



**Recruitment announcement for the post of Technical Assistant
for the Project « Strengthening women and youth participation in
cross-border trade in West Africa ».**

AGRA Funding

Working language: French and English

January 2025

1. About WACTAF

West African Association for Cross-Border Trade, in Agro-forestry-pastoral, Fisheries products and Food (WACTAF) is an association created in June 2019 in Lomé (where its headquarters are located) with the technical support of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). Its actions are part of the efforts made to operationalize the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (TLS) in line with the African Continental Free Trade Area "AfCFTA".

WACTAF brings together private socio-professional organizations in the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries value chains, whose members are involved in marketing food products or agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries products throughout the ECOWAS and CILSS countries. There are private socio-professional organizations in the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries value chains in seventeen (17) countries, including the fifteen (15) ECOWAS Member States and two (2) Sahel countries (Chad and Mauritania).

2. Context

The proliferation and persistence of non-tariff barriers contribute greatly to the increase in trade costs and the weakness of cross-border trade flows in West Africa. Indeed, the sustainable development of cross-border trade in agricultural products and the increase in the incomes of women and youth in West Africa is hampered by the persistence of non-tariff barriers (prohibitions or restrictions, specific conditions or requirements that make trade difficult or costly for women and youth, incorrect application of non-tariff measures such as sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures and other technical barriers to trade) and the multiplicity of illegal payments on the corridors make the business climate very unfavorable for the majority of commercial actors, specifically women and youth who can no longer make a decent living from their commercial activities. This has a strong impact on (i) the trade of small and micro-enterprises owned by young people and women, (ii) the policy to combat food insecurity; (iii) compliance with and application of sanitary and phytosanitary measures; (iv) growth of the economies of ECOWAS States; (v) effectively addressing the growing insecurity in the sub-region and the high cost of living, especially among women and young people ¹².

The objectives sought by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), notably, the stimulation of intra-African trade, economic growth, industrial development and the improvement of the livelihoods of citizens with particular regard to women and youth, will be difficult to achieve if the above-mentioned challenges are not effectively addressed with the strong involvement of government services, the private sector and civil society ³.

The multiplication and/or strengthening of innovative and adapted mechanisms to combat obstacles to cross-border trade, coupled with actions to strengthen the capacities of women and

¹ Mobilizing Traders in West Africa to Eliminate Non-Tariff Barriers - Borderless Alliance , October 15, 2017

² Rethinking informal cross-border trade in Africa - Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), November 2023

³ Strengthening the effectiveness of the fight against non-tariff barriers - SheTrades , document on the AfCFTA

young traders in mastering the trade promotion regulations in force in the ECOWAS region, will contribute enormously to (i) the gradual removal of all obstacles to the development of cross-border trade; (ii) the facilitation of the cross-border movement of agricultural products; (iii) the supply of low production areas for the effective fight against food insecurity; (iv) the improvement of the livelihoods of commercial actors, especially women and young people; (v) the sustainable promotion of cross-border trade by women and young people in order to effectively increase intra-African trade ⁴.

In light of the aforementioned considerations, the WACTAF has formally requested and subsequently secured financial support from the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) for the implementation of the project «Strengthening the Participation of Women and Youth in Cross-Border Trade in West Africa ».

The project aims to remove the many barriers that hinder cross-border trade in agricultural products. The main actions of the project include activities related to the development of Trade Informations and Border Assistance Desk (TIBADs), the digitalization of the Road Free Trade Operation (RFO), the sharing of knowledge and experiences, the strengthening of the organizational capacities of youth and institutional support to the Permanent Secretary of WACTAF. The overall objective is to reduce cross-border trade barriers, improve knowledge of trade regulations and promote gender in intra-regional trade policy. The project is expected to last 24 months and covers three ECOWAS countries including Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo. The objective is to support 100 inter-professional organizations, federations and cooperatives, with 15,000 direct beneficiaries, 45% of whom are women and 35% are youth.

