   

Masters Research Grants – Fish Trade Program in Africa

# Introduction

The WorldFish Center with the funding from the European Commission (EC) has joined efforts with AU-IBAR and NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA), to implement a programme called “*Improving Food Security and Reducing Poverty through Intra-regional Fish Trade in Sub-Saharan Africa*” (also referred to as Fish Trade Program). The Fish Trade Program aims to improve food and nutritional security and reduce poverty in sub-Saharan Africa by enhancing the capacities of regional and pan-African organizations to support their member states to better integrate intra-regional fish trade into their development and food security policy agendas. The Program works within the four corridors in Africa (Western, Southern, Eastern and Central) aims to deliver on the following results:

* Generate information on the structure, products and value of intra-regional fish trade in food security in Sub Saharan Africa and make it available to stakeholders.
* Come up with a set of recommendations on policies, certification procedures, standards and regulations, and get them well embedded in national and regional fisheries, agricultural, trade and food security policy frameworks in sub-Saharan Africa.
* Enhance the capacities for trade amongst private sector associations, in particular of women fish processors and traders and aquaculture producers, to make better use of expanding trade opportunities through competitive small and medium scale enterprises; and
* Facilitate adoption and implementation of appropriate policies, certification procedures, standards and regulations by key stakeholders participating in intra-regional trade in the four trade corridors.

This program focuses on four main African trade corridors, in Western, Southern, Eastern and Central Africa. It is focused in three main areas namely to:

1. Strengthen the evidence base for coherent policy development at national and regional levels,
2. Support the formulation and implementation of appropriate policies, standards and regulatory frameworks to promote intra-regional fish trade, and
3. Strengthen the capacity of private sector associations, in particular of women fish traders, to enhance the competitiveness of small- and medium-scale enterprises engaged in this trade.

The Program responds to the potential of Africa’s intra-regional fish trade in addressing the region’s food and nutrition insecurity, as well as poverty reduction through wealth creation which has been overlooked and neglected in national and regional policy. As a result, intra-regional fish trade has largely remained informal, with substantial volumes traded by artisanal and small – medium enterprises, mostly by women.

African Union and its Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have therefore prioritized strengthening of regional trade and have identified fish and fish products as key commodities for investment and policy support. This is evidenced in the African Union Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture document which clearly aims to “*Promote responsible and equitable fish trade and marketing by significantly harnessing the benefits of Africa’s fisheries and aquaculture endowments through accelerated trade and marketing”*.

**Nature of Research Grant**

This research grant forms part of the mentorship program which aims at building the capacities of the youth and young professionals in Africa through active engagement in the program implementation process. This is based on the assumption that there exists huge opportunity to generate volumes of data on fish trade in Africa, and the project offers opportunity to even generate more information which can be capitalized on to inform national and regional policies at the same time bring forth academic excellence to a number of individuals who can help in contributing to the development of Africa at large if their capacities are built.

**Eligibility**

It is expected that the candidates should be from AU Member states and should have completed their course work in any of the following Universities which are participating in the implementation of the Fish Trade project;

1. University of Abidjan, Ivory Coast
2. University of Dakar, Senegal
3. University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
4. University of Douala, Cameroun
5. University of Ghana, Ghana
6. University of Ibadan, Nigeria
7. Lilongwe University of Agriculture & Natural Resources, Malawi
8. National University of Rwanda Other Universities within the regions will also be considered but priority will be given to the Universities above

The students should be pursuing masters or have proven background in the following programs; Economics, Fisheries Economics, Agriculture Economics, International Trade and other related programs.

The candidate should be willing to undertake the study in the southern corridor and parts of eastern corridor, such as Rwanda at the minimum possible cost.

**Selection Criteria**

The selection of candidates shall be done through a rigorous exercise, consisting of independent reviewers. The basis of selection shall be made on academic merit obtained at Masters Coursework and evaluation of content of concept note.

**How To Apply**

The candidates must develop a five paged concept note together with their supervisors and must have an endorsement letter from their supervisors and should include the followingkey sections;

* Indicate the country in which the study will be undertaken
* indicate the university of study, degree program being undertaken and indicative courses so far studied under this program
* Clearly indicate what they are going to do and how they are going to do it (proposed methodology)
* Linkage of academic study to overall fish trade project
* How their project will contribute towards achievement of their national developmental goals
* How they are going to collect data and analyze their data to ensure that the work is publishable and have an academic tone
* Expected Results
* An indicative budget for the whole study and workplan

Candidates shall be requested to attach transcripts from their masters course work and a letter of consent from supervisory committee.

The applications shall be addressed to

NEPAD Regional Fish Node

Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Box 219

Lilongwe

Malawi

Email: [fishnode@yahoo.com](mailto:fishnode@yahoo.com) with copies to: [lissubby@gmail.com](mailto:lissubby@gmail.com) ; [ekaunda@yahoo.com](mailto:ekaunda@yahoo.com) ;

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To reach not later than 4th September 2015