**COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA (COMESA) SECRETARIAT**



**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR THE POSITIONS UNDER THE COMESA REGIONAL FOOD BALANCE SHEET PROJECT**

Ref: CS/HR/RFBS/26.1022/SS Date: 26th October 2022

**PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Secretariat and in collaboration with AGRA and with funding support from the Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Transformation in Africa (which includes the UK FCDO, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, USAID, and The Rockefeller Foundation,) is leading the implementation of a digital Regional Food Balance Sheets (RFBS) Project for Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA).

The RFBS project is part of the efforts to strengthen regional agri-food data and information system. The overall objective/purpose of the RFBS is to contribute to improved regional food security, nutrition, and economic growth in ESA. The project strategic objective is to increase the use of near real time information on critical food balance calculations and analytical products to inform decision-making by ESA governments, private sector actors, and development and humanitarian agencies around production support, trade policy, and stock management. The project has the following three Specific Objectives:

**Specific Objective 1**: To enhance availability of near real-time production, trade, price, stocks, consumption, and related data for ESA region;

**Specific Objective 2**: To increase availability of specific decision support briefs, reports and analysis tailored to user groups; and

**Specific Objective 3**: To establish effective governance structure and partnerships that are responsive to and maintains buy-in from key public and private sector stakeholders to guide the evolution and sustainability of the tool over time**.**

The objectives will be achieved through the development and maintenance of a user-centric, digitally enabled web platform that uses near-real-time data feeds to generate intuitive and value-additive analytics and dynamic visualizations. The platform will be centrally developed and managed to ensure consistency and security and will cover six core modules including the overall balance of a particular location, historical and forecasted production, trade, prices, stocks, and consumption.

The RFBS project is a collaborative and multi-stakeholder engagement, including participation from a range of analytical and technology partners to provide data and forecasts on crop production, cross-border trade, input supply, data aggregation, and platform development.

The project is initially being implemented in six pilot countries, Zambia, Malawi, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Tanzania and it will be scaled up to other countries in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Implementation of the RFBS initiative envisages direct benefits to farmers/producers, traders/ processors, associations in the agro-industry (e.g., Grain Traders/Millers Associations) food exporters and food aid agencies who will function in a predictable environment that gives them access to national, regional as well as international markets; one that gives them timely and sufficient information enabling them to plan and operate competitively.

And for governments, an environment that provides needed information to take appropriate policy responses that spur rather than stifle investment in value chains and enhances sustainable food and nutrition security. Major agricultural trade related policy bottlenecks will be eliminated or reduced to gain and or maintain regional market access and competitiveness. This will increase regional trade and improve incomes of farmers, staple food exporters and other actors within the agricultural value chains and improve regional food security and enhance regional integration.

To support the implementation of the above-mentioned programmes, the COMESA Secretariat plans to recruit staff as described in the job descriptions below:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **NO** | **NAME OF THE POSITION** | **GRADE** |
| 1 | Delivery Analyst  | P3 |
| 2 | Technical Operations Coordinator | P2 |

1. **JOB DESCRIPTION FOR POSITION OF DELIVERY ANALYST**

**JOB TITL :** Delivery Analyst

**GRADE :** Professional Level (P3)

**SALARY** **:** USD 72,000.00 **p.a- all inclusive**

**PROGRAMME** **:** Regional Food Balance Sheet Project

**DUTY STATION :** COMESA Secretariat, Lusaka, Zambia

**CONTRACT DURATION :** From date of signature of the contract up to the end of the programme duration, which is expected to end in April 2024.

**REPORTING TO** **:** Director Industry and Agriculture Division.

1. **SCOPE OF WORK**

The Delivery Analyst has a mandate from COMESA Secretariat to support the RFBS Initiative Lead in coordinating activities across different stages of the Initiative. The Delivery Analyst’s role will begin with an emphasis on leading RFBS convening functions in 2022, including through the launch of the RFBS Minimal Viable Product (MVP). Increasingly, the Delivery Analyst will help assess and build capacity for COMESA Secretariat to take on a larger role in overall ownership and accountability for the RFBS initiative in both project management and in supporting technical implementation of the digital food balance sheet.

1. **KEY TASKS/ RESPONSIBILITIES**

Navigate COMESA and its corresponding networks to assist the COMESA Initiative Lead and the Product and Project Manager in:

