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## NATIONAL CEREALS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (NCRI) BADEGGI

### Terms of Reference for Engagement of Chief Technical Advisor

Minimum number of years of relevant experience required: 1yr ☐ 5yrs ☐ 15yrs+ ☐

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| <b>Name:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                  |
| <b>Job Title:</b> Chief Technical Advisor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                  |
| <b>Division/Department:</b> FAO-GEF 8 FSIP                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                  |
| <b>Programme/Project Number:</b> GCP /NIR/11236/GFF                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                  |
| <b>Location:</b> Niger and Kebbi States                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                  |
| <b>Expected Start Date of Assignment:</b> September 2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Duration :</b> Initial three years with possible of extension |
| <b>Reports to:</b> Direct Reporting to ED NCRI with technical Guidance of FAO                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                  |
| <b>GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF TASK(S) AND OBJECTIVES TO BE ACHIEVED</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                  |
| <p><b>Project Title:</b> Transformation to Sustainable Crops, Livestock and Aquaculture Food Systems in Nigeria</p> <p><b>GEF Implementing Agency:</b> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)</p> <p><b>Executing Entity:</b> National Cereals Research Institute (NCRI)</p> <p><b>Position:</b> Chief Technical Adviser (CTA)</p> <p><b>Duty Station:</b> [NCRI Kebbi Sub Station, with frequent travel to project landscapes in Kebbi and Niger States]</p> <p><b>Contract Duration:</b>Initial three years with possibility of extension</p> <p><b>Reporting to:</b>Executive Director/CEO NCRI <b>With Technical Guidance:</b> FAO Nigeria Project Manager, Lead Technical Officer (LTO) and relevant FAO technical units</p> <p><b>1. Background</b></p> <p>The Government of Nigeria, with financing from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and technical support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), is implementing the project “Transformation to Sustainable Crops, Livestock and Aquaculture Food Systems in Nigeria” under the GEF-8 Food Systems Integrated Program (FSIP).</p> <p>The project seeks to support transformation towards sustainable, resilient and inclusive crop, livestock and aquaculture food systems through integrated approaches that generate environmental, social and economic benefits. The project promotes sustainable production systems, integrated landscape management, restoration of degraded ecosystems, strengthened food systems governance, sustainable and inclusive value chains, access to finance, knowledge management, private-sector engagement, and the participation of smallholder producers,</p> |                                                                  |

women and youth.

FAO serves as the GEF Implementing Agency, while the National Cereals Research Institute (NCRI) serves as the national Executing Entity responsible for project execution in collaboration with relevant Federal and State Government institutions, research organizations, producer organizations, private-sector actors, communities and other stakeholders.

A Project Management Unit (PMU) will be established to coordinate and support implementation of the project. The Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) will serve as Head of the PMU and will provide overall leadership for the day-to-day management, technical coordination and operational implementation of the project.

The CTA will work closely with the National Project Coordinator (NPC), provided by NCRI as part of its co-financing contribution. While the NPC will facilitate NCRI institutional coordination, government ownership and high-level stakeholder engagement, the CTA will lead the PMU, coordinate implementation across project components, supervise PMU personnel and ensure timely and technically sound delivery of project results.

## **2. Purpose of the Assignment**

The Chief Technical Adviser will provide overall leadership, management and technical direction to the Project Management Unit and ensure the effective, efficient and timely implementation of the project in accordance with the approved Project Document, results framework, Annual Work Plans and Budgets, GEF requirements and applicable FAO procedures.

The CTA will be responsible for translating the project design into coordinated implementation across all components and intervention areas. The CTA will ensure coherence among technical, operational, financial, monitoring, safeguards, gender, knowledge-management and stakeholder-engagement workstreams.

The CTA will serve as the principal day-to-day technical and operational interface between the PMU, NCRI, FAO, participating States, implementing partners, consultants, service providers and other project stakeholders.

## **3. Duties and Responsibilities**

### **A. PMU Leadership and Overall Project Management**

The CTA will:

- Serve as Head of the Project Management Unit and provide overall leadership for day-to-day project management and implementation.
- Coordinate and supervise the work of PMU technical, operational, financial, monitoring, safeguards, gender, communication and knowledge-management personnel.
- Ensure effective coordination among all project components, outputs, activities and implementation partners.
- Convene and chair regular PMU coordination and implementation review meetings.
- Assign responsibilities to PMU personnel and monitor delivery against agreed work plans, timelines and outputs.
- Establish and maintain an implementation tracking system covering project activities, milestones, procurement requirements, contracts, deliverables, risks and agreed actions.

