

Terms of Reference

Expert in developmental evaluation (NKE1.4)

Short description of the Expert Profile (Cat I)

The Expert should have expertise in:

- Developmental evaluation approaches and tools;
 - Systems thinking, creative and critical thinking;
 - Methodological flexibility;
 - Able to facilitate rigorous evidence-based perspectives;
 - Practical experience in gathering and interpretation data, framing issues, surfacing and testing model developments in innovation Project team;
 - Practical experience in vocational training.
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Background

The [DeSIRA Initiative](#), funded by the European Commission (DG INTPA) seeks to enhance an inclusive, sustainable and climate-relevant transformation of rural areas and of agri-food systems, by linking better agricultural innovation with research for more developmental impact. It supports actions in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) to strengthen the resilience of their agri-food systems, the relevance of the national and regional research and innovation systems, and the coherence and efficiency of their agricultural public research and extension services related to climate change challenges.

DeSIRA-LIFT is a *service project* (June 2021 – May 2024) to the European Commission (EC), Directorate General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) with the main objective to enhance the impact of the DeSIRA Initiative by providing (on-demand) services to DeSIRA project holders and partners. DeSIRA-LIFT includes three service areas aligned to the three DeSIRA Pillars: *Service Area 1* supports country-led DeSIRA projects to enhance their impacts on climate-oriented innovation systems in line with more sustainable food system transitions. *Service Area 2* supports the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) ex-pillar IV organizations in their Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) related roles. *Service area 3* is providing support to policy makers on themes related to agricultural research for development (AR4D) and innovation policies and programming.

Rationale of the assignment

Service Area 1 (SA1) aims to establish a core team of long-term experts that will contribute to the operationalization of the predefined and on-demand services to DeSIRA country-led research projects ([DeSIRA Pillar 1](#)) to enhance their impact, under guidance of the SA1 leader (Aurélie Toillier, CIRAD).

The SA1 core team is responsible for designing and delivering on-demand and pre-defined support services to country-led DeSIRA projects in four areas:

- Service 1.1: Support to the implementation of in-project MEL approaches and tools;
- Service 1.2: Support to strengthen participatory research, innovation and innovation services in country-based DeSIRA projects;
- Service 1.3: Facilitation of cross-project mutual learning and networking;
- Service 1.4: Elaboration of Knowledge and Communication Products.

The core team will ensure the relevance, responsiveness and efficiency of services by using a coaching approach of project clusters for developing a specific set of project capacities: capacities to manage and navigate more effectively climate-smart AIS-oriented interventions; capacities to manage open innovation approaches and generate climate-relevant innovations.

The core team will facilitate alternatively in-project learning cycles and inter-project joint learning events depending on the needs and levels of capacities in place.

The core team is also in charge of tracking progress within the project clusters and produce knowledge for a middle-range theory on how to develop capacities for transformative Research & Innovation (R&I) projects.

Scope of the assignment

The Expert will perform the following tasks under this assignment:

- Contribute to the operationalization of the service delivery approach of SA1: clustering of projects, organization and facilitation of cross-project events (step 1, 3, 5 of the coaching trajectory), delivering pre-defined support services, reporting activities;
- Ensuring the continuation between SA1 services along a coaching trajectory toward the generation of outcomes in country-led DeSIRA projects;
- Support the on-demand process and matching with service offer in his/her field of expertise
- Develop and facilitate interactive on-line sessions for projects and identify project support needs in his/her field of expertise (step 1, 3, 5 of the coaching trajectory);
- Develop a menu of Service Offer targeted toward project's capacity development in his/her field of expertise;
- Support the packaging of support services (steps 2 and 4 of the coaching trajectory), i.e. customize support services for project clusters;
- Support the selection of cross-project learning topics aligned with SA1 learning agenda and supervise the development of learning contents and formats in his/her field of expertise;
- Elaborating ToR for short-term non-key experts for the delivery of on-demand support services;
- Supporting the elaboration of a roster of experts for delivering SA1 support services under her/his own field of expertise;
- Supporting the identification of existing resources (documentation, guides, videos, trainings) aligned with SA1 services that will be made accessible to project implementers through SA1 digital platform;
- Lead the development of some knowledge products in line with SA1 learning agenda under her/his own field of expertise.

Deliverables

- A map of project capacity development needs in the domain of Knowledge and open innovation Management
- A comprehensive menu of Service Offer and an associated roster of experts / trainers
- Packages of Service Offer for clusters
- ToR of on-demand learning events
- ToR of short-term experts
- Activity reports
- Knowledge products (transversal reviews on learning topics under this field of expertise)

Reporting

The Expert will report to the SA1 leader on a regular basis during the assignment.

Duration and size of the assignment

The assignment will be 150 working days for the duration of the DeSIRA-LIFT programme (till June 2024). In case of unsatisfactory performance, the assignment may be terminated under specific conditions (to be specified in the employment contract).

Location of the assignment

The assignment will be primarily home-based for the foreseeable future. However, attendance of meetings in EU or in the geographical areas of the projects' implementation (Africa, Asia, Indian Ocean, Latin America) may be required in the future, depending on covid-19 measures.

Required qualifications and experience of the Expert (Cat I)

The Expert will have:

Qualifications and skills

At least MSc-level in a discipline related to Economics or Social Sciences.

General professional experience

At least 12 years' professional experience in areas directly relevant to international development, innovation with a social science perspective, knowledge and innovation systems, or likewise.

Specific professional experience of proven knowledge and expertise in research and innovation with a systemic view and with an institutional approach.

Research work is appreciated in the following fields: developmental evaluation, horizontal workshop, peer-to-peer learning, etc.

Additional training in agricultural development and the following professional experience will be appreciated.

Specific professional experience

At least 5 years' professional experience in areas directly relevant to agriculture in an international setting:

- Intervention research in the field of multi-actor innovation, support for R&I projects, capacity development for vulnerable actors and/or in the agriculture and agri-food sector.
- Experience working in LMICs in consultation with professional organizations (farmer organizations, NGOs, private companies, research centres, etc.) and/or international organizations in the field of agricultural innovation management and consultancy.
- Training experience with agricultural development and innovation professionals.

Soft skills

- Ability to work in a team and in a multicultural context
- Motivation, self-direction and proactiveness
- Methodological rigour, priority management and organisational skills
- Proven aptitude for scientific publication
- Good command of MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access) and comfortable using a variety of IT tools, software and the web – for both data analysis and publishing
- Skills for facilitation and communication
- Excellent writing and oral presentation skills in English with a working knowledge of French and/or Spanish and/or Portuguese.