

Recruitment of the Head of Agriculture and Rural Finance Access to Finance Rwanda

Access to Finance Rwanda (AFR) was established in 2010 as a not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) in Rwanda with the objective of creating an inclusive financial market for rural and low income populations in Rwanda with a focus on women and youth. Existing funders of AFR include DFID, the MasterCard Foundation, Sweden and USAID.

Access to Finance Rwanda is part of the Financial Sector Deepening (FSD) Network in Africa.

AFR's strategic objective is to incentivize and enable inclusive financial sector development in support of Rwanda's economic transformation. AFR stimulates financial sector development by partnering with financial institutions and other stakeholders to increase supply, access to and use of financial services as well as to incentivize efficient allocation of resources to sectors with significant growth and employment creation potential. We identify and address constraints that prevent the financial market from reaching Rwanda's low-income population, and promote innovations and learning that result in sustainable change in the financial sector. Improving access to financial services for the rural poor and women is a particular focus. The goal of the programme is to trigger changes in products, financial service delivery and market behavior which go beyond AFR's direct efforts. AFR's role as a financial market enabler is in line with the making markets work for the poor (M4P) approach.

Currently the programme focuses on five thematic areas:

1. Supporting the capacity and systems development of financial service providers that serve the poor, with a specific focus on automating the operations of Rwanda's Umurenge SACCOs and their connectivity to micro financial institutions and commercial banks;
2. Supporting the flow of financial services to the agriculture sector;
3. Digital financial services
4. Risk mitigation to include insurance and development of pensions for informal sector workers; and
5. Market development and facilitation

AFR focuses on unlocking constraints to agriculture finance because of the sector's critical role in support of economic transformation and poverty reduction. 70% of the labour force, rely on agriculture as their primary source of livelihoods. Relative productivity increases have led to rural poverty reduction over the past decade. In order to continue to drive poverty reduction agriculture must realize further productivity increases. Currently low agricultural productivity stems from a range of capacity, investment and market coordination weaknesses. Agriculture is also poorly linked into agro-processing, manufacturing, tourism and service based value chains. Agriculture has the potential to be a driver of economic transformation through gradual commercialization and agricultural processing. This will grow incomes in agriculture and lead to a transition into higher productivity activities in industry and services. Nevertheless the agricultural productivity gap has been stagnating since 2011 and only 1.9% of new loans authorised in 2015 went to the agriculture, fisheries and livestock sector according to the Central Bank. The main reasons provided by banks as to the low share of credit flowing to the agriculture sector include the high risks associated with weather dependent agriculture, lack of collateral, the low loan value per applicant, and high administrative costs.

The position

It is against this background that AFR currently has a portfolio of five projects to model different ways of de-risking finance into agriculture with a range of market players. The Head of Agriculture and Rural Finance will assume strategic leadership of AFR's agricultural portfolio. She/he will be expected to revisit existing initiatives and strategy in light of emerging lessons, sustainability, scalability and potential for wider market impact. She/he will also be responsible for designing new interventions which help the sector reach its full potential by focussing on effective exploitation of backward linkages of industry, commercialization and vertical supply chain integration.. The role manages the organization's strategic and business plan objectives related to extending agriculture financial services, particularly for women and youth in rural areas. The position requires a good understanding of enabling factors and tools for market systems strengthening. It also provides the opportunity to interact with key decision makers within Government Departments and related agencies, the private sector and the international donor community.

The main areas of accountability and responsibility include:

- a) Co-ordinate research in order to understand the ecosystem of the Agriculture & Rural Finance sector and inform intervention frameworks.
- b) Lead topical market system analysis and identify cutting edge issues and knowledge gaps that should be tackled within existing or new projects with regard to making finance work for agriculture.
- c) Refresh AFR's strategy for intervention in the Agriculture & Rural Finance sector; ensuring that a logical theory of change for developing the sector is defined.
- d) Assume effective strategic leadership of the existing portfolio and staff and adapt project design in line with latest learning to ensure sustainability and maximum market impact.
- e) Assure alignment to the M4P and market system's approach while building capacity of the team in this area.
- f) Identify & steer Implementing Partners to develop a portfolio of impactful projects.
- g) Effectively manage implementing partners, to ensure lessons are captured and acted upon, results are achieved, risks are managed and that quality projects are delivered.
- h) To actively participate in the development and implementation of AFR's Communications plan; ensuring that the plan will result in key stakeholders being influenced effectively.
- i) To lead the unit in a manner that empowers the team and ensures delivery of AFR's goals and objectives.

Educational Qualifications

MBA or relevant Master's degree

Job Related Experience and Knowledge

- a) At least five years experience within the international development space with experience in agriculture finance
- b) Prior experience in the financial service industry of a middle income country or a leading international management/strategy consulting firm preferred
- c) Specific experience structuring or managing agriculture financing instruments within a financial institution will be an added advantage

- d) Relevant technical and leadership skills with demonstrated success in influencing industry and government
- e) Strong leadership skills with demonstrated success in developing staff and building institutional capacity
- f) Strategic capacity to challenge and design effective policy and programming
- g) Strong analytical abilities, both qualitatively and quantitative
- h) Experience in supporting market development and access, supply chain management and business case development using an M4P approach
- i) Ability to work under pressure and to coordinate with multidisciplinary stakeholders and advisors
- j) Experience working in Rwanda or East Africa is preferred
- k) Fluency in English in both technical report writing and speaking

The position will be hired under local contract terms.

How to Apply

If your qualifications and experience match the requirements for this role, please email your application to AFR at the following email address: procurement@ afr. rw clearly indicating the Subject Line “Application for the position of Head of Agriculture and Rural Finance”

All applications should be sent **via email**.

Please attach your **CV** containing your e-mail address, daytime telephone contact, qualifications, achievements, experience, present position and names & addresses of three referees together with a **cover letter** (maximum 2 pages) summarizing why you consider yourself particularly well suited for the position. **Do not attach any other documents at this point.**

Closing date for receipt of applications will be on a rolling basis until the position is filled.

All applications will be selected on merit and **only shortlisted candidates** will be contacted and invited for interviews.

For any questions regarding the application process please contact **Access to Finance Rwanda on: +250 782 507 751.**