Terms of Reference for Consultancy Services to Develop CCARDESA's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) System

A. Introduction

The Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA) is a SADC subsidiary mandated by Members States to coordinate regional cooperation in agricultural research and development is implementing the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme EX Pillar 4 (CAADP-XP4) Programme on Agricultural Research and Innovation. This programme is being implemented under the EU's "Development Smart Innovation through Research in Agriculture" (DeSIRA) initiative. CCARDESA is implementing this programme in partnership with other Ex-CAADP Pillar 4 Africa institutions comprising; African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF) and the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in East and Central Africa (ASARECA). The CAADP-XP4 Programme is financed through the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for a period of four (4) years 2019-2023. Its implementation focus is in 7 SADC target countries (i.e. Botswana, Eswatini, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe).

The CAADP-XP4 programme supports a science-led and climate-relevant agricultural transformation in Africa and aims at strengthening the capacities of CCARDESA to deliver on their Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D) mandate and to collectively support African countries implement relevant programmes of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) through: inclusive regional and international partnerships; production and exchange of climate relevant agricultural knowledge; effective communication, monitoring and evaluation; promotion of systemic and effective use of science, knowledge and innovation; and representation of the Sub Regional and National Organizations at Continental level.

The programme seeks to achieve five outputs and one of them is *Effective Planning, Coordination, Partnership, Monitoring, Evaluation Learning (MEL) and Reporting.* The CAADP-XP4 programme supports strengthening of systems at CCARDESA that will enhance effective implementation and reporting on the CCARDESA programmes. The MEL System will generate appropriate knowledge products and decision support tools for use in the sub-region, as well as enhance evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of CAADP-XP4 programme based on the EU- Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM) System. The system should also be interoperable with other CAADP-XP4 organisations and national partners MEL systems to harmonise joint reporting.

CCARDESA seeks to engage a team of Consultants/Firm to support the Secretariat in developing the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) System which will enable the Secretariat to have expanded options and provision for capturing new indicators, baseline datasets, and target values for the CCARDESA programme/projects in accordance with the newly developed strategic plan (articulated in the CCARDESA programme Results Framework), as well as to accommodate other anticipated projects currently in the pipeline.

B. Purpose and objective of the Assignment

The main purpose of the consultancy is to develop the M&EL system that will be used to monitor and evaluate activities of the strategic Plan (2020-2029). The M&EL system will facilitate the effective monitoring of the programme and projects that respond to the goal and objectives of the strategic plan and the Medium-Term Operational Plan. The objective of this consultancy is to develop the CCARDESA MEL System to enhance data management and facilitate performance assessment against the expected strategic results for CCARDESA programmes and projects. Specifically, the consultant is expected to develop an M&EL framework, a database and M&E plan that will be used to monitor and evaluate CCARDESA strategic plan and the Medium-term operational plan activities. The M&EL framework, a database and M&E plan should be supported by IT programs, tools and systems, automated but also tracking means of verifying reported data at secretariat level, programme and project level.

The specific objectives of the assignment include:

- To develop a comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework, Database and M&E plan for monitoring and evaluating the CCARDESA strategic plan (2020-2029) and its Medium-Term Operational Plans (MTOP);
- To design, develop and establish an interactive automated M&E system that is web-based, cost-effective and user-friendly for effective management of CCARDESA programmes/projects data and other relevant information;
- To develop a Monitoring and Evaluation framework for inclusion of CCARDESA projects/programmes standard indicators, the targets as well as ensure alignment of these results to donor requirements such as the EU Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) System for CAADP-XP4;
- Design an MEL system that facilitates alignment /interoperability and joint reporting with the CAADP-XP4 and the national partners.

C. Scope of Work

The Consultant will work closely with 3 technical staff from CCARDESA. In executing this assignment, the Consultant will undertake the following specific tasks:

1. Review project documents (strategic plan, MTOP, Annual reports among others) including the log frame, annual targets and indicators, theory of change and existing monitoring tools
2. Interact with ongoing programmes/projects monitoring processes, avenues for collecting and processing performance data and review products across various initiatives to inform baseline and use this to develop an inception report, outlines for the M&E plan and framework
3. Review all the indicators included in the strategic plan and the MTOP and make a shortlist and recommendation for indicators that will appropriately measure the success of the six thematic results of the strategic plan at various levels of the results chain (impact, outcome and output levels)
4. Develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework and M&E plan for implementation strategic plan and Medium-Term Operational Plan: The framework should outline key performance indicators (output and outcomes) with clear definitions, milestones, data collections strategies, and frequency of collection among other variables. It should include methodologies for measuring indicators and who is

responsible for data collection. It should also clearly demonstrate how the impacts outlined will be measured and evidence for the evaluations will be generated. Systematic disaggregation of data including by sex and geographical location.