- Identify implementation bottlenecks and ensure timely corrective action.
- Coordinate the performance and deliverables of project consultants, service providers and technical partners.
- Ensure that PMU personnel, consultants and implementing partners work in accordance with their respective Terms of Reference, contracts and agreed deliverables.
- Ensure effective coordination between national, state and landscape-level project implementation.
- Provide regular implementation updates to NCRI, the NPC and FAO.

## **B. Work Planning, Budgeting and Implementation Coordination**

The CTA will:

- Lead the preparation of the project's Annual Work Plans and Budgets (AWPBs) in collaboration with PMU specialists, the NPC, NCRI and FAO.
- Lead preparation of detailed quarterly and monthly implementation plans.
- Ensure that annual and periodic work plans are aligned with the approved Project Document, results framework, budget and implementation timeline.
- Monitor implementation of approved work plans and ensure timely delivery of activities and outputs.
- Work closely with the Finance and Administration team to ensure that financial requirements are aligned with implementation priorities.
- Coordinate preparation of procurement and contracting requirements arising from approved work plans.
- Monitor activity implementation and expenditure against planned outputs and milestones.
- Recommend adjustments to implementation arrangements, sequencing or work plans where necessary to improve delivery.
- Coordinate preparation of requests for implementation inputs, technical support and project resources required from NCRI, FAO or implementing partners.

## **C. Technical Leadership and Quality Assurance**

The CTA will:

- Provide overall technical leadership for project implementation.
- Ensure that interventions are implemented through an integrated food systems and landscape approach rather than as isolated sectoral activities.
- Provide technical guidance on sustainable crop, livestock and aquaculture systems, integrated landscape management, climate resilience, natural resource management, value-chain development and food systems transformation.
- Ensure coherence and technical integration across the different project components.
- Lead technical review and quality assurance of studies, assessments, strategies, technical guidelines, training

materials, investment plans and other project products.

- Coordinate technical inputs from national and international consultants and specialists.
- Ensure that project interventions are evidence-based and consistent with relevant national policies, technical standards and FAO/GEF requirements.
- Identify technical gaps and recommend additional expertise or support where required.
- Promote innovation, adaptive management and application of good practices in project implementation.
- Ensure that recommendations from FAO technical units and specialists are incorporated into project implementation.

#### **D. Coordination with the National Project Coordinator and NCRI**

The CTA will work closely with the NPC to ensure effective institutional coordination and project delivery.

The CTA will:

- Keep the NPC regularly informed of implementation progress, challenges and institutional issues requiring NCRI or government action.
- Work with the NPC to facilitate engagement with NCRI management and relevant Federal and State Government institutions.
- Seek NPC support in resolving institutional and administrative bottlenecks beyond the direct control of the PMU.
- Provide technical and implementation inputs required for high-level government engagements.
- Work with the NPC to ensure alignment of project activities with national and state policies and institutional priorities.
- Support the NPC in promoting government ownership, institutionalization and sustainability of project interventions.
- Coordinate with the NPC on Project Steering Committee preparations and follow-up actions.
- Support documentation of NCRI co-financing contributions by providing relevant implementation information and evidence.

#### **E. Stakeholder and Institutional Coordination**

The CTA will:

- Coordinate routine technical and implementation engagement with participating Federal and State Government institutions.
- Facilitate effective collaboration among government institutions, research organizations, producer organizations, private-sector actors, financial institutions, communities, civil society and development partners.
- Coordinate stakeholder consultations and technical working sessions required for project implementation.

- Promote inclusive participation of relevant actors in project planning, implementation and monitoring.
- Facilitate coordination among crop, livestock, fisheries/aquaculture, environment, water, finance, planning and other relevant sectors.
- Support development of partnerships that contribute to sustainability, scaling and resource mobilization.

