.

Policy research – around one Programme: [6] Policy, Markets, Trade, Institutions and Socio-economic - which, through research, identifies and responds to key issues preventing achievement of improved markets, competitiveness and productivity.

Efficient research delivery – around two Programmes: [7] Knowledge management and [8] Capacity strengthening and coordination - to improve access to information and knowledge management, including research into mechanisms and methodologies.

The eight Programmes are managed by Programme Managers, who are answerable to a Director of Programmes based also at the CORAF/WECARD Secretariat. Programme Managers are responsible for developing high quality programmes and associated priority projects. They are also responsible for delivering Programme results, which would make significant contributions to CORAF/WECARD's overall objectives. Projects are implemented through the networking of appropriate stakeholders led by NARS-based centres. Project leaders focus on implementation with oversight from appropriate governance structures.

THE WEST AFRICA AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY PROGRAMME (WAAPP)

The West Africa Agricultural Productivity Programme (WAAPP) was initiated by ECOWAS with financial support of the World Bank to support regional cooperation in the agricultural sector. The development objective of WAAPP is to generate and disseminate proven technologies across ECOWAS countries, in regional priority areas identified in the CORAF/WECARD Strategic Plan, which is aligned with the ECOWAS agricultural policy (ECOWAP). The Programme is articulated around four components: (i) Enabling conditions for regional cooperation with regards to the development and dissemination of improved technologies, (ii) National

Centres of Specialisation, (iii) Competitive Funding of research on the development and adoption of technologies, and (iv) Coordination, management and monitoring and evaluation.

CORAF/WECARD is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the effectiveness of mechanisms for technology dissemination and the progress of indicators for the productivity and competitiveness of the agricultural sector in the beneficiary countries of WAAPP.

More specifically, it is responsible for: (i) managing the regional component of the competitive fund for agricultural research; (ii) providing advice to the management of the national component of the competitive fund for agricultural research and the National Centres of Specialisation (NCOS); (iii) compiling and synthesizing of information generated by national systems and monitoring and evaluation of project activities.

From three pilot countries (Senegal, Mali, and Ghana) in 2008, the WAAPP has increased to thirteen countries in 2011 and should cover the fifteen countries of ECOWAS in 2012. The first phase for the pilot countries has led to laying the foundation for regional cooperation for the development and dissemination of agricultural technologies and innovations, facilitated by the dissemination of regional laws and the establishment of tools in the area of information and communication. National Centres of Specialisation were established and scientific exchanges involving research scientists were initiated. The first call for proposals was launched within the framework of the regional competitive fund. The WAAPP has been enlarged to thirteen ECOWAS countries and has attracted other regional initiatives. The countries involved are aware of the need to consider cross cutting issues (Environment and Gender), and a dynamic M&E and fiduciary network participate in the mutual reinforcement of capacities between the countries and CORAF/WECARD.

The second phase will lead to strengthening regional integration in the agriculture sector, whilst supporting the harmonisation of procedures (seeds, fertilizers, intellectual property rights) and also the process of the National Centres of Specialisation acquiring a regional dimension in order to evolve into Centres of Excellence. It should also strengthen access, sharing, and the adoption at the regional level of technologies and innovations available in the countries, whilst ensuring the consideration of cross cutting issues (gender, environment, climate change), recognition of the Programme, and capacity strengthening of stakeholders. The coordination and efficient monitoring and evaluation will also be an important issue during the second phase.

VACANCY

The present vacancy is for the position of **Programme Officer**, who will provide support to CORAF/WECARD's Executive Secretariat in the management and coordination of the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Programme (WAAPP) and eventually in Central Africa (CAAPP).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the authority of the Director of Programmes and in collaboration with relevant Directions/Units of the CORAF/WECARD Executive Secretariat, the Program Officer will assume the following main roles:

- Lead the implementation of WAAPP activities at the level of the CORAF/WECARD Executive Secretariat;
- Coordinate the external relationships of CORAF/WECARD with ECOWAS, national units managing the Programme and the different partners including the World Bank;
- Foster relationships between different stakeholders at the regional level in order to create synergies between programme beneficiaries and stakeholders for an effective knowledge and product sharing.

