



ECOWAS COMMISSION
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Regional Resilient Rice Value Chains Development Project in West Africa (REWARD) – ECOWAS regional operation

Sub-component 3.2 of the REWARD multinational program “Support to regional policy and regulatory reforms, and harmonization at ECOWAS level, for rice value chains competitive to imports”.

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Name of Project: REWARD – ECOWAS Regional Project

Terms of Reference (TORS) for Project Procurement Specialist – Individual Consultant

1. Background

About the ECOWAS Rice Agenda

In West Africa, the consumption of high-quality rice outstrips local supply resulting in continued importation of milled rice from Asia to meet demands. Increasing population growth, urbanization and changing consumer preferences have further widened the gap in supply, and no country in West Africa has been able to achieve rice self-sufficiency despite having the right agro-climatic conditions and water availability to meet regional demand. The region is one of the vulnerable regions globally, grappling with significant challenges stemming from its climate, demographic trends, institutional frameworks, economic conditions, environmental issues, and subsistence methods. With a population exceeding 360 million, over 55% of West Africans reside in rural areas, relying heavily on natural resources for their socio-economic development. In response to this, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has made strong commitments to transforming agriculture and enhancing food security and resilience.

In 2014, the authorities of the ECOWAS Commission adopted the ‘Rice Offensive’, a strategic framework to engender a sustainable and sustained revival of rice cultivation in West Africa and to provide support for the National Rice Development Strategies of Member States towards achieving rice self-sufficiency by 2025. To accelerate the implementation of the Rice Offensive, a Regional Rice Action Plan was developed in 2020 to ensure that the region meets the goal. To achieve this, ECOWAS has aligned with several development partners including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, GIZ, the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, FCDO, AGRA,



JICA/CARD, World Bank, and others. Together, a regional “ECOWAS Rice Observatory” (ERO) was jointly established as multi-stakeholder platform. ERO, housed at the ECOWAS Commission in Abuja, Nigeria, coordinates rice sector-related programs, public/private investments, and policy recommendations for key decision-makers. At the same time, national rice platforms are being established, comprised primarily of private sector stakeholders across the value chain, in addition to representation from research, government, and civil society to coordinate country-specific investments and policies.

More recently, with the Rice Offensive and Regional Action Plan (2020 - 2025) nearing its terms, the ECOWAS Commission has developed a Regional Rice Roadmap (2025 - 2035) with the support of its partners. It is an extension of the Rice Offensive and a unified framework to guide investments and targeted interventions in the development of the rice sector in West Africa for the next ten (10) years to achieve rice self-sufficiency.

In response to these challenges, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has made strong commitments to transforming agriculture and enhancing food security resilience. To address these priorities, ECOWAS has secured funding from the African Development Bank to implement the Rice Resilient Value Chains Development Project (REWARD) in West Africa.

Brief overview of the REWARD Programme

REWARD, a multinational investment initiative totaling approximately UA 500 million, stands as a regional rice development program to be financed by the AfDB over the 15 West African countries, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo. This includes (i) 14 National Projects (no in-country investment in Cape Verde since there is no rice production but it is impacted by regional policies and regulations for rice sub-sector) focused on rice production, productivity, transformation, and marketing; and (ii) two (2) regional operations to be executed by specific institutions and agencies: one led by ECOWAS, which will support policy and regulatory reforms and harmonization at both regional and national levels, and one led by AfricaRice for regional technical support to foster innovation in rice value chains.



Alignment of REWARD with Dakar 2. In January 2023, Heads of State from 34 African countries gathered in Dakar for the Summit jointly organized by the African Union (AU) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) on the theme "Feeding Africa: Food Sovereignty and Resilience". The Dakar Declaration resulting from the Summit was endorsed by a resolution of the 36th AU Summit in February 2023 by which the Heads of State committed to (i) sustainably increase the production and productivity of agricultural value chains primarily oriented towards the achievement of food sovereignty as defined in the Food and Nutrition Compacts, (ii) strengthen access to public finance and development partners, carry out reforms favourable to private sector investment and (iii) ensure the implementation of the Compacts under the aegis of National Presidential Councils according to a set schedule. The review of the Compacts revealed that rice has been praised by Heads of State as a major strategic commodity for their food sovereignty. In this respect, REWARD is one of the ECOWAS and AfDB's flagship operational responses to the financing of the Compacts of the 15 ECOWAS countries.

REWARD is designed in a group-based approach considering Grantees' / Borrowers' readiness. The first group includes 2 countries and the 2 regional organizations, namely: Bissau-Guinea, the Gambia, AfricaRice and ECOWAS (REWARD-G1). It has been approved by the Board of Governors of the African Development Bank on 20 November 2024. Each national and regional investment operation is implemented by its own Project Implementation Unit (PIU) under its own Executing Agency and is independent on a fiduciary standpoint. As a multinational programme, an overall activity framework is overarching the REWARD, structured around 4 components, namely:

Component 1 (country level): Develop sustainable and climate-resilient rice production systems to ensure adequate quantity and quality for millers, with 3 sub-components: Sub-component 1.1 - Develop sustainable and climate-resilient infrastructure and management services in rice production systems; Sub-component 1.2 - Improve availability and access to quality inputs, mechanization services, and knowledge for climate-resilient agriculture; and Sub-component 1.3 - Regional technical support to foster innovation in rice value chains (implemented by AfricaRice as country support).

