



**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
(Individual Consultants)
Coverage: Eastern and Central Africa**

**NAME OF PROGRAMME: The Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research
in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA)**

**TITLE OF ASSIGNMENT: Development of ASARECA Medium Term Operational
Plan 2 (2024 - 2028) and refreshing of the ASARECA Strategy and Results
Framework (A-SRF:2019-2028)**

A. Introduction

The Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) is a sub-regional not-for-profit intergovernmental organization comprising of 14 member countries namely: Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. ASARECA is strategically positioned to perform higher level convening, coordination, communicative, facilitative, catalytic, partnership brokerage, and advocacy roles to enhance sustainable agricultural transformation and economic growth in Eastern and Central Africa (ECA).

Implementation of ASARECA Agricultural Research and Development (AR4D) Programs has been guided by various strategic plans including: (i) the ASARECA Long-Term Strategic Plan of 1997; (ii) the Second ASARECA Strategic Plan (2007-2016, extended to 2018); and (iii) the ASARECA Strategy and Results Framework (A-SRF:2019-2028). These strategies have been implemented through five-year Operational Plans, namely: (i) the ASARECA Operational Plan I (2008-2013); (ii) the ASARECA Operational Plan 2 (2014-2018); and (iii) the Medium Term Operational Plan 1 (MTOPI-1: 2019-2023). The A-SRF adopts two planning periods: (i) MTOPI-1: 2019-2023; and (ii) MTOPI-2: 2024-2028. The implementation of the MTOPI-1 is expected to end by 31 December 2023, highlighting the need to start preparations for development of the next Operational Plan (MTOPI-2). It is also important to refresh the current A-SRF in order to align with the current trends and emerging priorities in the AR4D landscape. The current A-SRF has four thematic areas (i) integrated capacity strengthening; (ii) development and scaling out/up of technologies, innovations and management practices (TIMPs); (iii) policy advocacy, market analysis and institutional arrangements; and (iv) knowledge and information management. Each thematic area has specific outputs designed to achieve agricultural transformation in the sub-region.

B. Purpose of the Assignment

The purpose of this consultancy is to review the performance of MTOPI-1, develop MTOPI-2, and subsequently refresh the current ASARECA Strategy (2019-2028). The MTOPI-2 is anticipated to: (i) articulate AR4D regional strategies, priorities and research programs as well as impact pathways for agricultural transformation; (ii) form the basis for resource mobilization and budgetary allocations;

and (iii) facilitate implementation of thematic activities within the Secretariat and member countries. The Consultant is expected to set measurable goals and objectives that are clearly linked to ASARECA's vision and mission, specify the potential value for money (return on investment) of the planned thematic interventions, and specify knowledge management approaches for enhanced organizational learning and capacity development.

ASARECA now invites eligible Individual consultants to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested persons should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services. This should be done in form of a Curriculum Vitae (CV). The sections will be under Individual Consultant Selection (ICS) method set out in IFAD Project Procurement handbook (www.ifad.org/project-procurement).

C. The shortlisting criteria are:

The individual Consultant should have:

- (a) A PhD in any of the following: Biophysical sciences; Agricultural economics; Strategic management and planning; Natural resources management; or Social sciences.
- (b) At least 10 years of technical agricultural research experience in any of the above technical areas,
- (c) Proven experience in strategic planning, including development of institutional strategies and operational plans.
- (d) Deep knowledge of the external environment particularly in terms of AR4D development frameworks, AR4D priorities, stakeholders and donors
- (e) Undertaken five similar assignments in the previous 10 years in ECA.

The detailed Terms of Reference can be accessed at <https://www.asareca.org/announcements>

Any request for clarification on the REOI should be sent via e-mail to the address below not later than 4th March 2023 by 17:00 hours EAT. The client will provide responses to all clarification requests by 9th March, 2023 not later than 17:00 hours EAT

D. Application

Individual applicants should send their Expression of Interest and comprehensive Curriculum Vitae, indicating the names, addresses, e-mail address, their own telephone numbers, and telephone numbers of three referees by 20th March, 2023 at 10.00am to:

The Executive Director, ASARECA
Attn: Procurement Unit,
ASARECA,
Plot 5, Mpigi Road,
P O Box 765 Entebbe, Uganda.
E-mail : procurement@asareca.org and secretariat@asareca.org

NB

- ASARECA will not take responsibility for late Expressions of Interest
- Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy services for Development of the Medium Term Operational Plan 2 (2024—2028) and Refreshing ASARECA Strategy (2019 - 2028)

A. Introduction

The Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) is a sub-regional not-for-profit intergovernmental organization comprising of 14 member countries, namely Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. The core functions of the organization are to mobilize and coordinate human, physical, financial and institutional capital to implement research, extension, and training for agricultural transformation in the East and Central African sub-region. ASARECA is strategically positioned to perform higher level facilitative, supportive, coordination and advocacy roles to enhance sustainable agricultural transformation and economic growth in the Eastern and Central Africa (ECA) sub-region.

