

Call for applications for the recruitment of the Facilitator of RESCAR-AOC

Opening date: July 12, 2021

Closing date: July 22, 2021

Background

The West and Central Africa Network for Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services (RESCAR-AOC) aims to ensure better mobilization of the potential of agricultural advisory services for the achievement of sustainable development in West and Central Africa (WCA). It was born out of the realization that a regional approach to the challenges of agricultural advisory services can add value to national efforts. The issues and problems of rural development are similar in several countries. The regionalization of the economy, policies and development actions is increasingly strong, supported by the actions of regional development agencies (ECOWAS and CEMAC). Strengthening exchanges, cross-learning and synergies would make agricultural advisory actors more efficient and innovative.

The overall objective of RESCAR-AOC is to contribute to improving the performance and sustainability of agricultural and rural advisory services in all their diversity. Its specific objective is to promote exchanges between agricultural and rural advisory actors at national and regional levels. Its action is structured around four main axes: (i) knowledge management, (ii) professionalization of agricultural advisory services, (iii) advocacy and strategic dialogue, and (iv) networking and partnerships. Gender and digitalization are cross-cutting themes in these different areas. RESCAR-AOC is a member of the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) and the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS). It adheres to the principles of subsidiarity for activities carried out at global, continental or national levels. It is the umbrella organization for national agricultural advisory services in WCA and facilitates their development and interaction.

Started in 2010, the institutional and operational deployment of the network is progressively taking place. This process accelerated in 2020 with the installation of the headquarters in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso); the institutional strengthening with support from GFRAS; the beginning of the steps for its legalization and the first participations in the steering and implementation of projects. Thus, RESCAR-AOC is involved in the SustainSAHEL project - *Synergistic use and protection of natural resources for rural livelihoods through the systematic integration of crops, shrubs and livestock in the Sahel*. In particular, he leads the work package n°2 on co-innovation and capacity development. SustainSAHEL is funded by the European Union, coordinated by FIBL and covers the period 2020-2024. RESCAR-AOC is also part of a consortium with CIRAD, IRAM and Inter-réseaux that is piloting the project "*Renewing agricultural advisory services to support agro-ecological transitions in family farming in Sub-Saharan Africa*" (ACOTAF). This initiative covers the period 2020-2023 and is funded by the French Cooperation. RESCAR-AOC's contribution to ACOTAF focuses on facilitating learning, developing synergies between projects/programs in different regions and countries, and providing the basis for the sustainability and dissemination of project results. In addition, in 2020, RESCAR-AOC entered into a partnership with the Developing Local Extension Capacities (DLEC) project and the support from USAID to support the modernization of agricultural advisory services in Guinea.

RESCAR-AOC must now strengthen its operational capacities to ensure that this momentum is sustained and contributes to the achievement of its objectives. This includes strengthening its institutional set-up and mobilizing adequate competences to deploy an innovative and sustainable business model that will enable the network to meet the expectations of its members and other stakeholders in improving the resilience of agricultural and food systems in West and Central Africa. The recruitment of a Facilitator is therefore in line with this perspective.

Mission and Responsibilities of the Facilitator

The Facilitator ensures the organizational, institutional and operational deployment of RESCAR-AOC by developing appropriate strategies and actions for membership consolidation, and effective and efficient implementation of the strategic and operational plan. He/she has solid experience in facilitating multi-stakeholder and multi-scalar processes focused on performance and impact. He/she will drive and animate regional dynamics to respond to the challenges of foresight and renewal of agricultural advisory services in line with demand. He/she will accompany change through capacity building and the development of methodological innovations enabling members to improve their performance. The Facilitator ensures the efficient participation of RESCAR-AOC in the projects and partnerships in which it is engaged. The Facilitator develops initiatives to mobilize resources (funding, skills, goods and services) necessary for the effective functioning and sustainability of the Network. The Facilitator develops and coordinates medium and large-scale projects, mobilizes and/or supports RESCAR-AOC staff and members and works with partners on joint initiatives.

The Facilitator will assist the RESCAR-AOC Steering Committee in consolidating the network's insertion in the regional agricultural innovation and knowledge system. To this end, he/she will work to develop synergies and functional and programmatic relationships with other actors (research, development, training) and stakeholders in the agricultural and food systems. The Facilitator is accountable to the RESCAR-AOC Steering Committee and is required to report regularly on his/her initiatives and activities. The Facilitator receives guidance from the Steering Committee and is responsible for implementing it in a transparent manner.