1. Support coordination of different stakeholders within COMESA for the benefit of the RFBS and helping to refine the long-term internal governance structure for ongoing leadership of the initiative;
2. Mapp internal resource needs and gaps as a basis for resource planning and mobilization;
3. Ensure the adequate engagement of a broader set of stakeholders including through operationalization of the RFBS governance structure;
4. Ensuring information feedback to the COMESA Committee on Statistical Matters and the technical Committee on Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment annual meetings on project progress;
5. Analysing RFBS inputs and their eventual outputs and generating targeted reports or briefings to inform policy and support decision-making processes. Supporting the COMESA Initiative Lead in convening policy discussions or workshops which are informed by these outputs;
6. Work in close collaboration with the Product and Project Manager to support compilation of Regional Food Balance Sheet (RFBS) and prepare COMESA for long-term ownership of the RFBS initiative;
7. Supporting the evolving overall vision of the digital tool and ensuring that the product aligns with both public and private user requirements;
8. Liaison with Member states on assessments of national Food Balance sheets and other basic data required for compilation of the same;
9. Provision and coordination of any technical assistance to Member states on issues related to national RFBS;
10. Supporting development of Food Balance Sheet data sharing guidelines/regulations to ensure data providers are clearly aligned and understand their responsibilities;
11. Supporting and later leading the development and implementation of the RFBS communication and advocacy and stakeholder engagement plans;
12. Preparing technical materials for RFBS Committee meetings, and later Advisory Committee meetings;
13. Structuring internal COMESA capacity building assessments and coordinating capacity improvement efforts to refine the timelines for and ensure success of the long-term handover of PPM and Technical Operations functions; and
14. Provision and coordination of capacity building on FBSs for Member States.

**Specific Key Activities**

1. **Ensure full alignment with the Product & Project Manager** and the donors on the strategic vision, priorities, overall roadmap, and progress, including:
2. Participating in, and later leading, bi-weekly implementing partner check-in sessions as part of the project management functions of the RFBS initiative to track progress, de-escalate arising issues, and allocate resources;
3. Operationalizing the RFBS Committee and national sub-committee(s) including managing attendance, preparing agenda, detailing key discussion points, and managing action items or follow up so that any feedback is well received and acted upon; and
4. Assisting to update KPIs and accountability metrics at first around convening functions and later across multiple roles within the Initiative.
5. **Support resource mobilization efforts** in close collaboration with the PPM, and in an increasing position of leadership beyond the MVP phase. Specific tasks include:
6. Tracking the balance of budget needs and funding flows and providing regular updates to key COMESA stakeholders. Assisting in broader Advisory Committee or other stakeholder funding updates;
7. Supporting the coordination of donor funding activities both within and outside of the PIATA partnership to cover medium term needs and gaps (2022-2024); and
8. Supporting the development of a detailed resource mobilization plan with an emphasis on the long-term (2024 onwards) that outlines funding options, the operational and strategic implications of each, and presents a recommended strategy to sustain the Initiative.
9. Collaborate and **support** **the development of the RFBS tool** by coordinating resources within COMESA and the wider RFBS imitative, including:
10. Supporting the COMESA RFBS Initiative Lead to coordinate COMESA communications, legal, finance, and other teams and resources and managing action items assigned to each;
11. Supporting the PPM in the end-to-end output strategy from inception to production through the translating of the product vision (MVP and beyond) into the product development roadmap and maintaining the product backlog through the different development stages (incl., on-going grooming and prioritization following agile development methodologies); and
12. Working with the PPM to remain engaged and up to date on the evolving needs of the Analytics Providers and Technical Operations teams. Participate in key update meetings and increasingly (after MVP) take ownership of coordination efforts with these groups.
13. **Follow-up on required actions and escalate arising dependencies or risks** to the relevant decision makers, while negotiating with stakeholders to deliver the most value within timelines and budgets.
14. **QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**
15. A Master’s degree in Statistics, Agriculture economics.
16. A minimum of 9 years relevant experience working with agricultural statistics at national or regional/international levels
17. A strong understanding of how Food Balance Sheets are compiled and used in Africa.
18. Demonstrable experience in building capacity for use of Food Balance Sheets or similar products in decision-making.
19. Good interpersonal skills in liaising with colleagues and partners.
20. At least 3 years of project management experience in a multi-stakeholder environment and team structure.
21. **JOB DESCRIPTION FOR POSITION OF TECHNICAL OPERATIONS COORDINATOR**

**JOB TITL :** Technical Operations Coordinator

**GRADE :** Professional Level (P2)

**SALARY** **:** USD 48,000.00 **p.a- all inclusive**

**PROGRAMME** **:** Regional Food Balance Sheet Project

**DUTY STATION :** COMESA Secretariat, Lusaka, Zambia

**CONTRACT DURATION :** From date of signature of the contract up to the end of the programme duration, which is expected to end in April 2024.

**REPORTING TO** **:** RFBS Delivery Analyst.

1. **SCOPE OF WORKS**

Working closely with the Delivery Analyst and the RFBS implementing teams, the Technical Operations Coordinator will support the design, development, and deployment of the digital MVP and future iterations of the product. S/he will contribute to the strategic design and the front-end interface of the MVP. S/he will work with counterparts within COMESA and AGRA to use “user journeys” for key stakeholders and guide iterative modification of the product based on ongoing user testing and feedback. When required, the Technical Operations Coordinator will meet in-person with prospective users in East and Southern Africa, and support deployment and testing of the product on the ground throughout the development cycle.