Component 2 (country level): Promotion of rice processing and marketing of competitive locally produced rice, with 4 sub-components: Sub-component 2.1 - Develop/modernize processing infrastructure and enhance capacities of small farmers



and commercial actors throughout the value chain; Sub-component 2.2 - Develop information systems, innovative technologies (including digital), and consumer-oriented labels to improve market access; Sub-component 2.3: Promote private sector investment by supporting businesses and improving funding availability throughout the value chain; and Sub-component 2.4: Regional technical support to foster innovation in rice value chains (implemented by AfricaRice as country support).

Component 3 (Country + Regional level: ECOWAS regional policy support) -

Support policy and regulatory reforms, regional harmonization, for a competitive rice value chain against imports, with 2 sub-components: Sub-component 3.1 - Support to national policy and regulatory reforms for rice value chains competitive to imports; and Sub-component 3.2 -Support to regional policy and regulatory reforms, and harmonization at ECOWAS level, for rice value chains competitive to imports (sub-component 3.2 of the REWARD multinational program being the actual REWARD-ECOWAS regional project).

Component 4 (countries, AfricaRice and ECOWAS): Program coordination and management, as discussed and agreed with ECOWAS.

To implement the ECOWAS-led regional component of the REWARD, the ECOWAS Commission is seeking a Project Procurement Specialist, based at the Project Implementation Unit of REWARD in Abuja, Nigeria. The main objective is to ensure the effective execution of all procurement activities of the REWARD project implementation. He/she will report directly to the REWARD Project Coordinator under the overall supervision of the Director of Agriculture and Rural Development of the ECOWAS Commission.

2. Position Summary and Scope of Work

The Procurement Specialist will bring in-depth knowledge of best practices in global and regional procurement services to help guide the implementation of the project effectively. S/He will be responsible for supporting the REWARD PIU and overall ECOWAS Rice Agenda with the following key roles: management of procurement process, vendor management, Procurement reporting, capacity building and mentoring.

The role will initially be for One (1) year, with the possibility for yearly extensions until the project ending upon satisfactory performance by both ECOWAS and AfDB (no objection), and availability of budget.



3. Main Activities for the Assignment

The main activities for the assignment include but not limited to:

- a) Preparation of Project Procurement Plan for Goods, Intellectual Services and Works under Request for Bids, Request for Proposals and Request for Quotations.
- b) Maintain awareness of market conditions, including source lists, price availability and competitiveness, and ensure that costs are fair and reasonable prior to approving any purchase.
- c) Support the Technical Team in the preparation of Technical Specifications for Goods and TORs for intellectual services-In order to ensure compliance with set standards, regulations, procedures and process requisition in accordance with AfDB Procurement Regulations.
- d) Support the Technical Team in the preparation of bill of Quantities/ technical specifications for Works in order to ensure compliance with set standards, regulations, procedures and process requisition in accordance with AfDB Procurement Regulations.
- e) Prepare solicitation requests for Bidders/Vendors through drafting letters and Advertising of IFB
- f) Prepare Bidding Documents in accordance with the relevant method of procuring Goods/Works/Intellectual Services
- g) Coordinate the Receipt/Opening of bids exercise in line with the AfDB procedures.
- h) In conjunction with the relevant committee constituted by the Project Coordinator or Director, carry out detailed evaluation of Bids in accordance with the criteria set up in the bidding document.
- i) Prepare the evaluation report and present same to relevant authorities and the AfDB for "No Objection".
- j) Support in preparing Contract Documents for execution between the project and contractors or consultants.
- k) Support in monitoring implementation of the contracts to ensure that the agreed contract conditions are followed.
- l) Ensure that efficient procurement filing system is in place. He/she keep track of the status of each procurement activity – from request to receipt by the requester – ensuring that priorities are met.

Advisory Services on Procurement of Services:



- a) Preparation of Project Work Plans and Procurement Plan for Services under QCBS, QBS, CQ, IC, etc.
- b) Support the Technical Team in the preparation of Terms of Reference in order to ensure compliance with set standards, regulations, procedures and process requisition in accordance with AfDB Procurement Regulations.
- c) Solicit Consultants through selection method for intellectual services (including EOIs), seeking No Objection of the AfDB.
- d) Organize Pre-Proposal Conference where necessary
- e) Preparation of Request for Proposals for No Objection of AfDB.
- f) Assist in the Evaluation of EOIs and develop shortlist for AfDB No objection.
- g) Coordinate the Evaluation of Proposals.
- h) Prepare the evaluation report and obtain No Objection clearance from the AfDB; and provide support during all contract negotiations.
- i) Monitor proper implementation of contracts
- j) Assist in building up Consultants database
- k) Keep track of the status of each procurement activity – from request to receipt by the requester – ensuring that priorities are met.

