

## NCST is announcing the Request for Application (RFA) on

### IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH ON MALNUTRITION & STUNTING IN RWANDA

#### Background

The Government of Rwanda is committed to funding research and innovation development through National Research and Innovation Fund (NRIF) that was launched in June 2018. The overall goal is to enhance opportunities for data-driven innovations and integration of research findings into policy and practice to improve the wellbeing of Rwandan citizens. Implementation research using innovative methods to address stunting & malnutrition as major challenge affecting Rwanda is critically important to improve high quality and standards of life for Rwandans. Achieving high quality of wellbeing for Rwandans is enshrined in the National Strategy for Transformation (NST-1) as the medium-term plan to achieve Rwanda's vision 2050. Therefore, in order to achieve the national development targets, it is imperative to address stunting and malnutrition which is one of emerging national social, economic, and environmental challenge affecting Rwanda.

#### Purpose and Scope

The Demographic Health Survey (DHS) 2019/2020 report indicate high effects and various levels of malnutrition and stunting in children under age 5 years in Rwanda. The report indicates 33% under 5-year children are stunted (*too short for their age*), 9% are severely stunted, 1% are wasted (*too thin for their height*), and less than 1% are severely wasted. Furthermore, 8% of children are underweight (*too thin for their age*), 1% being severely underweight, and 6% of children are overweight. Malnutrition and stunting have an intimidating unfavorable country-level impact as this is associated with inadequate human capital development, If not addressed, this will negatively affect Rwanda's national development and transformation agenda towards knowledge-based and high income-economy in 2050.

Successful projects will utilize implementation research to address malnutrition *not only* directed towards food security or improving the diets of children only, *but also* comprehensively addressing gender inequalities, strengthening the education and decision-making process of men and women through family cohesion, improving sanitation and reducing poverty and social inequities. Interventions shall focus on implementation innovative research addressing various determinants of malnutrition and stunting. Examples include but not limited to a) improving the **health and wellbeing of women** b) improving mainly **under 5 years children nutrition and wellbeing**; c) focusing on **household increased income and quality of family wellbeing**; and d) **improving environmental conditions** in terms of access of clean water, availability of good toilets, overall communal sanitation and access to health facilities.

Therefore, the National Council for Science and Technology (NCST) in collaboration with International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Canada intend to support Implementation Research addressing **malnutrition and stunting** that are associated with inadequate human capital development, which affects the ability for human resources engagement in increased production of goods and services and income-earned from production. Multi-disciplinary and multi-sectorial collaborative approach of Rwandan researchers and global scientists, from various institutions will be utilized to raise awareness for this challenge. The goal shall be to develop long-term innovative solutions.

**NCST is announcing the Request for Application (RFA) on**  
**IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH ON FERTILIZERS IN RWANDA**

## **Background**

The Government of Rwanda is committed to funding research and innovation development through National Research and Innovation Fund (NRIF) that was launched in June 2018. The overall goal is to enhance opportunities for data-driven innovations and integration of research findings into policy and practice to improve the wellbeing of Rwandan citizens. Implementation research using innovative methods to address stunting & malnutrition as major challenge affecting Rwanda is critically important to improve high quality and standards of life for Rwandans. Achieving high quality of wellbeing for Rwandans is enshrined in the National Strategy for Transformation (NST-1) as the medium-term plan to achieve Rwanda's vision 2050. Therefore, in order to achieve the national development targets, it is imperative to address stunting and malnutrition which is one of emerging national social, economic, and environmental challenge affecting Rwanda.

## **Purpose and Scope**

Rwanda is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. The economy is largely based on rain-fed agricultural production from small, semi-subsistence, and increasingly fragmented farms, where more farming households cultivate less than a hectare of land. Intensive farming practices across the country lead to soil loss and declining soil fertility on the top of the acidic nature of Rwanda soils. Improving the management of soil fertility is part of important solutions of addressing food insecurity and rural poverty in the context of high population pressure and limited possibility of putting new land under cultivation. In addition, the fertilizer value chain in Rwanda faces challenges that need to be tackled in order to bolster fertilizer adequacy, access, consumption and raise agricultural productivity.

Successful projects will utilize implementation research that comprehensively addressing the challenges of fertilizers at national level. Interventions shall focus on implementation of innovative research addressing various factors of fertilizer. Examples include but not limited to **a) Improving utilization of locally available raw materials for fertilizer production and scale up; b) broadening range of fertilizer formulations/blends to improve adequate economic returns to fertilizer use; c) improving environmentally sustainable availability, access and proper and diversification use of fertilizers for improved crop productivity.**

Therefore, the National Council for Science and Technology (NCST) in collaboration with International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Canada intend to support Implementation Research addressing challenges of fertilizers in Rwanda, which if addressed it would help improving soil health and fertility which is part of important solutions of addressing food insecurity and rural poverty in the context of high population pressure and limited possibility of putting new land under cultivation. Multi-disciplinary and multi-sectorial collaborative approach of Rwandan researchers and global scientists, from various institutions will be utilized to carry out implementation research studies for this challenge. The goal shall be to develop long-term innovative solutions.