

DeSIRA-LIFT Service Area 1

Non-Key Expert

Terms of Reference

Cluster Facilitator (NKE 1.21 Cat III)

FR-EN speaking

Reference: SA1-7.2

1. 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.

2. Rationale of the assignment

The expert will join the team of long-term experts of DeSIRA-LIFT Service Area 1 (SA1).

She/he will work closely with the **SA1 core team** of long-term experts who develop and implement the whole support service offer for Pillar 1 DeSIRA projects. The SA1 core team is responsible for designing and delivering on-demand and pre-defined support services to 69 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 is composed of long-term thematic experts, project clusters facilitators and a Community of Practice (CoP) officer. The core team ensures the relevance, responsiveness and efficiency of services by using training & coaching approach of project clusters for developing a specific set of managerial capacities (<https://www.desiralift.org/service-area-1/>). The core team facilitates alternatively in-project learning cycles and inter-project joint learning events depending on the needs and levels of capacities in place. Most of the joint learning and sharing activities will be facilitated through virtual events and a

Community of Practice. The core team is also in charge of tracking progress within Project clusters and produce knowledge for a middle-range theory on how to develop capacities for transformative R&I projects in the global South.

3. Scope of the assignment

Geographic project clusters are key elements in the strategic delivery of the DeSIRA-LIFT SA1 support services, considering language and timezone issues. Each cluster is composed of about 20 R&I projects.

The Cluster Facilitator is responsible for ensuring regular contacts and follow up with projects in their cluster, facilitating the on-demand service delivery to Projects holders Cluster with a view to enhance the strategic outcomes of the DeSIRA Initiative Pillar 1 and facilitating interaction of projects with Service Area 1, and across the Cluster.

The tasks include:

- Being in regular contact with the projects included in her/his scope of work.
- Facilitating smooth communication between projects and SA1 core team about the service offer: supporting the communication activities on the service offer, and requests from projects.
- Following closely the support requests formulated by each project: organizing and updating support requests; making sure requests are well understood by SA1 core team;
- Following closely projects' participation to SA1 courses, events and other activities;
- Capturing valuable information to overcome inertia and generate opportunities for mutual learning across projects in a cluster
- Supporting SA1 core team in the monitoring and evaluation of its service delivery: satisfaction surveys, indicators of participation, evaluation reports, follow-up if/when necessary.
- Supporting SA1 core team in the implementation of activities (courses, events, coaching) for the projects' clusters: check and enhance projects 'readiness to attend the activities and be proactive; support to the logistics for online/physical events; support to workshop facilitation; train project teams to some digital learning tools when needed (Klaxoon, Zoom, Padlet, etc.).
- Supporting SA1 core team in the elaboration of knowledge & communication products with the projects: Support to the identification of cross-cutting topics in clusters; identification of projects willing to engage in joint knowledge & communication products; be responsible for the development of some knowledge products: stories of change, project interviews and infographics on project activities., support to translation in different language (FR, EN, SP, PT).

In particular, during SA1 activities/ learning events, the cluster facilitator serves as the group's resource, catalyst, and coach:

- clarifying, summarizing, and sharing ideas,
- guiding group discussions,
- facilitating the selection of services in the menu,
- establishing a climate conducive to learning,
- challenging assumptions and encouraging reflection and feedback, and
- maintaining an energy level that matches the pace of DeSIRA-LIFT SA1 activities
- responding to windows of opportunity that may arise to connect projects to timely service offer/activities.

4. Deliverables

- Data on cluster composition, contacts, requests, needs, etc. and organized databases (excel file) with information on projects
- Communication and knowledge products: interviews, stories of change, infographics, etc.
- Activity reports

5. Duration of the assignment

The assignment will be of a maximum of 100 working days. It should start no later than 20 October 2022 and last for the duration of the DeSIRA-LIFT programme (up to 30 May 2024).

In case of unsatisfactory performance, the assignment may be terminated under specific conditions (to be specified in the contract).

6. Required qualifications and experience of the Expert

The Expert will have:

Qualifications and skills

Relevant education in a discipline related to International Development or Social Sciences.

General professional experience

At least 3 years professional experience in areas directly relevant to international development.

Specific professional experience

- Minimum 3 years professional experience in areas directly relevant to workshop facilitation, communication and trainings, evaluation in the context of agricultural development, research and innovation in the global South
- Good facilitation skills and the ability to communicate in a trustworthy and convincing way both physically and online;
- Network facilitation, creating engagement;
- Coaching approaches to project leaders;
- Hands-on practical view on the DeSIRA Initiative and related projects.

Soft skills

- Ability to work in a team and in a multicultural context
- Skills for facilitation, listening and communication
- Ability to pursue the strategic aims of the DeSIRA-LIFT facility
- Hands-on practical view on the DeSIRA Initiative and related projects
- Motivation, self-direction and proactiveness
- Methodological rigour, priority management and organisational skills
- Good command of digital platforms for communication and hosting events

Language skills

- Good writing and oral presentation skills in English.
- Good writing and oral presentation skills in French.

7. Reporting

The expert will report to the Community of Practice Manager and SA1 co-leader on a regular basis for the design and implementation of all her/his activities.

The expert will report to the SA1 leader and Project Director for the validation of his/her workplans, timesheet and activity reports.

8. Location of the assignment

The assignment will be primarily home-based for the foreseeable future.

However, depending on the geographic location of the expert, attendance to workshops in the geographical areas of the projects' implementation (Africa, Asia, Indian Ocean, Latin America) may be possible. Occasional travel to countries in the global South may be required. This will be decided after discussion with MEL lead expert and SA1 leader.