Implementation of ASARECA Agricultural Research and Development (AR4D) Programs has been guided by various strategic plans including: (i) the ASARECA Long-Term Strategic Plan of 1997; (ii) the Second ASARECA Strategic Plan (2007-2016, extended to 2018); and (iii) the ASARECA Strategy and Results Framework (A-SRF:2019-2028). These strategies have been implemented through five-year Operational Plans, namely: (i) the ASARECA Operational Plan I (2008-2013); (ii) the ASARECA Operational Plan 2 (2014-2018); and (iii) the Medium Term Operational Plan 1 (MTOPI-1: 2019-2023). The A-SRF adopts two planning periods: (i) MTOPI-1: 2019-2023; and (ii) MTOPI-2: 2024-2028.

The implementation of the MTOPI-1 is expected to end by 31 December 2023, highlighting the need to start preparations for development of the next Operational Plan (MTOPI-2). It is also important to refresh the current A-SRF in order to align with the current trends and emerging priorities in the AR4D landscape. The current A-SRF has four thematic areas (i) integrated capacity strengthening; (ii) development and scaling out/up of technologies, innovations and managements practices (TIMPs); (iii) policy advocacy, market analysis and institutional arrangements; and (iv) knowledge and information

management. Each thematic area has specific outputs designed to achieve agricultural transformation in the sub-region. To implement the A-SRF, in the next five years, ASARECA intends to develop its MTOP-2. This MTOP-2 shall be well positioned to respond to the CAADP agenda and the wider AR4D agenda within the sub-region. It is also expected to articulate ASARECA's value proposition that aligns with national, sub-regional, continental and global frameworks for Agricultural transformation.

B. Purpose of the Assignment

The purpose of the consultancy is to review performance of MTOP-1, develop MTOP-2, and subsequently refresh the current ASARECA Strategy (2019-2028). The MTOP-2 is anticipated to: (i) articulate AR4D regional strategies, priorities and research programs as well as impact pathways for agricultural transformation; (ii) form the basis for resource mobilization and budgetary allocations; and (iii) facilitate implementation of thematic activities within the Secretariat and member countries. The Consultant is expected to set measurable goals and objectives that are clearly linked to ASARECA's vision and mission, specify the potential value for money (return on investment) of the planned thematic interventions, and specify knowledge management approaches for enhanced organizational learning and capacity development.

C. Objective of the Consultancy

The overall objective of the consultancy is to review performance of MTOP-1, develop MTOP-2, and subsequently refresh the current ASARECA Strategy (2019-2028).

Specifically, the Consultant will:

1. Review and assess progress in the implementation of the current MTOP-1 focusing on: (i) achievement of targets set for key performance indicators, and (ii) challenges in implementation.
2. Conduct a situational analysis by examining the internal and external factors affecting ASARECA. The situational analysis is anticipated to: (i) define key and emerging priorities and/or trends in the AR4D landscape within the ECA region and design interventions for delivery of thematic results based on identified priorities; (ii) identify key drivers for anticipated thematic impacts for agricultural transformation; and (iii) identify critical risks and assumptions anticipated to have significant bearing on the envisaged outcomes and impacts.
3. Conduct stakeholder consultations to inform the design of MTOP-2. The consultations will include discussions with: (i) NARS such as NARIs, Universities, Agriculture and related Ministries, CGIAR, Extension Agencies, NGOs/CSO; (ii) development partners; (iii) private sector; (iv) farmer organizations; and (v) RECs and AUC. The consultations will entail a stakeholder consultative workshop as well as meetings with selected stakeholders.

4. Develop a consolidated MTOP-2 for the period 2024-2028, including estimated human resource, associated skills mix, and develop possible funding scenarios (low, medium and high) for implementation of MTOP-2 (by thematic area and year).
5. Review, validate and sharpen the current A-SRF, and update it to incorporate emerging priorities.
6. Ensure that A-SRF is well aligned to the major regional, continental and global frameworks including: (i) the CAADP 10-year Results Framework which is the overarching continental agriculture development framework; (ii) the complementary African Union Malabo Declaration on accelerated African agricultural growth and transformation in line with the AUC/NEPAD Agency Implementation Strategy and Roadmap; (iii) the agricultural sector and related strategies of the relevant Regional Economic Communities; (iv) the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa; (v) the Science Agenda for Agriculture in Africa; (vi) the framework for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Africa; (vii) the relevant United Nations Sustainable Development Goals; and (viii) strategic priorities of selected development partners.
7. Develop an appropriate organizational structure and operational modalities.
8. Facilitate a validation workshop to guide the development of MTOP-2 and validate the refreshed Strategy (2019-2028).

