1. Introduction

The Conservation Agriculture for Resilient Food Security and Economic Growth in Africa’ (CA4RFSEGA) Programme is a four-year initiative (1st August 2017 to 31 March 2021) funded by the Department of Civil Society (SIVSA) of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD). The African Conservation Tillage Network (ACT) is the overall implementing agency. The partners are the three Centres of Excellence (CoEs) in Kenya, Tanzania and Zimbabwe namely KALRO Njoro, TARI-Uyole and Gwebi College respectively. Other partners are the Conservation Farming Unit (CFU) and partners in Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda; and the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) with partners in Zimbabwe and Tanzania.

The CA4RFSEGA programme is designed to improve food security, economic growth and increase climate change resilience of smallholder farmers in Africa through adoption of Conservation Agriculture (CA). CA is a no-till based sustainable intensification and climate smart production system which promises to reclaim and transform degraded semi-arid into grain baskets with rainfed dryland farming. This is to be achieved by enhancing scaling up adoption of CA by millions of smallholders through (a) improved CA policy environment, political commitment and leadership; (b) capacity development of CA institutions (centres of excellence, civil society organizations, and entrepreneurial CA service providers) and (c) improved access to supportive CA knowledge and information. The CA4RFSEGA programme aims to reach over 12,300 farmers through the SACAU and CFU partners across five countries in Eastern and Southern Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Zambia).

2. Background

The African Conservation Tillage Network (ACT) is a Pan-African not-for-profit organization established in 1998. It has evolved into a platform for stimulating, facilitating and challenging for mutual sharing of information and knowledge on experiences or lessons on promotion of Conservation Agriculture (CA). ACT further collaborates with similar regional bodies on food security, climate change, research and training. It also engages in North-South, and South-South networking and collaboration in promotion of CA. In the promotion of the CA technologies, ACT primarily relies on grant funding from projects administered. As a Regional pan-African organization, ACT operating from its Nairobi headquarters has presence in Eastern, Southern and Western Africa, and is in the process of establishing its presence in Northern Africa.

Currently ACT is implementing among others, the project called ‘Conservation Agriculture for Resilient Food Security and Economic Growth in Africa’ (CA4RFSEGA), which is being implemented in Kenya, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. The project is funded by the Department of Civil Society (SIVSA) in the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), and is aligned to contribute to NORAD’s grant scheme objective of achieving a stronger civil society in developing countries with the ability and capacity to promote democratisation, realise human rights and reduce poverty.
The project long-term goal is to improve Food Security, Economic Growth and Increase Climate Change Resilience of Smallholder Farmers in Africa through Conservation Agriculture. The expected specific results for the project are (a) improved policy environment, political commitment and leadership for scaling up adoption of CA and implementation of the climate change agenda; (b) Capacity development of CA centres of excellence (CoE), civil society organizations (CSO)s and entrepreneurial CA service provider associations (CASPA) to deliver high quality CA training and services is enhanced; and (c) Improved access to supportive CA knowledge and information for enhancing scaling up of CA in Africa.

The CA4RFSEGA’s strategy is informed by three complementary and overarching ‘theories of change’ focusing on the change pathways that:

(a) Intentional government and continental bodies’ support and engagement assures systematic agriculture system build-up over time and creates a sustainable conducive environment for agricultural systems through favourable policies, coordination, plans and supportive budget allocation within government agricultural systems for efficient operation.

(b) Increased crop productivity for smallholder farmers using CA results to an agriculture transformation in terms of the benefits, but does also require a paradigm shift in terms of technology, knowledge and skills. Building capacity at the farmer, national and systems (societal) levels needs to focus on institutional capacity development and networking for strengthened technology development and supply chains. Identified CA institutions as critical paths are the CA-CoEs, CSOs and the CASPAs.

(c) The uptake of CA for sustainable intensification by smallholders is greatly enhanced with mechanization. Provision of mechanised CA services by farmers based on entrepreneurial business models is poised to enhance affordable access to mechanisation services, while profits will drive sustainability.

These theories of change directly inform CA4RFSEGA’s results framework and the agreed ACT-CFU-SACAU results framework.

3. Rationale and Purpose

ACT plans to conduct the midterm review of the project to establish the progress made half way in to the project period. It is important to assess whether the project is still relevant and on track to fulfil its objectives, or whether there are changes that needs to be made so far and the way forward towards achieving the goals of the project. The review will also be a learning process for both ACT and the funding agency on the successes and failures of the project, as it outlines the achievements, challenges, opportunities and recommendations towards achievement of the project objectives and outputs.

