

## Terms of Reference

### Expert in meta-analysis and learning reviews (NKE1.6)

---

#### Short description of the Expert Profile (Cat I)

The Expert should have expertise in:

- Appraisals and synthesis of large quantitative and qualitative data set;
  - Selecting, evaluating, and synthesizing all available evidence;
  - Statistical methods;
  - Applied econometrics.
- 

#### Background

The [DeSIRA Initiative](#), funded by the European Commission (DG INTPA) seeks to enhance an inclusive, sustainable and climate-relevant transformation of rural areas and of agri-food systems, by linking better agricultural innovation with research for more developmental impact. It supports actions in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) to strengthen the resilience of their agri-food systems, the relevance of the national and regional research and innovation systems, and the coherence and efficiency of their agricultural public research and extension services related to climate change challenges.

DeSIRA-LIFT is a *service project* (June 2021 – May 2024) to the European Commission (EC), Directorate General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) with the main objective to enhance the impact of the DeSIRA Initiative by providing (on-demand) services to DeSIRA project holders and partners. DeSIRA-LIFT includes three service areas aligned to the three DeSIRA Pillars: *Service Area 1* supports country-led DeSIRA projects to enhance their impacts on climate-oriented innovation systems in line with more sustainable food system transitions. *Service Area 2* supports the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) ex-pillar IV organizations in their Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) related roles. *Service area 3* is providing support to policy makers on themes related to agricultural research for development (AR4D) and innovation policies and programming.

#### Rationale of the assignment

Service Area 1 (SA1) aims to establish a core team of long-term experts that will contribute to the operationalization of the predefined and on-demand services to DeSIRA country-led research projects ([DeSIRA Pillar 1](#)) to enhance their impact, under guidance of the SA1 leader (Aurélie Toillier, CIRAD).

The SA1 core team is responsible for designing and delivering on-demand and pre-defined support services to country-led DeSIRA projects in four areas:

- Service 1.1: Support to the implementation of in-project MEL approaches and tools;
- Service 1.2: Support to strengthen participatory research, innovation and innovation services in country-based DeSIRA projects;
- Service 1.3: Facilitation of cross-project mutual learning and networking;
- Service 1.4: Elaboration of Knowledge and Communication Products.

The core team will ensure the relevance, responsiveness and efficiency of services by using a coaching approach of project clusters for developing a specific set of project capacities: capacities to manage and

navigate more effectively climate-smart AIS-oriented interventions; capacities to manage open innovation approaches and generate climate-relevant innovations.

The core team will facilitate alternatively in-project learning cycles and inter-project joint learning events depending on the needs and levels of capacities in place.

The core team is also in charge of tracking progress within the project clusters and produce knowledge for a middle-range theory on how to develop capacities for transformative Research & Innovation (R&I) projects.

### **Scope of the assignment**

The Expert will be responsible for managing meta-data on DeSIRA Projects under Pillar 1, and project MEL data for the purpose of the SA1 learning agenda:

- To support the elaboration of the global database of Pillar 1 DeSIRA Projects;
- Manage and Process meta-data on Projects;
- Organize data for Transversal Learning Reviews;
- To support the selection of learning topics that feed into SA1 Learning Agenda;
- to support the design of e-surveys ahead of workshops , and data analysis;
- Develop a methodology for cross-project analysis (cross-review of Projects ToC, and impact pathways);
- Supervise short-term NKE to conduct cross-project analysis;
- Support the elaboration of impact pathways;
- To organize cross-project events if needed;
- Support Production of knowledge on how R&I projects operates;
- systematization of knowledge and publication.

### **Deliverables**

- Databases
- Data analysis reports
- Support the development of knowledge products (transversal reviews on learning topics under this field of expertise)

### **Reporting**

The Expert will report to the SA1 leader on a regular basis during the assignment.

### **Duration and size of the assignment**

The assignment will be 150 working days for the duration of the DeSIRA-LIFT programme (till June 2024). In case of unsatisfactory performance, the assignment may be terminated under specific conditions (to be specified in the employment contract).

### **Location of the assignment**

The assignment will be primarily home-based for the foreseeable future. However, attendance of meetings in EU or in the geographical areas of the projects' implementation (Africa, Asia, Indian Ocean, Latin America) may be required in the future, depending on covid-19 measures.

### **Required qualifications and experience of the Expert (Cat I)**

The Expert will have:

#### Qualifications and skills

At least MSc-level in a discipline related to Agricultural Economics, Behavioural Economics, Econometrics or Social Sciences.

### General professional experience

- At least 12 years' professional experience in areas directly relevant to meta-analysis, systematic surveys, learning reviews, data management, impact evaluation, survey design or likewise.
- Research work in the following fields is appreciated: systematic reviews, learning reviews or other approaches for generating evidence and impact pathways.

### Soft skills

- Ability to work in a team and in a multicultural context
- Motivation, self-direction and proactiveness
- Methodological rigour, priority management and organisational skills
- Good command of digital platforms for communication and hosting events
- Skills for facilitation and communication
- Excellent writing and oral presentation skills in English with a working knowledge of French and/or Spanish and/or Portuguese.