## **F. Monitoring, Evaluation and Results Management**

The CTA will:

- Work closely with the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist to ensure systematic monitoring of project outputs, outcomes, indicators and milestones.
- Ensure that all PMU workstreams contribute to achievement of the approved results framework.
- Review implementation performance against agreed indicators and targets.
- Ensure timely identification of implementation delays, underperformance and emerging risks.
- Lead corrective action planning where project performance deviates from expected results.
- Ensure systematic documentation of evidence supporting reported project achievements.
- Coordinate preparation of project progress reports and technical implementation updates.
- Lead PMU contributions to the annual **GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR)**.
- Coordinate project preparation for FAO supervision missions, monitoring missions, Mid-Term Review and Terminal Evaluation.
- Lead follow-up and implementation of recommendations arising from supervision missions, PIR reviews, audits, the Mid-Term Review and evaluations.
- Maintain an updated project risk and implementation action tracker.

## **G. Financial and Operational Oversight**

Without replacing the responsibilities of the designated Finance and Administrative personnel, the CTA will:

- Provide overall management oversight to ensure financial and operational processes support timely project implementation.
- Ensure expenditure requests are linked to approved work plans and project activities.
- Coordinate with finance and administration personnel on cash-flow requirements, procurement planning, contracting and operational arrangements.
- Monitor implementation against available resources and flag potential budgetary or operational constraints.
- Review operational requirements for missions, workshops, procurement and service contracts to ensure alignment with project priorities.
- Ensure timely submission of supporting technical documentation required for financial and operational processing.

- Promote economy, efficiency, transparency and value for money in project implementation.

## **H. Project Steering Committee and Governance**

The CTA will:

- Lead preparation of technical and implementation documentation for Project Steering Committee meetings.
- Prepare consolidated project progress updates, implementation analysis, presentations and proposed action points for consideration by the PSC.
- Work closely with the NPC in organizing PSC meetings and securing appropriate government participation.
- Present project implementation progress and technical issues to the PSC, as required.
- Maintain an action tracker for PSC decisions and ensure timely follow-up by the PMU.
- Regularly update the NPC, NCRI and FAO on implementation of PSC recommendations.

## **I. Environmental and Social Safeguards, Gender and Social Inclusion**

The CTA will:

- Ensure that environmental and social safeguards are fully integrated into project planning and implementation.
- Work closely with safeguards and gender specialists to ensure compliance with applicable project safeguards instruments and FAO requirements.
- Ensure that environmental and social risks are systematically identified, monitored and addressed.
- Ensure effective implementation of stakeholder engagement and grievance redress mechanisms.
- Promote gender-responsive and socially inclusive project implementation.
- Ensure meaningful participation and benefit sharing for women, youth, smallholder producers and vulnerable groups.
- Ensure that safeguards, gender and inclusion results are adequately reflected in project reporting.

## **J. Knowledge Management, Communication and Learning**

The CTA will:

- Provide leadership for project knowledge management and learning.
- Ensure systematic documentation of lessons learned, good practices, innovations and scalable approaches.
- Coordinate development of technical knowledge products, case studies, policy briefs and implementation guidance.
- Facilitate knowledge exchange among participating states, project landscapes and national institutions.
- Support participation of the project in relevant GEF-8 FSIP regional and global knowledge-sharing initiatives.
- Promote visibility and communication of project results in coordination with NCRI and FAO.

- Ensure that communication products comply with relevant project visibility and branding requirements.

## **K. Sustainability, Scaling and Resource Mobilization**

The CTA will:

- Ensure that sustainability considerations are integrated throughout project implementation.
- Identify opportunities for scaling successful project interventions through government programmes, private-sector investment and development-partner financing.
- Support development of partnerships and investment opportunities that can sustain project results beyond the GEF financing period.
- Promote institutionalization of successful approaches within national and state systems.
- Work with NCRI, FAO and stakeholders to identify complementary financing and co-financing opportunities.
- Support preparation of sustainability and exit strategies for key project interventions.

## **4. Supervision of PMU Personnel**

The CTA will provide day-to-day supervisory and coordination oversight to project-funded PMU personnel and consultants, excluding the National Project Coordinator, whose role is provided by NCRI through co-financing.

The CTA will:

- coordinate individual work plans and deliverables of PMU staff;
- review progress and performance against assigned responsibilities;
- provide technical and managerial guidance;
- facilitate collaboration among PMU specialists;
- review and quality-assure technical outputs;
- identify performance or capacity gaps requiring corrective action; and
- ensure that PMU activities remain aligned with overall project priorities.

Where formal administrative actions relating to PMU personnel are required, the CTA will coordinate with NCRI and FAO in accordance with applicable contractual and institutional arrangements.

