TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)
CONSULTANCY SERVICE: PROVISION OF TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ON STRENGTHENING QUALITY CONTROL OF AGRICULTURAL INPUTS AND PRODUCTS

Reference: CAADXP4 3.5.1

A. BACKGROUND

Developing countries face several risks associated with trade, perhaps the best known is declining terms of trade, as the world prices of the primary commodities exported by developing countries tend to fall over time relative to the price of manufactured products these countries import. A related problem is the volatility of world prices for the primary (especially agricultural) commodities developing countries export. In addition, these prices are determined in markets beyond the influence of individual poor countries and are typically affected by factors beyond their control. Related to this are supply-side risks, especially the sensitivity of output to climatic variability. In addition, most developing countries are price-takers in most international markets in which their nationals trade, but their activities are concentrated in a small number of markets. They cannot influence world market prices (mainly because of the small relative size of their market contribution), but at the same time are severely affected by changes in world market prices, especially when these changes are dramatic or unexpected. A related issue here is the increasing tendency for large multi-national companies to capture the benefits of comparative advantage by virtue of their monopsony position. The distributional impact of trade reform can also be a critical issue in poor countries. The impact of trade liberalization on poorer groups may well be lost if only the aggregate implications are considered. These trade challenges have rendered many developing countries especially those in Africa unable to grow and deliver good quality products because of trade barriers that impede the movement of agricultural inputs and produce from one part of the continent to another. Intra-continental trade offers a means to ensure that African countries make gains from their respective agricultural commodities. However, intra-continental trade or trade among African countries has not seen remarkable improvement over the years. In 2018, intra-Africa trade was only 16.6% of the total trade volume of Africa as compared to 68% for Europe, 55% for America, and 57% for Asia. Many factors have been attributed to this gloomy picture for Africa, factors including unfavorable trade policies on the continent and poor-quality control measures for inputs and produce, particularly agricultural produce and inputs. Ensuring quality controls to facilitate trade among African countries or cross-border trade is of the essence because trade facilitation is theoretically linked to food security through its positive effects on trade. More trade through improved trade facilitation or less restrictive tariff and non-tariff measures does not automatically contribute to food security and different development outcomes. However, trade strongly influences several underlying determinants of food security and malnutrition. Additionally, existing evidence suggests that better trade facilitation measures can, in some cases, result in poverty reduction and improved welfare outcomes for the poor, especially in Africa.
The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) is of the view that ensuring and strengthening quality control measures to increase cross-border trade should be a priority for Africa countries in the quest to achieve SDG 2 and its related SDGs. Through the implementation of the CAADPX Pillar IV project with support from the European Commission, FARA aims at contributing to enhancing cross-border trade on the continent by strengthening the capacities of national and regional organizations through the provision of technical support. One approach identified by FARA is the creation of enabling environment to ensure enhanced regional trade, markets, and transboundary commodity movement of agricultural commodities. To achieve the objectives of this activity, there is the need to technically support national and regional organizations to strengthen their capacities to ensure quality control of agricultural inputs and products to increase cross-border trade among African countries.

B. RATIONALE

Poverty or the lack of sustainable incomes, and malnutrition are major constraints to improved livelihoods in Sub-Saharan Africa. Producing more agricultural produce (food), itself, is not sufficient to combat poverty and malnutrition. Export of agricultural products particularly food will increase the demand for food and reduce nutritional deficits through income generation. The quality of agricultural produce (nutrient content, market characteristics, and access) and its related price premium or discount plays a key role in providing incomes. Potentials for export earnings are negatively impacted by trade barriers. While traditional trade barriers continue to decline, technical and regulatory barriers such as appropriate levels of sanitary and phytosanitary standards are increasing, and impact developing nations’ access to markets. The European Union (EU) agricultural safety rules for products to enter the European market are becoming more rigorous since the beginning of 2005. More than 50% of African agricultural products are subject to rejection due to microbiological contamination.

