

**ECOWAS COMMISSION**

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Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food

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**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS**

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**For the Selection of an Actuary for Risk Finance Component within  
the WEST AFRICA FOOD SYSTEM RESILIENCE PROGRAM (FSRP)**

**Reference :** ARAA/FSRP/2023/SCI/015

**Publication date :** April 5th 2023

**Deadline for Submission :** May 5th, 2023, 5 :00 PM GMT

## 1. Background

The ECOWAS is home to more than 360 million inhabitants of whom about 55% live in rural areas. More than 30% of the population remains in extreme poverty (below the international poverty line of US\$1.90 PPP per day) and around 60% of the poor derive their livelihoods in part or entirely from agriculture. The situation is further complicated by climate change's impact on food production by exerting pressure on average yields and increasing production volatility. Its effects are projected to intensify drastically in the coming decades. The current decline in food security is primarily driven by complex interactions of climate change, population growth, an eroding natural resource base, the incidence of conflict impacting market functioning and even harvest in some countries.

The World Bank's Food System Resilience Program (FSRP) is a large regional investment project (Investment Project Financing Operation) designed as a multi-phase programmatic approach (MPA) to increase preparedness against food insecurity and improve the resilience of food systems in participating countries. Within FSRP's project components, risk financing activities are in sub-component C3.1 with the purpose of strengthening the capacity of the Regional Food Safety Reserve (RFSR) to respond to food crises with an innovative finance arrangement as a backstop to the reserve. The risk finance instrument will be the first of its kind as the RFSR responds to food insecurity induced by wider source of food crisis: climate events, conflict, health crisis (Ebola, Covid-19), sudden-onset price shock (e.g., 2008 food crisis). Additionally, several ex-ante and ex-post agriculture and food security risk management and risk finance initiatives exist in West Africa at country and regional levels. Thus, the need to strengthen coordination and collaboration to proactively manage risk and strengthen financial resilience to agri-food systems shocks.

ECOWAS Commission is seeking an actuary to join the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) for the risk financing component of FSRP. The actuary will work closely with the residential advisor of this project to oversee the technical aspects of the risk solution and play an instrumental role in the operationalization of the selected instrument in coordination with other regional partners and the World Bank team.

## 2. Brief presentation of the program

Initiated as part of the implementation of the region's commitments, the development objective of the West African Food System Resilience Program (FASRP) is to increase food insecurity preparedness and improve the resilience of food system actors, priority landscapes and value chains in the program areas.

The first phase of the Program covers four (4) countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Togo) and regional actions carried out by ECOWAS, CILSS and CORAF. The Program is financed by the World Bank at a cost of about 570 million dollars over a period of five (5) years. It is organized around the following five (5) components:

**Component 1 (managed by CILSS): Digital Advisory Services for the Prevention and Management of Agricultural and Food Crises** with the main objectives of (i) improving decision support systems with demand-driven information services to increase the effectiveness of agricultural and food crisis prevention and management, by integrating data and leveraging science, innovation, and advanced technologies; and (ii) strengthening regional capacity and institutional sustainability, as well as capacity to adapt to climate change.

**Component 2 (managed by CORAF): Sustainability and adaptive capacity of the productive base of the Food System** whose main objectives are: (i) to strengthen national and regional agricultural research systems; (ii) to strengthen the policy environment for landscape governance (inclusive multi-sectoral policies and regulations to avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation); and (iii) to

create/strengthen landscape units under integrated management capable of sustainably achieving multiple objectives (food production, provision of ecosystem services, protection of biodiversity, and improvement of local livelihoods).

**Component 3 (managed by ECOWAS): Regional Food Market Integration and Trade** whose main objectives are: (i) to support the preparation and implementation of sound regional regulations and policies to facilitate trade in agricultural goods and inputs within and across national borders in West Africa through key corridors, (ii) to consolidate the food reserve system; and (iii) to support the development of strategic regional value chains, with the potential for tangible positive impacts on regional food security and nutrition.