Key responsibilities

1. Facilitate communication and liaison

- Develop and maintain strong relationships with stakeholders of the Programme in the countries involved – at the individual and institutional levels.
- Facilitate communication between the National Coordinating Units, through meetings, regular contacts and using communication tools.
- Manage daily interactions with stakeholders and provide timely and appropriate information as needed.
- Develop, in collaboration with the Communication and the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Units at the CORAF/WECARD Executive Secretariat, appropriate tools (e.g., Website and Media), which will facilitate information sharing with the general public as well as with key stakeholders (eg local producers, research institutions, extension and agricultural advisory services, Community-based organizations, relevant local authorities, technical and financial partners).
- Oversee planning, structuring, evaluation and reporting of major project meetings.

2. Monitor milestones

- Support preparation, coordinate implementation, evaluate and revise work plans and timelines for project activities and ensure the appropriate allocation of resources;
- Play a central role in the planning, review and evaluation of the Programme;
- Monitor progress towards results, both at CORAF/WECARD and regional levels, identify and manage risks to progress of implementation;
- Coordinate the preparation of Programme reporting.

3. Coordinate internal operations

- Manage internal processes on behalf of the Programme teams (e.g. archiving, IT requirements, internal reporting).
- Support National Coordination teams of the Programme in the management of WAAPP and also to comply with organizational policies and guidelines e.g. publication policy, travel policy, social ethics guidelines.

4. Support the Director of Programmes

- Manage the daily administration of the Programme.
- Draft general correspondence and responses to enquiries and field requests for information as regards the Programme.
- When required, represent the Director of Programmes at project meetings and workshops.

EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

- Holder of a Doctorate Degree in an agriculturally related field;
- At least 5 years experience or interest in international development issues and particularly in rural regions of West and Central Africa;
- At least 5 years experience in coordinating World Bank funded projects ;
- Experience in results-based management ;
- Experience or interest in agricultural research, extension and agricultural and rural advisory services, education, and capacity building;

- Demonstrated knowledge in CORAF/WECARD and its operations, philosophy and approaches and possession of a broad vision of national, regional, international research issues, placing CORAF/WECARD's Programmes and initiatives into this context;
- Capacity to hit the ground running, innovative and capable of undertaking and completing initiatives, as well as establishing good partnership networks;
- Demonstrate strong diplomacy persuasion and negotiation skills;
- Fluency in both French and English language;
- Ability to work independently in a range of environments and situations;
- Propensity for working in multi-disciplinary and multi-country teams;
- Willingness to travel extensively within the sub-region and internationally;
- Good communication and interpersonal skills and ability to get your point across to senior government and development partner officials, succinctly and diplomatically, and to be proactive;
- Well-organized, with good planning and problem-solving abilities;
- Flexible, quick-thinking, and ability to remain calm and positive in response to the challenges of work and travel;
- Skills in writing and editing scientific literature and/or 'general' material;
- Skills in data collection, management and/or analysis;
- Computer literate and fully familiar with the Microsoft Office Suite of software;
- Ability to remember people's names and position.

WORKING WITH CORAF/WECARD

CORAF/WECARD is not just looking to fill a vacancy. Whenever it recruits, it is looking for individuals, who share its values, are adaptable and resourceful, and who will complement the team and contribute to the development of the Organization.

Salary and remuneration will depend on the skills, experience and track record of the successful applicant, and will be internationally competitive.

CORAF/WECARD invests heavily in creating a culture of quality, professionalism, mutual support and team work. It creates opportunities for continuing formal and informal professional development and training.

NATIONALITY

The candidate must be a national of a CORAF/WECARD member state.

LOCATION

The Programme Officer will be based at the CORAF/WECARD Executive Secretariat in Dakar, Senegal.

HIERARCHY

The Programme Officer will report directly to the Director of Programmes.

DURATION

A contract with an initial period of twenty four months, subject to a positive performance review of the candidate during the first year, will be proposed. The contract may be renewed based on satisfactory performance and availability of financial resources for the project.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

If you are interested in applying, please e-mail a covering letter and your detailed CV, which must also include the names and contact details of three of your referees.

The application should be addressed to the Executive Director of CORAF/WECARD, Executive Secretariat, N° 7 Avenue Bourguiba, BP 48 Dakar-RP, Senegal, and e-mailed to proposals@coraf.org

Applications should be received at the CORAF/WECARD Secretariat no later than **midnight on the 31 January, 2012. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interview.**

As required by CORAF/WECARD, the selected candidate will undertake and pass a medical clearance prior to acceptance by CORAF/WECARD.