The lack of effective capacity to meet such standards and other non-tariff barriers in SSA are due to many factors including poorly, outdated and incomplete sanitary and phytosanitary legislation which is barely enforced; lack of recognized label and certification by the importing country for African products which impede market access; poorly staffed regulatory agencies and inappropriate infrastructure leading to poor food quality inspection, monitoring and certification; lack of impact studies to demonstrate the technical, financial and economic implications of new standards and their application and problems related to the sharing of responsibilities between the public and private sector; lack of information on export market sanitary and phytosanitary requirements in both the public and the private sector; Insufficient awareness of international agricultural input and product standards and poor institutional capacity to implement and comply with these standards, and lack of institutional capacity to engage in market access negotiations. Africa countries, therefore, face the need to understand and build the capacities of Africa organizations to ensure quality standards of agricultural inputs and products. This support to capacity building is expected to contribute to increasing cross-border trade among Africa countries and countries of other continents. This activity is expected to result in the strengthened capacity of Africa organizations to advocate for relevant policies to ensure cross-boundary market and trade reforms on the continent to enhance intra-continent trade.
C. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The general objective of this assignment is to provide technical support to national and regional organizations and stakeholders to advocate for policy reforms towards enhanced cross-border trade among Africa countries.

D. SCOPE AND SCHEME OF WORK

Specifically, this assignment seeks:

1. To assess the effectiveness of regional and country-level quality control mechanisms for agricultural inputs and outputs.
2. To develop an action plan for improving quality control mechanism to promote intra-continental trade for agricultural inputs and outputs in relation to cross-border trade.
3. To generate a policy brief that advocates for trade policy reforms to enhance cross-border trade on the African continent.

E. OUTPUT/DELIVERABLES

This activity is expected to lead to the following outputs/outcomes:

1. The effectiveness of quality control mechanism for agricultural inputs and outputs on the continent assessed.
2. A plan for improving the quality control mechanism for agricultural inputs and outputs is available for use by Africa countries and organizations to enhance cross-border trade and market on the continent.
3. Policy Brief

F. DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT

The duration of this assignment will be 30 consultancy days spread over two (2) months. The work shall be carried out over the period of 16th of July 2021 to 17th September 2021.

G. LOCATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The assignment will mostly be home-based but will require periodic on location at FARA Secretariat in Accra, Ghana when necessary. The consultant will be facilitated by FARA to work closely with the SROs who will link the consultant to the Country Level Focal Points.

H. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

The Consultant is expected to undertake the services with the highest standards of professional and ethical considerations, competence, and integrity. He/she is expected to deliver the outputs listed in Section C and D most effectively and efficiently within the assignment period stated in Section F of this document.

I. REPORTING

The Consultant will report to the Executive Director of FARA through the Director of Research and Innovation and the Policy Officer during the entire period of the assignment and on regular basis. The consultant will meet with the Director of Research and Innovation and the designated FARA staff at least
one week before the start of the assignment to be briefed on FARA’s expectations. The final report of the assignment is to be presented to FARA 14 Days after the presentation of the draft.

J. FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED BY FARA

FARA will provide the following information and facilities to the consultant:

1. Logistics
2. Any other relevant information required for the assignment
3. Technical assistance and facilitation by the policy officer at FARA when required.

K. FINANCING THE ASSIGNMENT

The Study would be financed as follows:

The schedule of payment is as specified below:

- 30% of the consultancy fee shall be paid upon submission and clearance of the Inception Report
- 50% of the consultancy fee shall be paid upon the submission and clearance of the Draft Report
- 20% of the consultancy fee shall be paid upon the submission and clearance of the Final Report

An inception meeting to be organized by FARA

L. QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE

The consultant must possess the following qualifications:

a) An advanced university degree in agricultural economics, economics, Agricultural Policy, social science, development studies, International Trade, or relevant academic qualification
b) At least eight (8) years post-qualification experience in agricultural sector policy development and analysis with experience on the African continent and the tier one countries
c) Excellent analytical skills as demonstrated by reports or working papers
d) Excellent writing skills evident in peer-review academic paper publications
e) Have a fair knowledge of FARA activities and interventions.
f) Be available for carrying out the assignment

M. APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND DEADLINE

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours 9h00 to 14h00 GMT. Submission of EOIs on the assignment must be delivered to the address below on or before 1st July 2021 to:

Dr. Yemi Akinbamijo,
Executive Director
Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)
PMB CT 173, Cantonment-Accra, Ghana
Email: recruitment@faraafrica.org
For further information and clarifications ONLY (please do not send applications to the address below):

Dr. Kwaku Antwi  
Policy Officer  
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FARA Affirmative Action Statement on Recruitment: there is no discrimination based on gender race, religion, ethnic orientation, disability, or health status.