For the implementation of this project, WACTAF wishes to recruit a qualified person for the position of Technical Assistant. It is with this in mind that this recruitment notice is launched.

3. Purpose of the position

Provide technical, organizational and operational support for effective implementation of the project.

4. Main missions

Under the functional authority of the project manager, the Technical Assistant will be generally responsible for i) contributing to the planning, execution and monitoring of project activities and ii) ensuring the technical coordination of interventions on the ground in the three target countries (Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo).

Specifically, its missions include:

- Supervise the digitalization of the Road Free Trade Operation (RFO);
- Facilitate the establishment and operationalization of TIBAD;
- Support capacity building of women and youth involved in cross-border trade;
- Organize Roadshows and stakeholder consultations on cross-border trade;
- Contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of project results;
- Support data collection and writing of technical reports;

⁴ Study on small-scale cross-border trade in West Africa - ReliefWeb , June 2023

- Participate in the development of the various terms of reference (TDR) of the project;
- Ensure the promotion of gender equality and the inclusion of youth in all project activities;
- Contribute to the capitalization of good practices and lessons learned and
- Evaluate the project, identify new areas of intervention (request for funding/amendment/response to call for tenders).

5. Candidate profile

The qualifications and skills sought in the candidate are as follows:

- Postgraduate university training in agricultural economics, international trade, project management, social sciences or other relevant fields;
- At least 5 years of experience in project management, including development, planning, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting;
- Experience in capacity building and support for SMEs, cooperatives or local organizations;
- Experience working with regional organizations (e.g. ECOWAS), donors and government actors would be an asset;
- Good knowledge of regional trade regulations (ECOWAS, AfCFTA);
- Project management skills: development, planning, monitoring-evaluation and reporting;
- Mastery of digital tools (Excel, project management platforms, databases);
- Excellent writing skills in French and English, with proven experience in writing technical reports;
- Ability to work in a team and communicate effectively with diverse stakeholders, including local partners and project beneficiaries and
- Availability for travel to the three target countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Togo).

6. Selection criteria

Selection Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Scale
A. Academic and professional qualifications	Master's degree in Agroeconomics, International Trade, Project Management, etc.	15 points
	At least 5 years of experience in project management, including development, planning, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting.	15 points
	Experience in capacity building of SMEs, cooperatives or other local organizations	10 points
B. Technical skills	Knowledge of regional trade regulations (ECOWAS, AfCFTA)	15 points
	Mastery of digital tools (Excel, project management platforms, databases)	10 points

C. Language and writing skills	Excellent command of French and English, ability to write technical reports in both languages	10 points
D. Personal and interpersonal qualities	Adaptability in a multicultural environment	5 points
	Ability to work in a team and collaborate with various stakeholders (local organizations, partners, beneficiaries)	10 points
	Commitment to promoting gender equality and inclusion	5 points
E. Availability	Availability to carry out regular missions in the three target countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Togo)	5 points
Total		100 points

7. Location of the position

The position is based in Lome, with missions in the three intervention territories (Benin, Burkina-Faso, Togo).

8. Contract duration and start date

The duration of the contract is 12 months, with a trial period of three (03) months, renewable after satisfactory evaluation. The position is expected to start as soon as possible.

9. Report to be provided

The Technical Assistant will be required to provide a monthly activity report in electronic version of the activities carried out in accordance with the terms of reference.

10. Submission of Applications

Application files in French or English must include:

- A cover letter addressed to the Permanent Secretary of WACTAF;
- A detailed and up-to-date CV of the candidate;
- A simple copy of the last diploma obtained;
- A simple copy of the work certificates and
- A copy of any other relevant documents (optional).

Applications must be sent no later than midnight (GMT) on April 11, 2025 by email to the following address: aoctah.wactaf@gmail.com ; aoctahwactafregionale@gmail.com .

Copy: justinmatitoma@gmail.com ; cyrilleabilimi@gmail.com ; agbovianani7@gmail.com .

Successful candidates will be contacted for an interview. The management committee retains the right to not proceed with this call for expressions of interest.