



Request for Proposals

External Independent Evaluation of LEAP4FNSSA's Data and Systems for Monitoring & Evaluation of the EU-Africa Research & Innovation Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture

Context and background information

The design and implementation of the EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) was prompted by the level of global hunger, expanding nutritional imbalances in Europe and in Africa, and the need for food production systems on both continents to sustainably respond to the expectations of its citizen (farmers and consumers) and to the rising demand of the global population. This required a change of approach in the collaboration between the EU and the AU, leading to the research and innovation Partnership, and its framework outlined in their bilateral FNSSA Roadmap,¹ which highlights food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture as priority themes, emphasising broader participation, effective coordination and joint ownership of research by African and European stakeholders, and linking research and innovation. The vision is for enhanced alignment of research and innovation across the Partnership's constituent funding programmes (H2020, LEAP-Agri and AURG), their subsequent projects and closer linkages with policies.

To support this bi-continental Partnership, the LEAP4FNSSA project² has been established to foster and accelerate the implementation of the High Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) Roadmap on food nutrition security and sustainable agriculture by transforming the existing Research & Innovation Partnership into a sustainable Platform. The general objective of the LEAP4FNSSA project is to establish a sustainable structure for the efficient and coherent implementation of the EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership as described in the FNSSA Roadmap. Under the aegis of the EU-AU High Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) and its Bureau, and by building upon related projects such as RINEA, CAAST-Net. Plus, ProIntensAfrica and LEAP-Agri, LEAP4FNSSA aims to achieve this overall objective through three specific objectives:

- Increase the synergies and coherence between actors, research and innovation projects, initiatives and programmes, through the development of institutional alliances and clusters of projects;

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/pdf/policy/eu-africa_roadmap_2016.pdf

² <https://www.leap4fnssa.eu/>

- Develop a learning environment and a large knowledge base, including monitoring and evaluation activities, creating communication and links between different initiatives to improve STI cooperation;
- Establish a long term and sustainable governance and funding mechanism for the Platform.

To reach these objectives, LEAP4FNSSA builds on a consortium of experienced partners to implement a methodology based on three principles: long-term impact, relevance of the outputs to the HLPD, and innovative actions.

This call for external evaluation relates to the second objective and will contribute to the monitoring and evaluation activities under LEAP4FNSSA Work Package one, task 1.4.

Purpose and scope of the evaluation

The evaluation will assess the effectiveness of data collection tools and adequacy of data collected to provide evidence of outcomes and impact from the Partnership, and will provide recommendations for future data collection as part of LEAP4FNSSA MEL tasks.

The evaluation should focus on analysis of the monitoring and evaluation tools and methods currently in use and determine their effectiveness for ascertaining the progress and outcomes of the Partnership.

Additionally, it will suggest innovative tools and methods to cover any gaps and to strengthen existing tools. This will lead to a strengthening of the data quality and evidence of impact of the Partnership, collected by the LEAP4FNSSA MEL team.

Specific objectives of the external independent evaluation of LEAP4FNSSA monitoring data and impact assessment

1. To assess the relevance, coherence and quality of collected data in relation to the overall monitoring and evaluation framework and theory of change;
2. To assess the quality and relevance of data collection tools with regard to the Partnership objectives and their suitability for projects under the Eu-Africa R&I FNSSA Partnership.

The evaluators will be required to use appropriate methods to answer the following questions;

- **Are the data collected adequate to provide evidence on the theory of change and logframe indicators?**
- **How relevant are the data in the context of the Roadmap and Partnership?**
- **Are the tools and methods appropriate and fit for purpose?**
- **How can systems and processes of data collection be improved, e.g. in terms of efficiency, reliability and coverage?**

The work will be focused on a review of the qualitative and quantitative tools developed for the Baseline Study and 1st Annual Progress Report on monitoring and impact and subsequent indicator data collected from projects under the FNSSA Partnership that were funded by H2020, LEAP-Agri and AURG.