Frequent Tasks

Under the direct authority of the Steering Committee, the RESCAR-AOC Facilitator will conduct the following tasks in a professional and ethical manner:

1. **Facilitate the mobilization, ownership and active participation** of RESCAR-AOC members in the development of initiatives to operationalize its mission and ensure the achievement of the network's objectives;
2. Ensure the **efficient implementation of RESCAR-AOC strategic and operational plans and report on progress and results** to the Steering Committee;
3. Coordinate **RESCAR-AOC participation in ACOTAF, SustainSAHEL and other related or similar initiatives**;
4. Undertake **fundraising initiatives**;
5. Implement a **strategy to make RESCAR-AOC a learning, proactive and sustainable organization with a dynamic and innovative business model**
6. Develop **functional and programmatic linkages between RESCAR-AOC and other actors in the regional agricultural innovation and knowledge system**;
7. Lead **regional dynamics to renew agricultural advisory services and strengthen their participation** in improving the performance of agricultural and food systems;
8. Facilitate **synergies and subsidiarity between RESCAR-AOC and agricultural advisory development initiatives** at national, regional and international levels;
9. **Coordinate the administrative and financial management** of RESCAR-AOC, and the implementation of the decisions of its Steering Committee.

What you will bring:

- i. Knowledge of the issues and problems of sustainable agricultural development in West and Central Africa;
- ii. Knowledge of RESCAR-AOC dynamics and agricultural advisory renewal initiatives at national, continental and global levels is desirable;

- iii. Solid experience in facilitating professional networks, multi-stakeholder processes, and supporting the development and scaling up of innovations in the agricultural sector;
- iv. Conceptual and practical knowledge of agricultural advisory services, agro-ecological transitions, agricultural innovation systems, and sustainable development
- v. Mastery of the issues of agro-ecology, gender, digital, and risk and disaster management in agricultural advisory services
- vi. Eight or more years of experience in strategic planning, design and management, including monitoring and evaluation of regional or international programs related to agricultural advisory services, sustainable agriculture, and agribusiness
- vii. Skills in leadership, development and management of partnerships with actors in the agricultural innovation system (producers' organizations, agricultural research and training, government, private sector, etc.)
- viii. Experience in capacity development, knowledge management, advocacy, resource mobilization and interactions with development agencies;
- ix. PhD or Master's degree in agricultural sciences, rural sociology, communication for development or other related discipline
- x. Scientific and technical writing and analytical skills
- xi. Experience in administrative and financial management of development organizations
- xii. Good command (written and oral) of French and English. Knowledge of Spanish or Portuguese would be an advantage.

In addition, you must be a national of a West or Central African country and be based, or willing to relocate, in Ouagadougou where RESCAR-AOC's headquarters are located.

What do we offer?

A 2-year Burkinabe employment contract, renewable in case of satisfactory performance. Working conditions and environment conducive to professional and personal development. You will work in a small multicultural and multidisciplinary team including members and partners of RESCAR-AOC. You will receive a competitive salary in relation to the level and requirements of the position.

Application

Candidates interested in this position are requested to submit an application including: (i) a letter of motivation (maximum one page) explaining how the candidate's background and professional experience relate to the specific duties of the position to be filled; (ii) a detailed curriculum vitae (maximum 5 pages) accompanied by a photo; (iii) a copy of your passport or national identity card, (iv) certified copies of university degrees; (v) salary expectations and, (vi) names and addresses of three professional references (including the head of the applicant's current or previous organization or the applicant's direct supervisor/superior at his/her current or previous place of employment).

Complete applications should be sent by July 22, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. GMT via email to rescar.aoc@gmail.com with a copy to p.djamen@gmail.com and amadou.ndiaye@ugb.edu.sn Please include in the subject line of the email the title "RESCAR-AOC Facilitator Application." For more information on this opportunity, write to p.djamen@gmail.com and amadou.ndiaye@ugb.edu.sn.

RESCAR-AOC is an equal opportunity employer. Women are strongly encouraged to apply. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for the next steps of the recruitment process.