Specifically, the activities to be carried out by the ECOWAS Department of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources are as follows

1. Facilitate trade across major corridors and consolidate the food reserve system:
  - a. Oversee the development and implementation of the ECOWAS Agricultural Trade and Market Scorecard (EATM-Scorecard);
  - b. To strengthen and operationalize the ECOWAS West Africa Rice Observatory by improving its capacity for coordination, data collection and regular communication on rice value chain development;
  - c. Stimulate harmonization of regional agricultural trade policies on critical food system resilience issues;
  - d. Support ECOWAS multi-stakeholder policy dialogue and consultation. The FSRP will support ECOWAS' facilitation capacity to organize inclusive mechanisms for multi-stakeholder dialogue and consultation, negotiations related to the continental free trade area and the World Trade Organization (WTO);
  - e. Improve the performance of regional food security reserves at all three levels (local, national and Regional Food Security Reserve - RFSR).
2. Support for the development of strategic and regional value chains:
  - a. Improving the organization and financing of strategic regional value chains;
  - b. Promote agricultural competitiveness and market infrastructure, through support to regional agricultural trade platforms;
  - c. Strengthen multi-stakeholder coordination and promote an enabling environment for the private sector.

**Component 4** is the **Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC)**, which is a funding mechanism for eligible expenditures in the event of an emergency precipitated by a natural disaster. Activating this component allows for the rapid disbursement of funds to reduce infrastructure damage, ensure business continuity, and recover more quickly from a disaster. Following a major disaster, the affected participating country may request the World Bank to channel resources from other PRSF components to the CERC. As a condition of disbursement, an Emergency Response Manual (ERM) will be developed for each country, stipulating fiduciary, safeguard, monitoring, and reporting requirements related to the use of the CERC, as well as any other essential coordination and implementation provisions.

**Component 5 (managed by ECOWAS):** This component concerns the **management of the Program** which will delegate the technical work under components 1 and 2 to the relevant mandated organizations (mainly CILSS for component 1 and CORAF for component 2). Component 5 will ensure effective management of the Program and careful monitoring of performance and impact.

In order to effectively coordinate Component 3 of the program, ECOWAS plans to mobilize a consultant, an **expert in regional integration and trade policy** to strengthen the PRSP coordination team. The consultant will be based in Abuja, Nigeria, in the Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development

(DARD) of the ECOWAS Commission.

The present terms of reference describe the conditions for the recruitment of this consultant within the framework of the FSRP.

### **3. Job description**

The Actuary will report to the FSRP Regional Coordinator at the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF /ECOWAS) and work closely with the World Bank team.

#### **3.1- Scope of Work**

The actuary will be responsible for the following activities:

- Assist in and review the feasibility study on de-risking the regional food reserve and provide inputs to the design of viable risk solutions to address food crisis due to various triggering events including but not limited to climate-induced production shortfalls, supply chain disruption, price volatility and conflicts drawing on sound actuarial principles and the expertise in quantitative risk management; independently validate the proposed calculations;
- Provide leadership in co-shaping a systematic framework with the World Bank team for assessing and demonstrating the extent to which the selected risk transfer solution provides value for money for ECOWAS and donors compared to alternatives
- Assist in and review projection and risk models based on discussions with project stakeholders, market players (e.g. potential insurers, reinsurers and investors, etc.) and opine on whether the proposed model meets the industry standards for a risk transfer transaction. This will include a review of the underlying data, of the index to be used for triggering, as well as the documentation and risk modelling results;
- Apply advanced actuarial techniques to support decisions on the risk transfer product development, pricing, and market placement that meets the needs and objectives of the project;
- Provide inputs to and maintain updating the risk transfer instrument implementation handbook in compliance with actuarial procedures and in alignment with the project manual of procedures
- Administer the risk finance instrument backstopping the strategic grain reserve to ensure technical, financial soundness and product sustainability;
- Coordinate with external actuary firms, brokers and other stakeholders supporting underpinning analytical work, preparation and market placement of the risk transfer product
- Support the PIU through analytical and advisory guidance to help set the program right, manage stakeholder relationships
- Assess the technical gap and establish the training needs of key RFSR staffs involved in the risk transfer transaction in close collaboration with World Bank technical support team
- Collaborate with World Bank team other technical experts to provide capacity building activities/seminars/workshops on the design, development, and adoption of risk finance instrument as well as continuous capacity development in the needs-based critical areas
- Develop internal data and analytical capacity to operationalize risk finance projects in ECOWAS by 1) identifying gaps in the database/analytical infrastructure 2) building workable spreadsheets with clear step-to-step instructions for data recording and analysis 3) making recommendations on future investments