It is expected the selected external independent evaluator will review collected monitoring data using a methodological framework driven by the evaluation criteria described in the FNSSA Roadmap and detailed below, and guided by the Theory of Change and the indicators agreed in the Logframe.

1. Advancement of knowledge;
2. Conduct of capacity building and targeted research activities;
3. Uptake of research outputs to scale;
4. Improved coordination of European and African R&I activities;
5. Effectiveness of multi-disciplinary teams in mobilizing stakeholders and sourcing funds;
6. Operationalization of capacity and mechanisms for knowledge and innovation mobilization.
7. Institutional and technical evolution of the R&I Partnership;
8. Enhancement of collaborative capacities of European and African R&I communities;
9. Impact of research on communities;
10. Capacity to inform and influence policy and decision making;
11. Dissemination of knowledge.

Recommendations are to be drawn from the evaluation which will support future indicator data collection tools, systems and strategies for the evaluation of the EU-Africa R & I FNSSA Partnership.

Meetings, reporting and timelines

The external independent evaluation will be conducted using desk-based reviews of the quantitative and qualitative datasets collected by the ACU.

The external independent evaluation is expected to start on 1st March 2021 with a draft report submitted for review on the 26th March 2021, comments from the draft report will be provided to the evaluator within 1 week of submission and approval. Final submission of the report to the ACU and the LEAP4FNSSA WP 1 co-leaders will be on the 9th April 2021.

The total budget available for the external independent evaluation is €8,750, including VAT (bids exceeding this amount will not be considered). 25% of the budget will be paid on the submission and approval of the draft report of the external independent evaluation, with the remainder paid on submission and approval of the final external independent evaluation. Following the selection process, details of the workplan are to be submitted by the consultant/organisation and approved in consultation with the ACU, and the LEAP4FNSSA WP 1 co-leaders. The subcontractor has no rights or obligations towards the Commission/Agency or the other beneficiaries (it has no contractual relation with them).

Confidentiality

The external independent evaluation is confidential, and to be disseminated only for the ACU, members of the Working Group and other relevant members of the Consortium.

Deliverables

Deliverable	Date Due
First draft of an external independent evaluation report on monitoring tools and data collection	26 th March 2021
Comprehensive final external independent evaluation report that puts forward the evaluator's findings and recommendations on monitoring tools and data collection.	9 th April 2021

How to apply

If you are interested in carrying out this first external independent evaluation, please send a company profile to tim.fry@acu.ac.uk, indicating your previous experience in relation to evaluation work done for reputable entities and a tender including the following elements:

- Organisational profile (including detail of evaluations completed in the past) and CV's (max 2 pages) of proposed project team
- Technical proposal (3 pages maximum) including proposed evaluation questions, methodology and delivery plan
- Full budget presenting the costs
- A sample report from a previous project evaluation

Submission of expression of interest by email to: tim.fry@acu.ac.uk by 12th February 2021, any submissions after this date will not be accepted.

Evaluation criteria for applications

1. Experience of designing or managing evaluations of projects or programmes involving complex international, multi-stakeholder consortia
2. Experience of delivering or working with projects in the international relations and or international development sector
3. Clear identification of evaluation questions relating to the data quality and relevance
4. Clear identification of evaluation questions relating to the indicator data collection tools, systems and processes.
5. Value for money within the proposed scope of work and budget available
6. Not be a member of the LEAP4FNSSA project

Evaluation criteria

The evaluation of the proposals will be based on “best value for money” with the following criteria and percentage weighting.

Criteria	Percentage weighting
Quality of the proposal	50%
Experience and competences of the submitting team	50%

Evaluation process

The Task 1.4 leaders the ACU, will evaluate the submitted proposals according to the evaluation criteria and make a prioritized list of recommendations for the WP1 co-leaders and the Coordination to decide who should do the evaluation.

Conditions

The results and the delivered study report will be owned by LEAP4FNSSA and will be confidential.

The conditions mentioned in the ToR are not for negotiation.