4. Objectives

The review will be expected to outline the achievements, challenges, opportunities and recommendations towards achievement of the project objectives and outputs. The midterm review is expected to focus on the relevance and effectiveness of the project implementation.

The objectives of the review shall be to:
1. Assess the relevance of the project objectives, and activities of the projects;
2. Determine the results achieved so far, and to assess to what extent the objectives of the project are achieved, or likely to be achieved;
3. Make recommendations on the gaps and the adjustments/changes to be made to fill the gaps;
4. Determine the likelihood of results being sustainable over time.

The Consultant will seek to concretize the objectives, amongst others, through below review questions:

- To what extent are the objectives of the project still relevant for the beneficiaries, for the target groups, for the recipient countries, for the donor, for the partners of the project, for the international community?
- Are the activities and outputs of the project relevant in order to achieve the project objectives? Are the activities and outputs consistent with the overall goals and the achievements of its objectives?
- What is the success level of the CA service provision arrangements/investments? What can be done to improve/enhance it? How can the private sector/farmers be made more proactive in CA service provision/demand respectively?
- Are the project results likely to be sustainable over time?
- What are the main factors affecting the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives? How can it be improved?
- How does the partnerships in the project affect the objectives, and how can it be improved?

5. Scope of the evaluation

This midterm review should cover the project period from 1st August 2017 to 31st October 2019. The review should cover Kenya and the partners in Kenya since it also hosts the ACT headquarters for administrative and financial assessment. In addition, either Tanzania or Zimbabwe could be selected as the second country for the evaluation. Besides the CoEs to be evaluated in the two countries, others to be covered are the Regional and National partners, stakeholders and the beneficiaries. The review should evaluate all aspects of the project as per the institutional workplans based on the agreements between ACT and the partners.

6. Main users and stakeholders:

The review report will be of interest to several stakeholders, organizations, agencies, groups and individuals including and not limited to the country relevant Ministries (e.g. Agriculture, Environment, Women, Youth), CA training institutions and the Academia, Research institutions, Farmers and Farmer organizations, CA service providers and their associations, CA equipment Manufacturers and Agro dealers, NGOs, private sector actors, development partners and donors.

7. Method

The consultant should describe the method that will be used to conduct the review. Qualitative and participatory research methods are expected to be used to both triangulate and add depth to the quantitative results and interrogate the mechanisms of how and why the changes expected from the programme have or have not occurred.
The methodology should also consider that the review will involve evaluation of all three countries with country visits to Kenya and either Tanzania or Zimbabwe to interview project teams/implementers, beneficiaries as well as relevant project documents.

8. Deliverables and timelines

The review activity will be done in early November 2019. Preparations for the review will be done from mid-October for the commencement of the actual review in November 2019. An inception meeting will be held with the consultant(s) to flesh out more in detail the expected deliverables. The reviewer is expected to complete the review within four weeks and deliver the report by 30th November 2019.

The report shall consist of (15-20 pages) and will have an executive summary (2-4 pages), background of the project, the purpose and objectives of the evaluation, methodology used, the findings, conclusions and recommendations. Annexes that lists all the sources reviewed (both documents and interviewees) and any other relevant information should be included.

9. Application procedure

To apply for this consultancy, the consultant should submit the following:
- A technical and financial proposal (include a detailed work plan and budget) for undertaking the assignment.
- Current Curriculum Vitae/ resume of the consultant who will undertake the task.
- Firm profile, registration and other relevant statutory documents (if a company)
- Submit three reference letters from past clients/employers

Applicants may send their questions for additional informal on the Call for Tenders only by e-mail, and by 30th May 2019 at the latest to the address set out below:
E-mail address: hr@act-africa.org

All interested consultants or consultancy companies are asked to submit their proposals by close of business 30th June 2019 at 1700 Hours EAT to the Executive Secretary, ACT, and email address: hr@act-africa.org with subject “CA4RFSEGA Project Mid-term review”

ACT is an equal opportunity employer and believes that diversity promotes excellence in its operations. Acknowledgements will be sent only to applicants who strictly meet the requirements of the position and in whom there is further interest. ACT reserves the right to determine the structure of the tender process without prior notice and liability to compensate any party.