

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

Terms of Reference for Consultancy Services to Conduct a Demand Analysis and Tracer Study of Tertiary agricultural education and Training institutions in Malawi and Mozambique

1. Background

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a consortium of 25 universities in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa (ECSA) 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, in collaboration with its partners especially the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in East and Central Africa (ASARECA) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), sees a vibrant agricultural sector linked to African universities and other National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs) 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. This is in line with other initiatives targeting capacity development and strengthening for agricultural development in Africa.. As a lead capacity strengthening service provider, RUFORUM is keen to ensure that the capacity strengthening activities of its member universities are responsive to the market demands of the region and is competitive globally. In its capacity strengthening activities, RUFORUM strives to improve women participation and opportunities through deliberate programmes and actions. It is critical to understand the market needs for agriculture graduates in the region including whether there are any gender and diversity awareness and analytical skills required as part of agricultural training. Accordingly, RUFORUM invites expressions of interest from competent individuals, firms or teams to provide services described below.

2. Rationale

The study will reveal the extent to which selected agricultural tertiary institutions especially universities, have built the capacity of their graduates:

- both to work within, and to contribute to performance-driven governance and management structures and systems;
- facilitated the generation and uptake of demand driven agricultural technologies and innovations; facilitated policy options for enhancing the performance of the agricultural sector in the sub-region;
- gained capacity for implementing agricultural research in the Integrated Agricultural Research for Development (IAR4D) paradigm; and
- availed agricultural innovation information.

In so doing the study will also:

- Establish the employment rates of the agricultural (and RUFORUM) graduates – in informal, formal and self-employment.
- Determine the challenges facing the capacity building activities, graduates, development institutions (both private and public) and lessons for future actions
- Determine the usefulness of the skills and capacities the students and institutions acquired
- Examine the market demand for female graduates and other differentiated groups as well as gender and diversity related skills
- Collate the views of the current employers on the quality of the trainees produced by the collaborating institutions and RUFORUM universities
- Determine challenges facing the female graduates and lessons for future action

3. Overall Objective of the Consultancy

The overall objective is to assess the relevance of the training received by university graduates of agricultural sciences to current job market in Malawi and Mozambique.

4. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives for the consultancy service include:

- a) To explore how the skills and knowledge acquired at universities and other agricultural colleges have influenced the work, organization and career of the graduates;
- b) To explore the role of the RUFORUM partners' capacity building in supporting research, training and outreach;
- c) To determine the market demand for female graduates and other differentiated groups including gender and diversity related skills
- d) To determine how networks and the use of networking platforms for capacity building have influenced beneficiaries' operational capacity and effectiveness and their impact on individuals' career development;
- e) To determine if this regional capacity building approaches and impacts are sustainable for partner institutions and countries;
- f) To generate lessons for RUFORUM and other partners involved in research, training and outreach.

5. Specific Tasks

The specific tasks that will define the scope of the consultancy needed to accomplish this assignment are:

- Development of a database of graduates and their present activities (employment, research and development activities, etc);
- Development of a database of universities and other agricultural tertiary institutions and their current capacity, activities and experiences with regional capacity building activities;
- Establishment of the trends in employment by sector (private sector, public sector and NGO/donor sector) including demand for female graduates and other gender disaggregated groups;
- Document the skills and knowledge acquired at agricultural tertiary training institutions and how this has influenced to work, organization and career of graduates;
- Document the skills and knowledge needed by potential employers of the graduates of tertiary agricultural training including any special awareness and knowledge in gender;

- Document how networks and the use of networking platforms for capacity building have influenced beneficiaries capacity and individuals' career development;
- Document impacts of regional capacity building approaches and how to sustain them among partner institutions and countries;
- Develop a set of tracer study instruments and approaches designed for use by RUFORUM and its regional partners in future; and
- Lessons for RUFORUM, its partners and research, training and outreach participants.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Consultant

1. Develop a work plan in consultation with RUFORUM Planning and M&E Unit for undertaking the assignment;
2. Conduct a literature review of RUFORUM and regional capacity building documents and current activities and frameworks;
3. Develop a methodology for implementing the study including instruments for data collection and guidelines for data collection and analysis;
4. Use their network in the region to obtain relevant information and data from the RUFORUM network and other relevant institutions; and
5. Undertake the demand analysis study focusing on the University of Malawi (Bunda College) , Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique and other agricultural tertiary institutions in these two countries;
6. Develop the draft Demand analysis draft report and other reports and outputs expected of the assignment;
7. Facilitate a validation workshop for each focus country.
8. Present the findings of the study to RUFORUM Secretariat and produce the final report to incorporate comments and suggestions from RUFORUM staff and stakeholders;
9. Make arrangements for logistics including accommodation, local transport, stationery, computer services and any other as detailed in the contract;

RUFORUM

1. Review and approve the work plan, methodology and instruments for the demand analysis instruments;
2. Avail all relevant documents (i.e. Provide the consultant with the draft RUFORUM Strategic Plan, Business plan and other relevant capacity strengthening/project documentation) to be reviewed;
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 Capacity building literature review and demand analysis instruments and methodology (*at the end of 2 weeks of initiation*)
3. Database of RUFORUM partner institutions capacity building activities, approaches and use of networking platform (*at the end of 5 weeks after signing contract*)
4. Documentation of the key lessons for RUFORUM and its partners and research, training and outreach participants (*at the end of the assignment*)

5. Set of tracer study instruments and approaches designed for use by RUFORUM and its regional partners in future (*at the end of the assignment*)
6. Draft report (*at the end of 5 weeks*)
7. Validation workshop report for each focal country
8. Final report (at the end of consultancy (*within 1 week of the draft report presentation to RUFORUM Secretariat*))

8. Plan of Work / Duration

It is anticipated that this consultancy will be undertaken as from 1st 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

The expression of interest should demonstrate an innovative and rigorous design and analytical framework that addresses this challenging topic. The study Team should comprise;

- An economist capable of conceptualizing and designing a demand study
- A human resources expert capable of conducting a job analysis and matching that with skills requirements
- A university academic staff member who is familiar with university training and research, and curriculum development and reform.

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 conducting demand analysis 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 time-frame 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 (10%);
- 2) Methodology and approach (40%);
- 3) Proposed work plan (10%);
- 4) Competency and experience (30%)
- 5) Budget (10%).

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 **12th June, 2009** to RUFORUM Secretariat at P. O Box 7062, Plot 151 Garden Hill, Makerere University, Kampala – Uganda; E-mail secretariat@ruforum.org; Tel: +256 414535939 with copies to the Programme Manager, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation at E-mail: w.ochola@ruforum.org and babatamara@yahoo.com and also to a.akwang@ruforum.org.

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