TITLE: Sector Research Officer

PARTNER(S): TRAX and the University of Development Studies (UDS) Ghana

COUNTRY AND PLACE OF ASSIGNMENT: Bolgatanga, Ghana

CONTRACT DURATION: According to your program’s requirements

DESCRIPTION:

Uniterra is a leading Canadian international volunteer cooperation and development program, jointly implemented by the Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI) and World University Service of Canada (WUSC). Uniterra contributes to improving the socio-economic conditions of poor and marginalized communities in 14 countries and with over 170 partners in Africa, Asia and the Americas through the exchange of expertise and knowledge of Canadian and international volunteers. Uniterra believes that economic growth, when inclusive, is the most powerful driver of poverty reduction. The purpose of the Uniterra program is to improve the lives of some of the world’s most vulnerable populations by stimulating growth and facilitating access to the benefits of growing and diversified markets. To make this happen, we are working with our local partners to enhance the income of poor and marginalized women and youth through better access to employment and income generation opportunities. Uniterra country program staff work with our local partners to design Uniterra assignments in the context of the country strategy, supporting the inclusion of women and youth in key economic subsectors.

For more information on the Uniterra program, our approach and countries of focus please visit: Uniterra.ca.

This mandate will bring together the skills and knowledge of Ghanaian and Canadian students and university faculty. It is a follow up to the baseline and market research conducted by Uniterra in the last two years. This research is one of the joint key activities designed by Uniterra, partners and stakeholders during a validation workshop on guinea fowl implementation framework. The research is one of the activities that will unlock opportunities for women and youth and thus provide leverage in the area of information and data to many organizations working in the guinea fowl value chain in Ghana.

In spite of the huge potential within the guinea fowl subsector in Ghana, the industry is characterized by rudimentary practices, therefore posing an entry barrier to many interested women and youth. This action research is intended for the entire benefit of the Uniterra project, partners and stakeholders working in the guinea fowl value chain in Ghana. It is however a collaboration between local non-governmental organizations (NGO’s), the University for Development Studies (UDS), Uniterra and Canadian and Ghanaian students. Teams will be formed of Ghanaian and Canadian students, working under the guidance of key staff persons from Uniterra, UDS and Canadian universities.
The research seeks to identify significant but untapped and hidden knowledge, practices and potentials that abound in the guinea fowl value chain in the northern parts of Ghana. The Upper East region is one of the research focus points where TRAX Program Support (TRAX), a non-governmental organization, is going to act as host to the research team with technical and financial support from UDS, Uniterra and Canadian and Ghanaian students.

TRAX was established in 1989 and works with smallholder farmers in northern Ghana (Upper East and Northern regions) on improved agricultural and sound environmental management practices, development of skills in income generation, ICT and local organization structures. TRAX is well established and has developed excellent rapport with their project communities.

TRAX interventions at the grassroots level involve a programming framework that builds on indigenous knowledge, reliance and use of local resources and focuses on core areas of sustainable farming and environmental conservation, alternative sources of livelihoods, rural enterprise development and community self-reliance through the process of institution building and training of Community Trainers (CTs) as “lead farmers”. The program support facilitates formation of farmer groups, sustainable land management committees and trains farmers to easily adopt soil and water conservation techniques such as erosion gully control and rehabilitation, composting, tree growing, grass stripping, crop residue management, organic integrated pest management, construction of energy saving mud stoves, intensive wildfire prevention and management and construction of improved animal pens among others.

TRAX promotes the development of alternative income generating activities, particularly for women and youth. We believe that any increase in income can enable the rural poor to tackle a wide range of needs, whether in health, education or social development. We promote commodities such as shea, honey, support dry season farming, and promote “pay-back-gift” credit schemes of improved seeds, small ruminants, soya bean and guinea fowl.

The selection of TRAX as host to this action research in documenting existing best practices in the guinea fowl production, processing and marketing is well-grounded in the belief that the organization has very strong ties with local communities and has the capacity to store, replicate and transfer the knowledge that will come out of this project and also to ensure sustainability of the project.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Review existing data on the guinea fowl value chain and identify potential information gaps in the the area of best practices.
- Research into existing documented and indigenous best practices of guinea fowl production, processing and marketing.
- Research and document into existing support mechanisms available for guinea fowl breeders in the country.
- Present research findings of study in a form which will be usable by stakeholders.
- Ensure that women and youth are well represented in the research.
- Write reports required by TRAX and the Uniterra program.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Recent graduate and/or pursuing a bachelor’s or Masters degree in Social Science or International Development Studies
- Must have interest in social research;
- Must have knowledge in research and basic statistics;
- Knowledgeable in MS Word, Excel, SPSS, PowerPoint etc.;
- Must be willing to work in rural areas;
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively;
- Ability to work in an intercultural environment;
- Fluency in English.