

**VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT-CONSULTANT- BIODIVERSITY STUDY
ETHIOPIAN AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION AGENCY**

BACKGROUND

The ATA is an initiative by the Government of Ethiopia (GoE), designed with the primary aim of promoting agricultural sector transformation by supporting the Ministry of Agriculture and other public, private and non-governmental partners to address systemic bottlenecks through:

- Leading problem solving efforts to facilitate the identification of innovative solutions to address systemic challenges in priority domains,
- Supporting the implementation of identified solutions in high priority areas, and
- Enhancing linkages/ coordination among agricultural stakeholders to reach agreed upon milestones and objectives that transform the agriculture sector and lead to middle income country status by 2025.

The formation of the ATA is a result of two years of extensive diagnostic studies across eight sub-sectors of Ethiopia's agricultural system in a highly-consultative, multi-stakeholder process conducted by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Its structure and function is to provide nimble, innovative and results-oriented support to a range of partners in the agricultural sector.

The ATA will focus on a set of high priority program areas identified by an inter-ministerial Council chaired by the Prime Minister. There are eight program areas of initial focus, including seeds, cooperatives, soil health/fertility, technology access/ adoption and extension and research. Overall, each of the eight programs falls into one of three categories: systems, value-chains and initiatives.

The seed system program aims to strengthen the seed industry so that it can deliver high quality and sufficient seeds of improved varieties that will enable farmers to increase yields, while conserving Ethiopia's biodiversity. The program works in close partnership with regulators, research institutions, seed producers, distributors and farmer organizations in identifying and implementing interventions to strengthen the seed system. However, as farmers adopt seeds of improved crop varieties and other modern technologies, there will be an increasing risk of loss of biodiversity and vulnerability to disease and pest outbreaks. Therefore, in parallel with enhancing the efficiency of the seed system, it will also be important to support the preservation of local varieties.

SCOPE OF WORK

As a basis for strengthening Ethiopia's biodiversity conservation strategy, ATA plans to identify international best practices. These will be drawn from countries whose experiences are applicable to Ethiopia. Ideally, these benchmark countries should be ones that have rich crop biodiversity along with reliance on small-holder agriculture, all while facing the need to increase agricultural productivity and food security.

The case studies will address questions including, but not limited to, the following:

1. What are the high level strategies the countries have used to conserve biodiversity? E.g. gene bank (domestic/abroad), community banks, etc.
2. What factors have contributed to the success or weakness of these strategies?
3. What domestic and international legal frameworks (e.g. laws, accession to international conventions, etc.) have made it possible to conserve biodiversity while also enabling access for agricultural research and development?

4. What mechanisms have been applied to ensure linkage between conservation institutions and others, such as research, seed companies, and farmers?
5. What mechanisms have been applied to ensure that the benefits of improved varieties are shared not only among researchers, seed companies and farmers, but also re-invested in conservation initiatives?

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The Consultant is expected to have practical experience in the leadership of agricultural research or resource conservation institutions, ideally in a developing country context. She/He should have strong familiarity with framing and executing the evaluation of such institutions and their guiding policies. Excellent conceptual and analytical skills are essential.

Deliverables

In order to make sure that he/she will deliver relevant and useful outputs, he/she is expected to meet the following milestones, with input from ATA's Senior Director of Analytics:

1. Inception report: including methodology, analytical framework, report outline
2. First draft report
3. Final report
4. Present findings to ATA and concerned stakeholders

Approach

The Consultant will collect data and information through literature review and interviews with key informants. He/She will work closely with Senior Director of Analytics of ATA defining the questions, the analysis framework and synthesizing his/her findings.

Timeframe

The Consultant will take a total of 30 days to complete this assignment.

He/She is expected to be available for weekly progress reviews in Addis Ababa throughout the duration of the project. In the event that the consultant is travelling outside of Addis Ababa, regular email and telephone communication (at least once a week) is expected.

Interested candidates are requested to submit a **CV of no more than 3 pages** and a brief covering letter to Human Resource Department: Recruitment@ata.gov.et before April 15, 2012. **NB. Only short listed candidates will be contacted.**