



Job Description: Water Smart Agriculture Technical Advisor

Technical Advisor – Water Smart Agriculture, Global Water Initiative

Job Description

The Global Water Initiative (GWI) is funded by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation (HGBF) and is implemented by a consortium of NGO partners led by CARE, CRS, IIED and IUCN. GWI operates in Central America, East Africa and West Africa. GWI began a new phase in 2012 that prioritises improved water management in agriculture with a vision that:

“Water is used efficiently and equitably, enabling farmers to improve food security, become more resilient and sustain themselves, their communities and the world through agricultural production.”

GWI works with networks in each region to implement prioritised actions and to use lessons learned from the results achieved to inform, support and shape key national and regional policy processes on water and agriculture. GWI is aiming to use influence on policy to catalyse change on the scale needed for widespread and rapid improvements in sustainable water management on smallholder farms. This will help GWI move toward its vision of improving food security in vulnerable communities and countries.

GWI and its partners identified that, to complement GWI’s programmes at national and regional levels, advocacy and communications need to be strengthened and better coordinated at global level. A ‘Coordinator – GWI Policy and Advocacy’ (GPAC) has been working since 2013 to position GWI relative to global policy platforms on water and on agriculture – such as the Committee on World Food Security and the World Water Forum – and to develop and begin to rollout a GWI advocacy strategy. GWI’s advocacy at global level is focused on the use of GWI’s evidence from the field as the basis of a call for policies on agriculture and on water to prioritise investment and change needed for Water Smart Agriculture (WaSA).

WaSA is envisioned by GWI, like WASH has done for water supply and sanitation, as a framework for packaging investment and interventions in water resources management. The concept and principles of WaSA will be developed further by the GWI partners and wider networks. In scope, it will:

- Empower farmers to make better choices of farming systems, by making use of knowledge, skills, extension and other services and with resource security assured by good governance of water and land
- Result in production increases alongside increases in the efficiency of rainfall utilisation (ie. ‘green water’) and/or of water use for irrigation (ie. ‘blue water’)
- Use conservation agriculture to improve soil health, with benefits for both water storage and crop nutrition

- Reduce the water-related risks of farming and enable adaptation to climate variability and climate change
- Accelerate gains in farm productivity, with the gains used to help farmers build better lives and to increase returns on investment and job creation in the agricultural sector
- Ensure that water saved in agriculture is allocated in ways that strengthen water security for all, reduce water conflicts and restore and conserve ecosystems.

The position of ‘Technical Advisor – Water Smart Agriculture’ will expand the capacity and effectiveness of GWI’s work on global-level policy and advocacy. The Technical Advisor will support implementation of the GWI advocacy strategy in close collaboration and with direction from the ‘GWI Policy and Advocacy Coordinator’ (GPAC) by supporting the Coordinator and the GWI partners to define, develop and later advance the WaSA concept and strategies for influencing policy at the global level. The Technical Advisor will undertake research and analysis to deepen the evidence base for WaSA, including through case studies of regional GWI activities, and apply the results to the formulation of policy recommendations and in advising GWI on strategies for further development, advocacy and promotion of WaSA.

The Technical Advisor will support the Coordinator and GWI partners in outreach and advocacy activities, through for example authorship of publications and by representing GWI in policy forums on water, agriculture and food security. The Technical Advisor will functionally report to the GPAC but work under a contract with IUCN. The Technical Advisor will work closely with the Coordinator to design and execute global advocacy activities, with input and guidance from a consortium of four global organizations.

Terms of Reference

The Technical Advisor – Water Smart Agriculture will be responsible for the following tasks:

Policy Engagement and Outreach

- Work in close collaboration with the GPAC to execute a global advocacy program that incorporates the WaSA concept and the work of GWI in Central America, East Africa and West Africa. The Technical Advisor will help the GPAC gather and incorporate technical research and expertise to inform global advocacy, communications and policy-related efforts, in coordination with the consortium of four international GWI partner organizations.
- Advise GWI, under the direction of the Coordinator, on strategies for further development, advocacy and promotion of WaSA, including the formulation of policy recommendations.
- Authorship and publication of technical synthesis papers on WaSA and of policy briefs for use in support of GWI’s advocacy strategy, as well as other relevant written outputs such as blogs.
- Advise the GPAC and communications staff on the technical content of multimedia communications outputs.
- Representation of GWI in conferences and in technical dialogues related to policy platforms on agriculture and on water, to promote critical assessment and further conceptual and technical development of WaSA.
- Development and management of networks of scientific and policy professionals relevant to the analysis and dissemination of WaSA concepts and recommendations.

Research and Technical Analysis

- Desk-based research into the technical requirements for WaSA and the effectiveness and costs and benefits of practices for implementing WaSA to ensure that the concept of WaSA is scientifically and technically sound.
- Case studies of WaSA and the components of WaSA to consolidate lessons from practice and to ensure that the scientific foundations for WaSA can be related to practical implementation by farmers, water managers and their supporting agencies and service industries.
- Synthesis of the evidence-base and learning on WaSA into guidance on the practice of WaSA and in particular alternative packages of interventions for application in different social, economic, environmental and governance contexts.

Policy Analysis and Advice

- Analysis of options for policies and strategies for WaSA through effective translation of relevant science and practice into identification of changes in agricultural, water and other relevant policies that will create the needed enabling environment for WaSA and prioritization of investment.
- Develop and further elaborate recommendations for a policy framework for WaSA that can be promoted at global level through GWI's advocacy strategy and engagement with governments, civil society networks and the private sector.
- Provide advice to GWI regions and seek their input on how a WaSA policy framework can be tailored and targeted to available entry points for policy influencing and change relevant to the agricultural and water sectors at national and regional levels.
- Advise the GPAC and GWI partners on the rollout of GWI's advocacy strategy, including by ensuring that key messages are supported by sound scientific, technical and policy analysis.

Selection Criteria

The Technical Advisor – Water Smart Agriculture will ideally meet the following criteria:

- Master's degree or doctorate in agricultural science, agricultural water management, conservation agriculture or a related discipline.
- Track record of work related to both the agricultural and water sectors and therefore ability to catalyse and promote dialogue and exchange between them.
- Experience designing or executing a global advocacy program is desired.
- Ability to bridge technical research and information and global policy, communications and advocacy outreach is required.
- Excellent capacities for research and inter-disciplinary synthesis of learning and evidence.
- Ability to write for a policy audience demonstrated through high quality publications and communications outputs that translate science and practice into policy.
- Experience working with a consortium of global partners is desired.
- A minimum of 6 years' experience of policy-relevant work or advocacy in agriculture and water, including experience working in Africa and/or Latin America.
- Experience working in and fostering collaborative networks that link science and policy.
- Demonstrated capacity to promote and facilitate technical dialogues, including through policy platforms relevant to the agricultural and water sectors.

The successful candidate will have excellent inter-personal communications skills with strong natural diplomacy. Experience working with multi-partner projects will help the candidate to achieve the expected results. The post requires fluent English, with excellent writing skills. Ability to speak Spanish and/or French will be an advantage.