1. **KEY TASKS/ RESPONSIBILITIES**

Work with COMESA and its implementing partners to assist the Delivery Analyst and the Product and Project Manager in:

1. Coordinating different stakeholders within COMESA for the benefit of the RFBS and helping to refine the long-term internal governance structure for ongoing leadership of the initiative;
2. Mapping internal resource needs and gaps as a basis for resource planning and mobilization;
3. Ensuring the adequate engagement of a broader set of stakeholders including through operationalization of the RFBS governance structure;
4. Ensuring information feedback to the COMESA Committee on Statistical Matters and the technical Committee on Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment annual meetings on project progress;
5. Generating targeted reports or briefings to inform policy and support decision-making processes;
6. Supporting the COMESA Initiative Lead in convening policy discussions or workshops which are informed by these outputs;
7. Work in close collaboration with the Product and Project Manager to support compilation of Regional Food Balance Sheet (RFBS) and prepare COMESA for long-term ownership of the RFBS initiative. This includes:
8. Supporting the evolving overall vision of the digital tool and ensuring that the product aligns with both public and private user requirements;
9. Liaison with Member states on assessments of national Food Balance sheets and other basic data required for compilation of the same;
10. Provision and coordination of any technical assistance to Member states on issues related to national FBSs;
11. Supporting development of Food Balance Sheet data sharing guidelines/regulations to ensure data providers are clearly aligned and understand their responsibilities;
12. Supporting and later leading the development and implementation of the RFBS communication and advocacy and stakeholder engagement plans;
13. Preparation of materials for RFBS Committee meetings, and national sub-committees, and later Advisory Committee meetings;
14. Structuring internal COMESA capacity building assessments and coordinating capacity improvement efforts to refine the timelines for and ensure success of the long-term handover of PPM and Technical Operations functions; and
15. Provision and coordination of capacity building on FBSs for Member States.

**Specific Key Activities**

1. **Ensure full alignment** of COMESA and the donors on the strategic vision, priorities, overall roadmap, and progress, including:
2. Participating in, and later leading, bi-weekly implementing partner check-in sessions as part of the project management functions of the RFBS initiative to track progress, de-escalate arising issues, and allocate resources;
3. Participate in operationalizing the RFBS Committee and national sub-committee(s) including managing attendance, preparing agenda, detailing key discussion points, and managing action items or follow up so that any feedback is well received and acted upon; and
4. Assisting to update KPIs and accountability metrics at first around convening functions and later across multiple roles within the Initiative
5. Support the expansion of RFBSA in close collaboration with the PPM, and in an increasing position of leadership beyond the MVP phase. Specific tasks include;
6. Tracking the inclusion of additional crops, indicators, data contributors and countries in the implementation of RFBSA; and
7. Supporting the activation of new data contributors and provide training and technical support
8. Collaborate and **support** **the development of the RFBS tool** by coordinating resources within COMESA and the wider RFBS imitative, including:
9. Supporting the COMESA RFBS Initiative Lead to coordinate COMESA communications, legal, finance, and other teams and resources and managing action items assigned to each;
10. Supporting the PPM in the end-to-end output strategy from inception to production through the translating of the product vision (MVP and beyond) into the product development roadmap and maintaining the product backlog through the different development stages (incl., on-going grooming and prioritization following agile development methodologies);
11. Working with the PPM to remain engaged and up to date on the evolving needs of the Analytics Providers and Technical Operations teams. Participate in key update meetings and increasingly (after MVP) take ownership of coordination efforts with these groups; and
12. **Follow-up on required actions and escalate arising dependencies or risks** to the relevant decision makers, while negotiating with stakeholders to deliver the most value within timelines and budgets.
13. **QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**
14. Bachelor’s degree in computer science, data science, software engineering, statistics, agriculture, Project Management. A Master’s degree preferred.
15. At least 8 years of experience in software product management;
16. Proven ability to support an end-to-end digital product strategy from product design to scale-up and execute on product development;
17. Experience in human-centred design and the execution of complex digital and advanced analytics projects, including working with technical teams (e.g., software engineers, data scientists) and driving the implementation of end-to-end solutions development and analytics;
18. Strong problem-solving skills and knowledge of agile development methods; and
19. Ability to engage with a wide variety of stakeholders including ability to express connections between product strategic vision and discrete software development activities for cross-functional teams and ability to understand user needs and integrate into product design.
20. **WORKING LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE POSITIONS**

Must be fluent in English and/or French and/or Arabic (speaking and writing). A combination of any two or all these languages will be an added advantage.

1. **ELIGIBILITY FOR APPLICATION**

Applicants must be nationals of COMESA Member States and should not be more than 55 years of age at the time of submitting the application.

1. **FINAL DATE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS**

Applications MUST be submitted electronically through email on the prescribed **COMESA APPLICATION FORM** which can be accessed at the following COMESA website: <http://www.comesa.int/> , Opportunities, COMESA Job Application Format.

1. **ONLY SHORT-LISTED CANDIDATES WILL BE CONTACTED.**

Application should reach the address below by email not later than **Thursday 10th November 2022 .at 18:00 hours Lusaka, Zambia time.**

The Director of Human Resources and Administration

Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

COMESA Centre,

Ben Bella Road,

P.O Box 30051,

Lusaka

Zambia

Email: recruitment@comesa.int