

Terms of Reference for a Consultancy Services to Develop Regional Communications Strategy and Action Plan for the Food System Resilience Programme (FSRP)

1) BACKGROUND

The Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA) is a subsidiary organisation of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). It was established in 2011 and started its full operations in 2013. CCARDESA has a mandate of coordinating agricultural research and development and contributing to better food security and livelihoods in the region. In the SADC region, climate change and other related factors have been significantly affecting agricultural productivity with negative implications on food security, mainly among smallholder farmers. As part of the response, CCARDESA received a grant from the World Bank to coordinate the regional implementation of the Food Systems Resilience Programme. The FSRP overall Programme Development Objective (PDO) is to increase the resilience of food systems and preparedness against food insecurity in the participating countries.

The FSRP is being developed in phases, with the first phase of 6-year duration focusing on Madagascar in Southern Africa, Ethiopia in East Africa. CCARDESA is coordinating the regional FSRP implementation at SADC level whereas Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is focusing on East Africa.

The FSRP focuses on building resilience of food systems of countries and regions by using smart approaches that circumvent the effects of climate change on agriculture. The programme is to deal with and resolve the underlying structural challenges of food insecurity and reduce beneficiaries' sensitivity to unpredictable climate events, crises, and conflicts. Overall, under FSRP, CCARDESA is expected to promote regional information and knowledge systems for adaptation planning and resilience building by strengthening capacities to implement early warning systems that provide timely climate data and support the preparation and dissemination of information to farmers. The articulation of the value addition should be an apparent pillar of this intervention.

2) JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ASSIGNMENT

The key role of CCARDESA under FSRP is to identify opportunities to gather and share evidence and lessons that will strengthen the delivery of the resilience agenda at national, regional, and continental levels. The articulation of the value addition should be an

apparent pillar of the regional FSRP communications strategy. This project is expected to expand adding more SADC countries and at continental level. The adoption of project communications strategy has the potential to facilitate continuous learning environment and limit duplication of resources. It is also pivotal in improving or strengthening FSRP visibility, track and document project relevance, experiences, and processes from the inception phase. Hence need to develop a Communications Strategy and Action Plan for the project to be implemented across the region to target both internal and external FSRP key audiences.

3) OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The overall objective of the consultancy is to:

- Develop the regional FSRP communications strategy aimed at strengthening project visibility, gathering and sharing of evidence and lessons that will facilitate the delivery of the resilience agenda at national, regional, and continental levels.
- Develop a costed Action Plan for the Communications Strategy.
- Design standard publication layouts for FSRP communications materials targeting different audiences as identified in the strategy.

4) ASSIGNMENT TASKS

Specific tasks of this assignment include:

1. Conduct a baseline assessment to inform development of the communication strategy this will include a review of documents FSRP has developed since its inception to ensure there is no duplication of materials being produced.
2. Develop a communications strategy for FSRP to enhance the awareness, understanding, and knowledge of the general public, of key stakeholders in the government, private sector, civil society, etc. at the national and local levels.
3. Specify appropriate communication channels, dissemination methods and media such as video, print, web/online media, traditional media, and social media, among others, to effectively communicate key messages to specific stakeholders.
4. Design a standard publication layout for FSRP for use in future publications.
5. Develop guide for all communications on food systems resilience issues to ensure consistent formats for publications and communication products.
6. Conceptualize, design and develop Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials on food systems and resilience with appropriate and relevant messages tailored for key stakeholders using various formats as appropriate such as text, graphics, imageries, infographics, video, printed materials, etc.
7. Develop a costed implementation plan for the communication strategy including the annual activities and budget.
8. Review and update the FSRP webpage under the CCARDESA website to ensure it has some agreed IEC materials uploaded and visible.

5) EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

The following are the expected assignment deliverables:

1. An inception report detailing the process of the development of the strategy.

2. An outline of the Communication Strategy.
3. A first draft of the Communication Strategy and costed Action Plan.
4. Virtual strategy validation workshop with stakeholders and incorporation of inputs. A final version of the Communication Strategy and costed Action Plan, incorporating comments on the first draft.
5. Design layouts of IEC materials for various audience such as imageries, infographics, video, printed materials, etc.

6) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND TIMELINES FOR DELIVERABLES

The reporting requirements and timelines for deliverables are as shown in Table XX below:

Soft copies of the reports listed in Table 1 below shall be submitted to the FSRP Regional Coordinator within the scheduled timelines.

Table 1: Reporting requirements

S/No.	Deliverables/Reports	Timelines after contract commencement	Format of submission
1.	Inception Report	5 days after the inception meeting	Soft copy via email in word and PDF
2.	Outline of the Communications Strategy	5 days after approval of the inception report	Soft copy via email in word and PDF
3.	First draft of Communications strategy and costed Action Plan	10 days after approval of the outline	Soft copy via email in word and PDF
4.	Virtual validation workshop of the Communication Strategy and costed Action Plan	5 days after submission of the first draft	Online platform (Teams or Zoom)
5.	Final version of the Communication Strategy and costed Action Plan	5 days after virtual validation workshop	Soft copy via email in word and PDF
6.	Submit layouts of IEC materials	10 days after validation of the Communication Strategy and Action Plan	Soft copies in unlocked and editable formats

7) PAYMENT SCHEDULES

The proposed payment schedules based on satisfactory performance of the contract which will be negotiated with the successful consultant will be as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Proposed payment schedule

S/No.	Deliverables*	Percentage of the contract amount
1.	Submission and acceptance of Inception report	15%

2.	Submission and acceptance of the outline of the Communications Strategy	15%
3.	Submission and acceptance of the first draft of Communications strategy and costed Action Plan	20%
4.	Submission of the report of the validation workshop of the Communication Strategy and costed Action Plan	20%
5.	Submission of the final version of the Communication Strategy and costed Action Plan	15%
6.	Submission and approval of layouts of IEC materials	15%

Upon submission of every report, the consultant is expected to make a presentation of the submitted report to the Client in a scheduled virtual meeting. The acceptance of the report shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

8) CONSULTANCY APPROACH

This is an activity to be conducted remotely, requiring less or no travel by the Consultant.

9) DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The Consultant is expected to conduct this assignment within a period of 40 working days spread over a period of 3 months.

10) QUALIFICATIONS AND WORK EXPERIENCE OF THE CONSULTANT

The Consultant shall be required to have the following qualifications and experience:

- Preferably advanced degree in one or more of the following disciplines: Mass Communications; Development Communication; Organisational Communications, Journalism, or other relevant fields;
- Demonstrate prior experience in developing a communication strategy, ideally in the development context.
- Have a good understanding of food systems and resilience issues in the SADC region.
- Have at least ten (10) years of progressively advanced experience in strategic communications, public advocacy, which must include developing communications and advocacy strategies at the global, regional or national level.
- Have relevant experience in working with government, regional and/or international organizations on consultancy assignments, especially in strategic communications planning.
- Have experience in producing good communication materials for use by clients.
- Have excellent proven written and spoken English and strong oral and written communication skills. Some knowledge of French is going to be an advantage.

11) REPORTING

The Consultant will report to the APPSA Regional Coordinator who will be responsible for daily technical and administrative issues for the assignment.