5. Develop web based automated database with GIS, Impact, Outcome, Output, monitoring indicators for all programmes and projects for the Five Programmatic themes:
    a. Increased agricultural productivity and food and nutrition security;
    b. Sustainable management of natural resources and increased resilience to climate change and other emerging agricultural risks;
    c. Increased commercialisation of smallholder agriculture and access to markets;
    d. Gender equality, women empowerment and increased employment and participation of youth and vulnerable groups in agricultural value chains;
    e. Knowledge and information management, communication and policy support and
    f. Strengthened capacity of regional and national AR4D institutions, farmers and other agricultural value chain actors.

6. Train at least three officers on how to customise, navigate and add new projects/programmes in the database

D. Deliverables/Outputs
1. **A detailed Inception Report.** This Report should outline the methodology and timetable showing agreed dates of delivery of specified deliverables;
2. **A comprehensive Current Status Report.** The report should show the findings of the MEL review/audit as well as the existing gaps and how to fill them;
3. **Draft Strategic Plan Impact Pathway** / Theory of Change, Log Frame and set of Indicators
4. **Final Strategic Plan Impact Pathway**/ Theory of Change, Log Frame and set of Indicators
5. **A draft comprehensive M&E Framework**
6. **A comprehensive M&E framework**
7. **Draft /Demo Automated System**
8. **An automated database**
9. **A Draft M&E Plan**
10. **Final M&E Plan**
11. **Training Report with a summary of instructions (manual)**

Selection Method: Leased Cost Selection (70: 30)

E. QUALIFICATIONS AND WORK EXPERIENCE OF THE CONSULTANT FIRM
1. The Firm is expected to demonstrate experience and expertise in the Programme Management with special focus in development of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems. The firm is required to have a minimum of 10 years' experience in designing M&E frameworks, databases and systems development, with traceable concluded programming assignments. Experience in producing evaluation strategies and reviews of development intervention is also essential.

Key staff qualifications and Experience

The Firm should constitute a minimum of 3 key staff members including a Team Leader with the following qualifications.

a) Team Leader

1. At least a Master's degree in Monitoring and Evaluation, Project Management, Business Management, Economics, Information Technology or any other closely related field.;
2. At least seven (7) years of professional experience in designing M&E framework, databases and systems development, with proven programming skills.
3. At least 5 years' experience in design and delivery of robust, relevant and timely evaluation strategies and reviews of development interventions using qualitative and quantitative methods.
4. At least 10 years' experience in designing and applying robust and appropriate performance monitoring and results frameworks (including expertise and experience in indicator development, testing and data collection / analysis).
5. Minimum of 7 years' experience in Managing/ Leading Monitoring and evaluation projects of large, complex and long term.
6. Experience in generating data to demonstrate programme effects for different segments of the population.
7. Demonstrable experience in using reviews and evaluation as a tool for lesson learning.
8. Minimum of seven (7) years of relevant consultancy experience in any of the following: development planning, policy analysis, or monitoring and evaluation of Donor Funded Projects.

b) Team Member-System Developer

i. At least a master's degree in information technology, Data Science or any closely related filed.
ii. He/she should have a minimum of 5 years' prior experience in designing, developing and supporting implementation of computerized and web-based MIS systems.
iii. Demonstrable experience in working with Donor Funded Organizations
iv. Considerable experience in design and operationalization of similar automated systems at regional level is an added advantage.
v. Minimum of 4 years' experience in training & development on the use of a M&E systems
vi. Experience working in the Agricultural Sector is essential

F. Reporting

The Consultants will report to the Programme Coordinator and work very closely with the Monitoring & Evaluation Officer and Programme Officer.

G. Duration of the assignment

The assignment is expected to last for a maximum of 40 input days spread over 90 calendar days.