### 3.2- Qualifications

- Minimum graduate degree in mathematics, actuarial, insurance, engineering or other relevant technical field
- Minimum of five years of experience in structuring and execution of parametric risk transfer products
- Expertise in data quality and modeling aspect of the related financial instruments
- Experience in working with public entities on risk transfer is a plus;
- Excellent understanding of disaster risk financing and food security issues
- Knowledge of financial markets, financial risk management instruments, preferably of public and private climate related financial instruments (e.g., contingent financing, traditional reinsurance, parametric reinsurance, catastrophe bonds, insurance-linked securities) and catastrophe risk pools in emerging markets and developing economies
- Strong computer skills to develop user-friendly/punchy analyses/presentations (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) along with excellent presentation skills demonstrating the ability to present the results of complex analytical output to a variety of audiences with different levels of technical knowledge and experience
- Fluent in English and French
- Willingness to travel and work from the ECOWAS office in country X as needed.

## 4. General conditions for the position

### 4.1 Eligibility and qualifications

The ECOWAS Commission, through the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF) hereby invites natural persons to express their interest in providing the required services by providing information demonstrating that they possess the required qualifications and relevant experience to carry out the mission. Qualification and experience criteria better described in the terms of reference.

The attention of interested consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers", July 2016 ("Government Procurement Regulations"), which sets out the World Bank's conflict of interest policy.

### 4.2 Location, duration and start of the mission

- The Expert will be based in Lomé, Togo, at the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF/ECOWAS);
- The duration of the assignment is for the life of the Project after a six-month probationary period; A consultant contract will be signed for renewable 12-month periods over the life of the Project subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory performance and the needs of the Project;
- The start of the mission is envisaged for the second quarter of 2023;
- The position is full time;
- The Consultant is expected to refrain from any situation that could place him/her in a conflict of interest in the context of the assignment.

### 4.3 Application file

The application files consist of :

- A signed letter of interest, including the time frame for availability;
- A recent signed resume detailing professional experience and similar assignments;
- Three professional references (first and last name, current and past positions, email and phone contacts);
- Certified copy of highest degree;
- Copies of work or service certificates listed in the resume.

### 4.4 Receipt of applications

- Deadline for receipt of applications: **May 5th, 2023, 5 :00 PM GMT**
- Submission links: Entries will be submitted by download to Dropbox <https://www.dropbox.com/request/V06CGNnMfUYF2WSGiN89>
- Application format: The application must be in the form of a PDF file.

RAAF reserves the right not to consider applications that do not meet the above submission requirements.

### 4.5 Selection Process

A consultant will be selected according to the individual consultant selection method described in the "Procurement Regulations." of the World Bank. An interview to assess knowledge, skills and abilities may be arranged with the best candidates. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. RAAF reserves the right to cancel this selection process at any point of time.

### 4.6 Request for further information

Interested consultants can obtain further information by writing to the following e-mail addresses: [procurement@araa.org](mailto:procurement@araa.org) cc: [ctienon@araa.org](mailto:ctienon@araa.org), [mnakorba@araa.org](mailto:mnakorba@araa.org) with the subject "**SCI015- FSRP- Actuary for Risk Finance Component "**

**The Executive Director**

**SALIFOU Ousseini**