D. Major Elements of the MTOP-2: 2024-2028

ASARECA anticipates that the refreshed A-SRF and MTOP-2 will articulate its management of resources for sustainable agricultural development for enhanced livelihoods in the sub-region. In this regard, MTOP-2 is expected to guide ASARECA's operations based on a robust results framework and work plan. To achieve this, the Consultant will ensure that MTOP-2 document articulates:

1. Lessons learnt from the implementation of the current A-SRF and MTOP-1, and show how MTOP-2 will apply these lessons;
2. SMART objectives and strategies;
3. Major thematic areas as well as detailed activities under each theme;
4. Cost estimates for low, medium and optimal funding scenarios for: (i) technical research themes; (ii) technical support services; (iii) management and administration support services; (iv) Governance; and (v) Capital Expenditure.
5. Institutional and implementation modalities for its effective implementation
6. Robust Results Framework with clear hierarchy of objectives – impact, outcomes and outputs, as well as key performance indicators for tracking its implementation progress; and

7. Critical risks and main assumptions that will guide its implementation.

E. Scope of Work

The Consultant is expected to support ASARECA in the achievement of its mandate by developing an implementable MTOP-2. The specific tasks are highlighted in the following sections:

(a) Operational and Strategic Issues

To enable the ASARECA address these strategic issues, there is need for the Consultant to:

1. Review all the ASARECA Strategy and Operational Plan documents, as well as scan and document the mega-trends in the AR4D landscape in the ECA sub-region, continent and globally;
2. Review and update (if necessary) ASARECA's niche and thematic focus in AR4D in the region, strategic intervention areas, anticipated outputs and outcomes (as outlined in the A-SRF) including development of trackable Results Framework that is likely to position ASARECA on its competitive niche within the sub-region;
3. Conduct stakeholder analysis and identify critical stakeholder partnerships/networks in terms of comparative advantage, geographical focus and areas of work for better coordination and minimal duplication of efforts;
4. Identify priority flagship programs and projects for the thematic areas proposed during the consultations and provide budget projections and the associated funding scenarios;
5. Assess the current staffing levels and clearly define the optimal human resource package needed to ensure smooth implementation of MTOP-2 and develop the organizational and management structure;
6. Develop a draft MTOP-2 document, organize for validation workshop, and prepare a summary of the Draft for presentation to ASARECA management and stakeholders;
7. Prepare final MTOP-2 document that includes the views of a wider consultative group, and submit to ASARECA Management.

(b) Capacity Strengthening and Integration

1. **To enable ASARECA implement inclusive stakeholder engagement, strategic visioning and policy formulation strategic actions, there is need for the Consultant to undertake the identification and development of requisite:**
 - (a) Stakeholder engagement capacities and competencies for different stakeholder categories at different levels;

- (b) Strategic visioning, priority setting and programming capacities and competencies for different stakeholder categories at different levels;
 - (c) Policy and regulatory framework analysis, harmonization and advocacy capacities and competencies.
2. **To enable ASARECA commence generation, access and utilization of agricultural knowledge and information, there is need for the Consultant to undertake the identification and development of requisite capacities and competencies for:**
 - (a) Generation of agricultural transformation knowledge and information; and
 - (b) Access and utilization of agricultural transformation knowledge and information.
 3. **To enable ASARECA undertake effective institutional development, management and performance monitoring and evaluation, there is need for the Consultant to undertake the identification and development of requisite capacities and competencies for:**
 - (a) Effective institutional development and management and
 - (b) Performance monitoring and evaluation.

(c) Agricultural Transformative Technologies and Innovations

To enable ASARECA support the development and scaling up of TIMPs, there is need for the Consultant to:

1. Identify and prioritize the current regional emerging constraints to: (i) accelerated sustainable and inclusive agricultural transformation in the ECA sub region; (ii) promotion, uptake and widespread utilization of gender responsive and climate-smart TIMPs; (iii) development and upgrading of gender responsive and youth focused regional agricultural value chains; and (iv) establishment of private sector driven agribusinesses.
2. Identify current regional policies that affect the development, dissemination/transfer of TIMPs across ASARECA countries and propose strategic actions to mitigate the challenges identified.
3. Identify and prioritize challenges in development of plant and animal genetic resources within ECA and propose a roadmap for operationalization of regional plant and animal genetic resources centres.
4. Propose priority strategic actions to support dissemination, commercialization and scaling of TIMPs under MTOP-2 to respond to emerging regional agricultural challenges.
5. Identify strategic partners for development, dissemination, scaling and commercialization of priority TIMPs.

