



## Call for Independent Advisors to research institutions and think tanks in support of Global Development Network programs in Francophone Africa

### Background

The Global Development Network is a public international organization that supports high quality, policy-oriented, social science research in developing and transition countries to promote better lives. GDN has significant experience in providing demand-driven capacity building support in fragile contexts; in particular, through the program Capacity Building in Least Developed Countries (in Bhutan, Ethiopia and Laos, 2014-18, funded by IDRC), its work with research institutions in Latin America (Ecuador, El Salvador, 2015-2019, funded by IADB) as well as through its work on the research systems of many countries (global Doing Research initiative).

GDN works across a very wide range of themes and countries. Since its foundation in 1999, GDN has paired independent advisors with its grantees (institutions or research teams) in the context of its research and research capacity building programs. GDN adapted traditional mentoring approaches in use in academia and in other sectors to support projects and their teams, across all GDN programs, whether they focus on research grants, research capacity strengthening grants or larger institutional capacity strengthening grants. GDN program leads are trained development researchers with experience in capacity building, but we leverage the expertise and the experience of technical advisors to provide independent specialized support to our grantee. More about GDN's approach to mentoring and the role of Independent Advisors can be found [here](#).

GDN is currently calling for interested individuals with relevant and demonstrable experience and strong interest in institutional research capacity building in Francophone Africa to join a roster of Independent Advisors. Selected individuals will be offered an opportunity to support GDN grantees in two upcoming programs in Francophone Africa.

### These two new programs, funded by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) are:

1. The first program will support **five selected social science research institutions in enhancing their research capacity, based on self-identified priorities and strategies**, and in **boosting research production on policy relevant topics by young researchers**. It will provide the selected institutions with capacity building funds, and a budget for managing a competitive granting process targeting young researchers and focusing on the links between the economic, environmental and social dimensions of sustainable development in the region (24 months). The program will also encourage regular exchanges between the participating institutions on how to effectively strengthen research capacity in the Francophone African research space.

2. The other is a capacity building program dedicated to **think tanks in the Sahel** (eligible countries: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal) will soon be launched. The program will support capacity strengthening of think tanks over a shorter time frame (**two rounds of support of four think tanks** during 12 to 18 months), **based on self-identified priorities and self-defined strategies**. The objective is to increase the impact of research-based evidence work by think tanks in public and policy debates in the Sahel. Think tanks will be supported in their endeavors to produce high-quality research-based evidence on Sahel's development, and disseminate it strategically with multiple audiences. Interactions between think tanks in the region will also be strengthened, through regular regional policy and networking events.

## **The role and responsibilities of the Independent Advisor**

Independent Advisors are expected to:

- commit to support one institution each over the timeframe of the program (12/18/24 months), including participation to up to three short events (in presence, and occasionally online);
- co-develop a communications plan, with the paired institution, to set the pace and scope of interactions on the project, based on the nature of the activities proposed;
- review, discuss and assess the range of possible actions that the selected institution proposes, and their justification based on the analysis of their operating environment (internal/external) included in the proposal, but also in light of the resources and timeline available;
- support the institution's team in developing and finalizing an M&E framework for the project;
- discuss the narrative reports with the team before they are submitted to GDN;
- provide a minimum of three short written assessments on the promise, progress and achievements of the project, for discussion with both the institutions and GDN.

**A more detailed description will be provided in the Terms of Reference.**

### **Profile**

- Demonstrable research experience in the social sciences (with a focus on topics related to public policies and/or sustainable development)
- Experience developing evidence-based approaches to capacity building in the higher education/academic or non-academic research sector (think tanks)
- Experience working in at least one Francophone African country
- Ability to work both in French (working language of the targeted institutions) and English (GDN's official work language)
- Asset: experience developing schemes for young researchers and/or supervising or coaching young researchers (Master's, PhD or post-doctorate level)
- Asset: experience developing institutional partnerships focused on research.

### **Recruitment process**

Please send the following items to [recherchefrancophone@gdn.int](mailto:recherchefrancophone@gdn.int) by **8 January 2023**:

- a Curriculum Vitae
- a cover letter summarizing your motivation and describing up to three major professional capacity building experiences;

- a short essay (up to 600 words) on *'What are, in your opinion, the qualities of a good mentor?'*

**Important:** Please specify in the body of the email whether you are applying for « Programme 1 » or « Programme 2 » or both.

Please use the following format for the title:

**Application for Roster of Technical Advisors - [YOUR NAME]**

If you are pre-selected, we will contact you for a brief interview (in French and English).

Following a successful interview, GDN program managers will send the Terms of Reference to discuss the task as well as propose a tentative match with an institution.

**Conditions**

An honorarium will be provided. The exact amount and payment schedule will be presented in the proposed Terms of Reference.