AFRICAN ECONOMIC RESEARCH CONSORTIUM

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TO SERVE AS A CONSULTANT FOR THE END OF PROJECT EVALUATION

AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD POLICY ANALYSIS FOR NUTRITION OUTCOMES (AFFPON) PROJECT

1. Introduction
Established in 1988, African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) is a not-for-profit premier capacity building institution in the advancement of research and graduate training that inform economic policies in Africa. The principal mission is to strengthen local individual and institutional capacity to conduct independent, rigorous inquiry into problems pertinent to the management of Sub-Saharan African economies through synergistic programmes combining economic research with postgraduate training in economics.

Through its Research Programme, AERC runs the Collaborative and Thematic research projects which generate framework papers, country case studies and thematic research papers. AERC also leads three Training Programmes, namely: the collaborative Masters Programme in Economics (CMAP), Collaborative PhD in Economics (CPP) and Collaborative Masters in Agricultural and Applied Economics (CMAAE). The collaborative model of postgraduate training brings together over 30 universities in over 20 countries across sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

AERC’s CMAAE Programme gives a voice to the issues related to agriculture, food security and environmental management including climate change.

2. The Project and Funding
In November 2016, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) signed a Grant Agreement with AERC to support research on the impact of agricultural and food policies on nutrition outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa to inform policy development, program design and improved nutrition outcomes. This project is expected to end in December 2021.
3. **Focus of the Evaluation.**

The overall purpose of this end of project evaluation is to conduct, on behalf of the AERC, an assessment of the AFPON project implementation with a view to determining the relevance and extent of fulfillment of the project objectives.

The evaluation will focus on the AERC-BMGF Agricultural and Food Policy Analysis for Nutrition Outcomes (AFPON) Project, covering the period November 2016 to December 2021. The Project proposal, research outputs (research reports and papers), Senior Policy Seminar programme and report, AFPON Conference programme and report, and the annual progress reports will be the main documents of reference. However, the reviewer(s) may use other documents, questionnaires, and interviews (in person or by telephone) as well as contacts with the Consortium to carry out the task.

4. **The Objectives of the Evaluation**

This consultancy seeks to carefully review and evaluate the implementation process, quality, cost, and effectiveness of the AFPON project and examine to what extent the project implementation supported and provided value addition to AERC’s capacity building activities through research and graduate training.

The consultant will be required to review the extent of achievement of the AFPON project objective of determining the impact of agricultural and food policies on nutrition outcomes. The project proposed an analysis focusing on national agriculture-nutrition pathways, with specific attention to the following domains:

   a) Food prices, food security and macro-economic policy;
   b) Nutritional outcomes along the agricultural value chains
   c) Food prices, including consumer subsidies and price ceilings;
   d) Food security policies, including stocks and price stabilization schemes;
   e) Resource access, including land tenure, and women empowerment; and
   f) Agricultural extension and trade.

The specific objectives of the evaluation include the following:

   i. To assess the quality of AFPON Project compared to other international agricultural policy and nutrition policy analysis projects as the consultant may determine.
   ii. To assess the relevance and effectiveness of the AFPON project in addressing agricultural policy and food policy needs of SSA countries.
   iii. To assess the contribution of the project to the capacity building objective of AERC through the early-career Thematic research and AERC graduate training.
   iv. To assess efficiency of the Project in terms of deliverables.
   v. To assess the relevance and impact of the dissemination workshops of the project.
vi. To identify ways for improving effectiveness of similar projects of the AERC by considering whether there are alternative research methodologies that can be applied.

vii. To evaluate the AERC’s staff complement and ability to efficiently implement the project.

5. Deliverables
The main deliverable of this consultancy is the End-of-Project Evaluation Report. The first draft will be reviewed by the AERC Management and comments shared with the Consultant. The Consultant will then revise the report and submit a second draft for review. Upon submission of comments on the second draft, the Consultant will revise, incorporating comments, if any and submit a final report. The terms of reference are detailed in Section 6.

6. Suggested Methodology
It is recommended that this evaluation be based largely on a study of secondary sources of literature, supplemented by interviews (with AERC personnel, participating researchers, Resource Persons and mentors especially for Group E Thematic Area and collaborative research, and donor representatives) and observations of activities of the AFPON project. The following approaches to the implementation of the evaluation are suggested:

6.1 Desk Study and Review
This will entail a review of the project documents in relation to the extent of implementation. Examples of documents for this exercise include the following:

a) AFPON Project Proposal
b) AFPON Project Progress Reports 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21
c) AERC Annual Reports 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21
d) Research papers produced under the AFPON project
e) The Abuja 2020 Senior Policy Seminar programme and report
f) AFPON 2021 Conference programme and report

6.2 Visit to the AERC Secretariat in Nairobi
Despite the travel restrictions occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic, a visit to the AERC Secretariat in Nairobi would provide an opportunity for the Consultant(s) to conduct in-depth individual meetings with AERC Management and implementing staff.

6.3 Participate as an observer at the AERC-BMGF AFPON conference and interview researchers, policy makers and practitioners in the agricultural policy and nutrition domain and thereby assess the quality and policy relevance of the research outputs.

6.4 Interview CMAAE alumni who participated in the BMGF-AFPON internship programme in various institutions.
7. Proposed Calendar of Implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Period</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. Desk Research/Consultations</td>
<td>April 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>ii. Visit by Consultant to AERC Secretariat</td>
<td>April/May 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>iii. Participate as observer at the AFPON Conference</td>
<td>May 2021</td>
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<td>iv. Interviews with various stakeholders</td>
<td>May/June 2021</td>
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<td>v. Presentation of draft end of project evaluation report</td>
<td>July 2021</td>
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<td>vi. Submission of Final Report to AERC Secretariat</td>
<td>August 2021</td>
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8. Selection Criteria

The consultant should have the following qualifications:

a) PhD in Agricultural Economics, Economics, Development Economics, Nutrition, or related field.

b) Experience demonstrated by at least three end-of-project evaluations of similar projects in sub-Saharan Africa.

c) A good publication record detailing relevant articles in reputed journals in the fields of agricultural policy, food policy and nutrition policy research.

d) Provide an innovative and technically sound expression of interest citing examples of similar evaluations conducted and indicating how the assignment will be delivered.

9. Application Procedure

Applications clearly indicated “EOI for AERC-AFPON End-of-Project Evaluation” on the subject line can be sent to the following address on or before March 19, 2021.

The Executive Director
African Economic Research Consortium
Middle East Bank Towers, 3rd Floor, Jakaya Kikwete Road
P.O. Box 62882 – 00200; Tel: (254-20) 273-4150
Nairobi, Kenya,

Or by email to the following addresses: procurement@aercafrica.org and copied to cmmae@aercafrica.org
Please attach an updated curriculum vitae clearly indicating:

i. Key academic qualifications

ii. Professional training and certificates obtained.

iii. Employment record clearly stating the name of employer, period of employment, position held and brief description of main responsibilities.

iv. Names and addresses of 2 references who can provide a reference on your work.

v. Personal declaration signed on your CV as follows:

“I hereby certify that the details provided in my CV are at the best of my knowledge true, complete and accurate. I acknowledge that an inaccurate statement or omission in a personal declaration or other document might result in rejection of my application or termination of my contract. The African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) may verify any statements which I make in my application.”