Advisory Services on Implementation Supervision:

- a) Develop and discuss alternative solutions to identified problems.
- b) Assist in the application of the agreed corrective measures
- c) Provide training to the PIU on implementation matters covering procurement, report writing, etc.
- d) Conduct post-implementation review
- e) Participate at meetings aimed at improving project implementation

The Procurement Specialist will provide support and capacity building to PCU to ensure that they can prepare and submit a number of reports including the Procurement plan. In addition to any submissions that the PIU, ECOWAS, AfDB and other relevant stakeholders may require, the Procurement Specialist shall also make submissions to the Project Steering Committee of the following deliverables:

- a) For each fiscal year, an Annual Procurement Plan for the implementation of the Project activities;
- b) Monthly report of tasks performed, and deliverables achieved and next month work plan to be submitted on the 15th of the following month;



- c) Quarterly report on the implementation of the Procurement activities. Annual report on the implementation of the Procurement activities: The Procurement specialist shall prepare consolidated annual Progress Report covering progress towards achieving the objectives in this ToR as well as identified areas of weaknesses and strategies for improvement of procurement activities. The reports shall provide a brief but comprehensive end-of-month progress assessment. Tabulated and graphical representations of physical and financial progress compared with the work program and cash flow forecasts, relevant photographs and details of impediment to the works and proposals for overcoming them. The report will be assessed and appraised by the Project Coordinator.

All reports shall be in English and presented in hard and soft copies

4. Qualifications and Experience

- a) University Degree in Economics, Finance, Accountancy, Business Administration or related of study.
- b) The candidate must have at least 8 years of experience in Procurement with relevant experience of at least five 5 years in procurement in AfDB assisted projects or similar Multilateral Institution environment such as World Bank, EU, IsDB or similar organizations.
- c) S/he must have experience in preparing bidding documents for large contracts.
- d) S/he must have carried out similar responsibilities listed above
- e) Confidential handling of data and information
- f) Good organizational skills
- g) Innovative and possessing a positive attitude to change.
- h) Excellent communication and presentation skills, both oral and written English and /or French. Knowledge of a third other ECOWAS official language will be an added advantage.

5. Duration and Duty Station

The assignment will commence at completion of the selection process and upon contract signing. The project is expected to end in December 2029. The contract with the selected Project Procurement Specialist will last for a period of 12 months, with the possibility of further renewal, based on satisfactory performance and relevant rules. The duty station will be the REWARD PIU located within the ECOWAS Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development Offices in Abuja, Nigeria.



6. Reporting

The Project Procurement Specialist will be a full-time member of the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) and will report to the Project Coordinator.

At the conclusion of the assignment, the Project Procurement Specialist outputs will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- a) Professional competence
- b) Analytical, reasoning, organizational and communication skills
- c) Reliability and organization
- d) Output
- e) Quality of work produced.

7. Due Diligence

The Consultant shall perform the services in line with the terms of reference and carry out their services with due diligence, efficiency and economy according to the generally accepted techniques, practices, professionalism, and consulting standards recognized by Africa Development Bank. In respect of any matter relating to the services, the Consultant shall always act in respect of any matter relating to the services as a faithful adviser to DARD and shall always support and safeguard the DARD's legitimate interest.

8. Submission for Application

Application Package

- A letter of expression of interest / motivation, including the date of availability.
- A recent curriculum vitae providing details on professional experience and similar assignments.
- Three professional references (full name, current and previous functions, telephone, and email contacts);
- Certified copy of the highest diploma.
- Copies of work certificates or provision of services, as listed in the curriculum vitae.

The package must include supporting academic and other relevant work-related documentations in English or French to be delivered in a sealed envelope clearly marked the position being applied for or could be submitted by e-mail to the address below by not later than **XXX 2025 (5:00 pm WAT)**. The expression of interest must be in the form of a single PDF file. The ECOWAS Commission reserves the right not to consider applications that do not comply with the above submission conditions. Interested consultants can obtain additional information by writing to the following email



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addresses XXXX with the subject « REWARD Project Procurement Specialist - ECOWAS ».

Attn: Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development.
Annex River Plaza
496 Abogo Largema St
Central Business District
Abuja
Nigeria

Email: atraore@ecowas.int; badebowale@ecowas.int

9. Method of selection

The selection process will take place in two phases:

- CV screening and analysis: at the end of this phase, candidates will be ranked in order of merit based on the scores obtained in the CV evaluation. Only the most qualified candidate will be contacted for the interview phase.
- Interview phase: shortlisted candidates will be interviewed individually by a panel. The best candidate at the end of the interview will be recommended for contract negotiations.

Important Notes to applicants:

Only Shortlisted Candidates will be contacted for interviews.

ECOWAS Commission reserves the right not to proceed with this call for applications.