## **5. Key Deliverables**

| <b>Deliverable</b>                                                                                                                    | <b>Indicative<br/>Timing/Frequency</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Inception report outlining project implementation priorities, PMU coordination arrangements, technical approach and immediate actions | Within the first month                 |
| Consolidated Annual Work Plan and Budget                                                                                              | Annually                               |

|                                                                                         |                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Detailed quarterly implementation plans and milestone tracker                           | Quarterly                                |
| PMU implementation coordination reports                                                 | Monthly                                  |
| Consolidated technical project progress reports                                         | Quarterly/as required                    |
| Project implementation risk and action tracker                                          | Updated quarterly                        |
| Technical quality assurance of consultant, service provider and specialist deliverables | Ongoing                                  |
| Project Steering Committee implementation report, presentations and action tracker      | For each PSC meeting                     |
| Consolidated technical inputs to the GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR)            | Annually                                 |
| Reports from technical and implementation monitoring missions                           | Following each mission                   |
| Management response and implementation plan for FAO supervision recommendations         | As required                              |
| Technical and implementation support to Mid-Term Review and response/action plan        | At project mid-term                      |
| Knowledge products, good practices and lessons learned documentation                    | Ongoing                                  |
| Sustainability, scaling and resource mobilization recommendations                       | Periodically and towards project closure |
| Technical and implementation inputs to Terminal Evaluation and project closure          | Towards project completion               |
| Final project implementation and technical completion report                            | At project closure                       |

## 6. Minimum Qualifications

### Education

Advanced university degree (PhD or equivalent) in Agriculture, Agricultural Economics, Food Systems, Natural Resources Management, or another discipline relevant to the project.

A PhD in a relevant discipline would be an advantage.

### Professional Experience

- At least **15 years of progressively responsible professional experience** in the design, management, coordination and implementation of large-scale agriculture, food systems, climate change, natural resource management or rural development programmes.



- Demonstrated experience leading multidisciplinary project teams or Project Management Units.
- Proven experience managing complex projects involving multiple technical components, institutions and stakeholders.
- Experience in sustainable food systems, climate-resilient agriculture, integrated landscape management, natural resource management or sustainable value-chain development.
- Demonstrated experience in project planning, budgeting, implementation monitoring, results-based management and reporting.
- Experience supervising consultants, specialists and service providers.
- Experience in technical quality assurance of project studies, assessments and implementation products.
- Previous experience with GEF-financed projects, FAO projects or other international environmental and climate-finance programmes would be a strong advantage.
- Familiarity with environmental and social safeguards, gender mainstreaming and co-financing requirements would be an advantage.
- Strong understanding of Nigeria agriculture and food systems institutional environment is desirable.

## **7. Technical and Functional Competencies**

The successful candidate should demonstrate:

- Strong leadership and multidisciplinary team-management skills;
- Strong project and programme management capabilities;
- Excellent understanding of integrated and sustainable food systems;
- Knowledge of climate-resilient agriculture, natural resource management and landscape approaches;
- Strong strategic planning and results-based management skills;
- Ability to coordinate complex implementation arrangements across institutions and sectors;
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills;
- Ability to manage competing priorities and deliver results under tight timelines;
- Strong stakeholder facilitation, negotiation and partnership-development skills;
- Excellent technical writing, reporting and communication skills;
- Ability to provide constructive leadership and mentoring to multidisciplinary professionals;
- Sound judgement, accountability and attention to implementation risks; and
- High standards of integrity and professionalism.

## **8. Language Requirements**

Excellent command of written and spoken English is required.

## **9. Duty Station and Travel**

The CTA will be based at the Project Management Unit/NCRI Sub-Office and will undertake frequent travel to project landscapes and participating States, as well as other locations within Nigeria as required for technical supervision, stakeholder engagement, implementation monitoring and project coordination.

## **10. Working Arrangements**

The CTA will serve as the Head of the PMU and the principal day-to-day manager of project implementation.

The CTA will work:

- under the institutional framework and execution responsibility of NCRI;
- closely with the National Project Coordinator on government and NCRI institutional matters;
- under the technical oversight and guidance of the FAO Lead Technical Officer and relevant FAO technical units; and
- in collaboration with project partners, participating government institutions and other stakeholders.

## **11. Application Link and Deadline**

- Link: <https://forms.gle/BnGMFVSDhZoLEV4U8>
- Deadline: 2nd September 2026