

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS – [R-EOI/PME/09/01]

### Terms of Reference for Consultancy Services to Conduct a Monitoring and Evaluation Baseline Study among RUFORUM Universities in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa

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#### I. Background

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a consortium of 25 universities (12 full members and 13 associate members) in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa (ESA) established in 2004. It is registered as an International Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with the mandate to oversee graduate training and networks in the region. RUFORUM recognizes the important and largely unfulfilled role that universities play in contributing to the well-being of small-scale farmers and economic development of countries throughout the sub-Saharan Africa region. This contribution is made through quality training of graduates entering the rural development workforce and the production and dissemination of demand-driven, development-oriented research that is defined and applied through participatory processes linking researchers, farmers, policy-makers, and business.

RUFORUM sees a vibrant agricultural sector linked to African universities which can produce high-performing graduates and high-quality research responsive to the demands of Africa's farmers for innovations and able to generate sustainable livelihoods and national economic development. Its mission is to strengthen the capacities of universities to foster innovations responsive to needs of small-holder farmers through the training of high quality researchers, ensuring that graduates will have the skills and know-how to be attractive to potential employers, and the output of impact-oriented research that will result in agricultural policy and practice reform.

To achieve its mission, RUFORUM is keen to strengthen its planning, monitoring and evaluation system so as to ensure that it is able to determine on an ongoing basis the relevance, timeliness, quality, effectiveness, efficiency, capacity and impact of its activities. Strengthening the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of RUFORUM's activities and disseminating the related learning across the network and to other relevant stakeholders is a major element of RUFORUM's strategic plan and programme framework over the next five years. There are two dimensions of this aim of strengthening M&E:

- Building the M&E capacity of individual researchers and their institutions; and
- Enhancing the capacity of RUFORUM to monitor and evaluate its activities, disseminate emerging lessons, and advocate for innovation and policy reform based on research and M&E learning outcomes.

To improve the design and implementation of relevant approaches and systems for M&E, RUFORUM intends to hire a service provider to conduct a baseline survey to benchmark relevant indicators for the proposed M&E System. In addition, the team of consultants will contribute to the process of setting priorities for the M&E system by providing the necessary background information. The consultants' input will be 30 man days. It is expected that the teams showing interest in undertaking this service will identify the team leader with whom RUFORUM will sign a service provision contract.

## 2. Rationale

Agriculture plays a pivotal role in the social, economic, and political development fabric in sub-Saharan Africa. RUFORUM is implementing a number of activities aimed at engaging the capacity of African Universities to support agricultural development in Eastern and Southern Africa. To ensure that RUFORUM contributes to the sub-region's strategic areas of sustainable agricultural development an integrated and more comprehensive M&E system is needed that will continually guide the review of the quality, relevance, effectiveness, timeliness, efficiency, capacity and impact of its programmes. Over the next 5 years RUFORUM will implement an array of projects and activities targeting capacity building in research, training, capacity development, networking and outreach.

It is through a result-based M&E system that relevant data, information and knowledge will be collected, synthesised, disseminated and fed-back into the planning and implementation processes within all units and activities of RUFORUM. Indicators for performing the envisaged M&E are therefore critical and need to be identified, defined and benchmarked in line with the work plans, milestones and expected programme outputs, outcomes and impacts. A revamped M&E system will focus its approach on indicator based measurements, innovative learning and evaluation to help RUFORUM assess the delivery of its mission in the sub-region.

## 3. Overall Objective of the Consultancy

The overall objective of this consultancy is to conduct a baseline survey of the M&E procedures, systems and practices in order to benchmark indicators for tracking quality, progress, timeliness, effectiveness, efficiency, outputs, outcomes, partnerships and impact of RUFORUM research, training, outreach and collaboration activities among member universities and in postgraduate training in the region.

## 4. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives for the consultancy service include:

- (a) To facilitate the synthesis of available data and information on RUFORUM activities and their respective integration in proposed M&E system;
- (b) To identify, define and collect data on the indicators for M&E that RUFORUM would focus on for the next 5 years in line with the strategic plan and need for an integrated M&E system;
- (c) To benchmark current M&E practices in RUFORUM and among member universities and the broader network;
- (d) To develop a database of M&E issues and indicators for each RUFORUM programmatic activity and project;
- (e) To devise strategies for incorporation of the indicators into the proposed M&E framework
- (f) To develop strategies for data collection, storage and dissemination of information and lessons on the indicators identified under each RUFORUM programme activities

## 5. Specific Tasks

The specific tasks needed to accomplish this assignment are:

- (a) Desk review of relevant documents at RUFORUM secretariat on the status of M&E strategy;
- (b) Desk review of the existing M&E systems, strategies and approaches among RUFORUM universities;
- (c) Synthesis of RUFORUM secretariat and RUFORUM network gaps and outstanding issues and/or challenges in improving M&E framework;
- (d) Developing a matrix of indicators; data sources and data collection responsibilities for the M&E system;
- (e) Preparation of draft synthesis report to inform the M&E Strategy and framework preparation process which should identify M&E indicator integration opportunities;

- (f) Presentation of the synthesis report paper to the RUFORUM staff and stakeholders; and
- (g) Development of draft strategies for M&E reporting, dissemination and programme feedback.