6. Identify research and development gaps and priorities from the NARIs in the ECA (by country).

(d) Enabling Policy, Functional Markets, Institutional Arrangements, Market Access and Trade

To enable ASARECA support and advocate for establishment of enabling policy environment, functional markets and transformative institutions and institutional arrangements, there is need for the Consultant to:

1. Identify emerging issues in AR4D policy, institutions, and markets.
2. Identify constraints to: (i) implementation of AR4D policies and regulatory frameworks; and (ii) functionality of AR4D institutions and markets.
3. Identify key AR4D policies for harmonization (including seed trade regulations).
4. Propose strategic actions for engagement of RECs (EAC, COMESA, IGAD, SADC, ECCAS) and other strategic partners in addressing regional AR4D policy, institutional and trade challenges.
5. Develop guidelines for transfer and exchange of germplasm across the ASARECA member countries
6. Develop guidelines for ASARECA to facilitate member countries to trade in agricultural inputs (including seed), and commodities;
7. Propose strategic actions for supporting member countries in formulation of AR4D policies, laws, regulations, strategies and guidelines.
8. Identify regional AR4D institutions and institutional frameworks and develop strategies for capacity strengthening.
9. Propose strategic actions for strengthening AR4D input and output markets and improving market systems, market access and competitive advantage.
10. Identify policy strategies for dealing with transboundary issues including invasive species.
11. Propose strategic actions for strengthening policy research and analysis to generate data for use in formulating evidence-based policies.
12. Propose strategic actions for improving implementation of AR4D policies, laws and regulations.
13. Identify strategies for improving engagement between policy makers, researchers, farmers and private sector to effectively contribute to policy formulation and implementation; and trade negotiations.

(e) Knowledge and Information Management

1. **To enable ASARECA establish and manage regional technology and information clearing house, there, there is need for the Consultant to:**
 - (a) Identify approaches for effectively managing regional technology and information clearing house.

- (b) Identify credible data and information quality assurance approaches and ensure adherence to intellectual property rights.
 - (c) Identify and prioritize the regional challenges limiting effective technology and information clearing, quality assurance and adherence to intellectual property rights in the ECA sub region.
2. **To enable ASARECA establish and manage regional data bases, system models and decision support tools, there is need for the Consultant to:**
 - (a) Identify mechanisms for operationalization of regional data bases of TIMPs, specialized human and infrastructure capacities, institutions and programmes.
 - (b) Identify mechanisms to ease access to tested system models, modelling approaches and decision-support tools.
 3. **To enable ASARECA establish and manage functional platforms for communicating and exchanging knowledge and information, there is need for the Consultant to:**
 - (a) Identify mechanisms for establishing dynamic and functional platforms to facilitate effective management and sharing of agricultural data, knowledge and information.
 - (b) Identify user-friendly cutting edge ICT environment to support effective access to agricultural data, knowledge and information, feedback and demand articulation mechanisms.

F. Methodology for Work

In preparing MTOP-2, the Consultant is expected to develop a detailed methodology and implementation schedule to guide the process. This will include, but not limited to detailed review of documents such as: A-SRF; MTOP-1; ASARECA Performance Reports; ASARECA Governance Manual; ASARECA Constitution; MTOP-1 Achievements and ASARECA Operations Manual.

G. Deliverables and Reporting

Key deliverables of the assignment include:

1. An inception report detailing the Consultant's understanding of the assignment (TOR), including details of the proposed methodology and implementation plan.
2. A process report leading to the development of MTOP-2 and refreshed A-SRF.
3. Draft MTOP-2 and refreshed A-SRF documents for validation.
4. Final MTOP-2 integrating inputs from the stakeholder validation meeting.
5. Final refreshed A-SRF (2018-2029) document.

H. Time frame

The total consultancy period for the task will be 50 working-days and spread over a period of 3 months from the date of commencement.

I. Qualification and Experience

The individual Consultant should have:

- (a) PhD in biophysical sciences; PhD in agricultural economics, PhD in strategic management and planning; PhD in natural resources management; or PhD in social sciences.
- (b) At least 10 years of technical agricultural research experience in any of the above technical areas,
- (c) Proven experience in strategic planning, including development of institutional strategies and operational plans.
- (d) Deep knowledge of the external environment particularly in terms of AR4D development frameworks, AR4D priorities, stakeholders and donors
- (e) Undertaken five similar assignments in the previous 10 years in ECA.

J. Application

The Consultant will be selected under the Individual Consultant Selection Method. The individual applicants should send their expression of interest and comprehensive Curriculum Vitae, indicating the names, addresses, e-mail address and telephone numbers of three referees by 20th March 2023 at 10.00am:

The Executive Director, ASARECA

Attn: Procurement Unit,

ASARECA,

Plot 5, Mpigi Road,

P O Box 765 Entebbe, Uganda.

E-mail : procurement@asareca.org and secretariat@asareca.org

K. Reporting

The Consultant will report to the Executive Director of ASARECA.