

International Fund for Agricultural Development

**Formulation of the SCCF Climate Resilience through Conservation Agriculture
Project in Moldova**

**Study n.2: Assessment of tools and policies for mainstreaming
conservation agriculture and soil conservation at both institutional and
local levels.**

The practice of conservation agriculture (CA) is knowledge intensive, as it requires a deep understanding of its ecological foundations in order to optimize resource use and sustainable intensification of production while protecting and enhancing ecosystem processes over the long-term. The lack of knowledge on CA systems and their management, and the lack of policy support and incentives makes it difficult and socio-economically risky for farmers to give up current unsustainable farming practices. Although the adoption of CA is often motivated within European farmers by the reduction of costs in machinery, fuel and labour, soil and water conservation concerns do not appear to be key drivers in the decisions to shift to CA or not.

1. Objectives of the consultancy

This study will lead to the identification of a set of targeted capacity building and awareness raising activities focused on the CA principles, knowledge, skills and practices as well as the associated learning and adoption processes by all concerned stakeholders at the policy and implementation levels. The assessment will be based on a review of existing best practices and experiences applicable to the context of Moldova on CA learning and knowledge sharing, and on mainstreaming CA into agriculture and rural development policies to have a clear commitment to sustainable agriculture intensification compatible with ecosystem functions and services. The study will conclude with the design of a capacity building program and communication strategy at the institutional, research and local level to increase awareness and knowledge for the adoption of climate-smart CA and soil conservation/restoration approaches in rural development and farm production.

2. Main tasks

The main activities under the consultancy will be:

- a) Assess barriers and gaps for the adoption and implementation of CA and soil conservation approaches at all levels (national and local) and determine the specific needs of all targeted categories of potential CA adopters at all levels (policy, governance, research, technology development, information, capacity building needs, etc). Particular focus would be on: (i) decision makers; (ii) farmers and their organizations, research, extension services on agriculture, livestock and forestry, NGOs, and other relevant practitioners.
- b) Assess opportunities and needs for designing a "training local trainers" program to ensure the availability of well-prepared experts and extension agents to guide farmers in the adoption and scaling up of CA and soil conservation/restoration approaches/measures tailored to the environmental, socio-economic and technological context in Moldova, and to the special needs of small farmers.
- c) Identify centers of excellence and the best modern scientific expertise on CA and soil conservation (preferable in Europe) and plan learning tours and training programs, as well as networking opportunities for information sharing.

- d) Define a coherent approach and specific interventions for institutional strengthening for CA and soil conservation/restoration at all levels, with particular attention to farmer organizations, academic institutions, governmental institutions, agribusiness companies, and NGO.
- e) Define specific strategy/interventions needs for communication and outreach on climate-smart sustainable agricultural and soil conservation with focus on the local/community level and relevant rural development sectors (agriculture, livestock, forestry).
- f) Provide a list of relevant and measurable indicators for each proposed activity leading to better understanding of climate change mitigation at all levels and institutional monitoring and reporting of carbon stocks and fluxes.
- g) Provide project costing elements for the proposed activities (unit costs and overall costing). Financial envelopes should be aligned with the approved PIF.

3. Expected outcomes

The expected outputs and deliverables are:

- i. Assessment of gaps and barriers for CA and soil conservation/restoration in Moldova
 - The document will provide a core section on stakeholders' needs assessment for type of interventions, reflecting understanding of realities on the ground, that would lead to improved knowledge and capacities to apply CA and soil conservation/restoration measures, including needs for institutional development, participatory planning and legal frameworks (at all levels). The study will conduct a comprehensive assesment focusing on barriers at all levels and outlining the root causes and bottlenecks to CA and soil conservation/restoration at the national level that could be tackled through the SCCF project, responding to priorities identified through desk review and consultations with relevant national stakeholders.
- ii. Assessment of outreach and communication needs at local level
 - The study will identify gaps and specific needs to undertake a communication and awareness strategy related to climate-smart sustainable agriculture and soil conservation opportunities, benefits compared with business as usual, and tradeoffs at the decision-makers and community levels, as a way to increase the beneficiaries' engagement/understanding of the planned activities. The consultant will deliver the design of a coherent program/activities for information and awareness raising with specific information (e.g. number of tools/groups/targeted people, information sessions etc). It will also provide baseline values for the proposed targets including a list of relevant and measurable indicators for each proposed activity.
- iii. Definition of activities leading to strengthened capacity for adaptation at all levels by:
 - Providing precise information on the actual investment needs (in terms of size and cost) for specific capacity building programme/activities related to CA and soil conservation/restoration. The training/capacity building activities will be defined and described, through clear results and precise objectives in terms of targeting (e.g. number of groups/people for training, n^o of training sessions, type of training, etc).
 - Including a clear targeting strategy (criteria) for the implementation of the proposed activities. It will also provide baseline values for the proposed targets including a list of relevant and measurable indicators for each proposed activity.

Activity costing elements for each proposed activity (entailing unit costs and overall costing) will be provided. Financial envelopes should be aligned with the approved PIF. The documents should be provided to IFAD (ECD team and the Country Program Manager) in English and in an electronic format (in Word and/or Excel format).

4. Supervision

The consultant will work under the joint responsibility of the IFAD Environment and Climate Division (ECD) team and Country Program Manager (CPM) for Moldova. The consultant will carry out his tasks in close consultation with the relevant agencies of the Government of Moldova and all

relevant national stakeholders. The consultant will work closely with the IFAD Project, as well as in close consultation with the team leader and other members of the team.

5. Required expertise

The consultant (institutional/targeting and/or capacity development specialist) should have a minimum of 10 years of experience in the field of sustainable agriculture, agro-forestry, land management. Good knowledge of climate change, particularly in relation to the agronomic sector is a must. The consultant must be fluent in English.

6. List of documents

The following documents will be provided for reference to the consultant, as follows:

- SCCF Project Identification Form (PIF)
- GEF/SCCF related strategic documents
- GEF Templates for CEO Endorsement
- IFAD's Country Strategic Opportunities Paper (COSOP) for Moldova
- Second National Communication of Moldova to the UNFCCC
- Any other key/relevant information