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

### Consultant

1. Develop a work plan in consultation with RUFORUM M&E Unit for undertaking the assignment;
2. Do a literature review of RUFORUM M&E related documents and current M&E frameworks relevant to RUFORUM secretariat and network activities;
3. Develop a methodology for implementing the survey including formation of teams, training, data collection and analysis;
4. Design the instruments for data collection;
5. Undertake the baseline survey for M&E in selected RUFORUM universities and partners.
6. Develop the draft M&E synthesis report and other reports and outputs expected of the assignment;
7. Present the findings of the study to RUFORUM Secretariat and produce the final report to incorporate comments and suggestions from RUFORUM staff and stakeholders;
8. Make arrangements for logistics including accommodation, local transport, stationery, computer services and any other as detailed in the contract;
9. Use their network in the region to obtain relevant information and data from the RUFORUM network and other relevant institutions.

### RUFORUM

1. Review and approve the work plan, methodology and baseline survey instruments;
2. Avail all relevant documents (i.e. Provide the consultant with the draft RUFORUM Strategic Plan, business plan, Draft M&E Framework) to be reviewed and information on RUFORUM member universities and key partner institutions;
3. Meet the relevant costs related to this consultancy as agreed and stipulated in the contract;
4. Review and approve the synthesis draft and final report and other outputs as stipulated in the deliverables section and contract.

## 7. Deliverables

1. Work plan with time line (*after 1 week of signing of the contract*)
2. Synthesis of M&E literature review and baseline study instruments and methodology (*at the end of 2 weeks of initiation*)
3. Database of M&E priority issues and indicators (*at the end of 5 weeks after signing contract*)
4. Draft report (*at the end of 5 weeks*)
5. Final report (*at the end of consultancy (within 1 week of the draft report presentation to RUFORUM)*)

## 8. Plan of Work / Duration

It is anticipated that this consultancy will be undertaken as from 15<sup>th</sup> June 30<sup>th</sup> July 2009 with an effective input of 30 labour days. However, the lead consultant in consultation with the Programme Manager, PME unit will prepare a detailed plan of work that will form part of the contract.

## 9. Expertise Required and Prequalification

Applicants will be evaluated against the following prequalification criteria:

- Clear articulation of capacity and skill, and innovative approaches to carry out the assignment;

- Demonstrated experience and competency in the conducting M&E baseline studies of a regional magnitude especially in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa;
- Demonstrated analytical and report writing skills and experience;
- The organizational/individual competency to deliver the services including ability to organize and manage teams;
- Clear work plan and articulation of expected methodologies and outputs

## 10. Reporting

It is the responsibility of consultant to ensure timely and quality reporting for each phase and deliverable in the assignment. All reports will be submitted to the Programme Manager (PME) on dates as may be agreed during the inception meeting and stipulated in the contract. The reports will be reviewed within RUFORUM Secretariat and also by an external peer review team. All draft reports (written in English) will be submitted as soft copies while the final report will be submitted as a soft copy and three (3) hard copies with coloured illustrations where necessary.

## 11. Guidelines for Concept Note Development

The proposal of not more than 15 A-4 sized pages (Font – Times New Roman, Font Size 12 and margin at least 2.5 cm all round) should include the following:

- 1) Background that includes an interpretation of the terms of reference (*Maximum 1 page*);
- 2) Methodology and approach outlining a clear methodology and approach to the proposed task and a time schedule (*Maximum 4 pages*);
- 3) Proposed work plan outlining clear timeframe and logical steps in conducting the assignment (*Maximum 2 page*);
- 4) Competency statement that provides the organization profile including summary CVs of the experts to be employed on the assignment and the relevant references/similar assignments conducted earlier (*Maximum 6 pages*);
- 5) An itemised budget divided into professional fees and direct cost of activities in United States Dollars (*Maximum 2 pages*).

The Concept note will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- 1) Background Information (20%);
- 2) Methodology and approach (30%);
- 3) Proposed work plan (10%);
- 4) Competency and experience (20%)
- 5) Budget (20%).

## 12. Procedures for Submission of Proposals

Interested firms or teams of consultants should submit their technical and financial proposals electronically (mentioning the call number), curriculum vitae, and statement of capability by close of business **12<sup>th</sup> June, 2009** to RUFORUM Secretariat at P. O Box 7062, Plot 151 Garden Hill, Makerere University, Kampala – Uganda; E-mail [secretariat@ruforum.org](mailto:secretariat@ruforum.org); Tel: +256 414535939 with copies to the Programme Manager, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation at E-mail: [w.ochola@ruforum.org](mailto:w.ochola@ruforum.org) and [babatamara@yahoo.com](mailto:babatamara@yahoo.com) and also to [a.akwang@ruforum.org](mailto:a.akwang@ruforum.org).

For further information on RUFORUM, its member universities, partners and the programmes, visit the RUFORUM website: <http://www.ruforum.org>