



Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme

at the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies, Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari (CIHEAM -Bari)

Position: *Expert in Digitalization for Agriculture*

Unit: *Development and Planning Area*

Duty station: *CIHEAM Bari, Valenzano (BA), Italy – with field missions in countries where CIHEAM Bari operates*

Type of post: *Fixed-term contract (Grade A5/4)*

Duration: *2 years*

BACKGROUND

The Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari (CIHEAM Bari, Italy) is one of the four institutes of the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM). CIHEAM is an intergovernmental organisation with a mandate for the development of activities in higher education, vocational training, research and cooperation. It was established in 1962 and is composed of thirteen Mediterranean Member States (Albania, Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey). Its General Secretariat is based in Paris. CIHEAM's missions are to train agriculture executives from the Mediterranean countries, to carry out studies and research on Mediterranean agriculture within its international context, and to implement cooperation and development projects with the countries and actors of the Mediterranean region. CIHEAM Bari is a Centre for post-graduate training, applied scientific research and international cooperation programmes. Currently, CIHEAM Bari works in around 25 countries in the Balkans, MENA Region, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

In conformity with the Statute of the Organisation, CIHEAM Bari announces a vacancy for the position of n.1 Junior Professional Officer at CIHEAM Bari, Valenzano (BARI), Italy, with possible field missions in countries where CIHEAM Bari operates.

1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Purpose of the job:

In the rapidly evolving landscape of agriculture and development, digital technologies play a critical role in enhancing productivity, sustainability, and efficiency. It is crucial to leverage these technologies to improve

agricultural practices, promote rural development, and improve food security. Under the coordination of the Head of the Development and Planning Area, the Junior Professional Officer will provide expert guidance and support in the digital transformation of agricultural practices and rural development initiatives.

Key Functions:

The expert will undertake the following tasks:

1. Assessment and Analysis:

- Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the current digital landscape in the agricultural and rural development sectors in relevant regional/ national contexts. This includes utilizing methodologies such as surveys, interviews, and focus groups to gather data from diverse stakeholders and mapping existing digital initiatives and assess their effectiveness and scalability.
- Identify key challenges, gaps, and opportunities for digitalization by evaluating technological infrastructure, digital literacy levels, and regulatory environment in relevant countries. This will allow to identify barriers to digital adoption, including financial, technical, and social constraints.
- Analyze existing digital tools and platforms used within relevant organizations and by external stakeholders. This includes performing a SWOT analysis of current digital solutions in selected countries.

2. Strategy Development:

- Develop a digitalization strategy aligned with relevant organization's goals and objectives, by defining clear strategic priorities and objectives for digital transformation within agricultural value chains. This shall be carried out in alignment with national and regional digital strategies.
- Recommend digital solutions and technologies to enhance agricultural productivity and rural development, including IoT (Internet of Things), AI (Artificial Intelligence), and mobile applications, ensuring cost-effectiveness, scalability and sustainability.
- Create an implementation roadmap with clear milestones, timelines, and resource requirements. This includes developing adequate action plans and identifying potential funding sources and partnerships to support implementation.

3. Capacity Building:

- Design and deliver training programs to build digital competencies among staff and stakeholders, including the development of tailored curricula and training modules aimed at varied levels of digital proficiency.
- Provide technical support and guidance on the adoption and use of digital tools.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor the impact of digital initiatives. This includes defining qualitative and quantitative metrics to assess progress and outcomes and setting up effective data collection and reporting mechanisms to track KPIs.
- Develop a framework for continuous evaluation and improvement of digital strategies by conducting regular reviews and assessments to identify areas for improvement.

5. Stakeholder Engagement:

- Facilitate partnerships with technology providers, research institutions, and other relevant organizations by initiating and managing collaborations to leverage external expertise and resources. Pilot projects and innovation hubs could also be established where relevant.
- Engage with farmers, rural communities, and other stakeholders to ensure inclusive and participatory digitalization processes: this includes organizing community workshops, forums, and focus groups to gather input and feedback to ultimately promote digital inclusion initiatives to ensure accessibility for all segments of the population.

Key Results:

- Conduct comprehensive training sessions focused on the integration of digital technologies in development projects, improving both technical skills and strategic thinking.
- Develop training materials and resources tailored to the needs of various stakeholders within agricultural value chains.
- Provide hands-on workshops to build capacity in digital tools and platforms for development professionals and include interactive and experiential learning techniques to enhance engagement and retention.
- Offer guidance on best practices, case studies, and innovative approaches to leverage digital solutions in development contexts, by maintaining an up-to-date repository of digital resources and knowledge-sharing platforms.

2. QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS REQUIRED

Minimum Requirements

- Advanced degree in Agriculture, Information Technology, Development Studies, or related fields.
- A minimum of 2 years of proven experience in digitalization projects within the agriculture and/or development sectors.
- Good command of spoken and written English and French (CIHEAM's two working languages).

Competencies

- Excellent analytical, strategic planning, and project management skills.
- Strong communication and stakeholder engagement skills.
- Experience working with diverse stakeholders, including farmers, rural communities, technology providers, and government agencies.
- Ability to assist the management of diverse tasks and facilitate relationships among multiple parties.
- Ability to work efficiently in a team environment as well as independently.
- Organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Ability to use discretion and high level of trustworthiness.

Technical Skills

- Knowledge and relevance of experience in project cycle management (PCM).
- Strong understanding of digital tools, technologies, and platforms relevant to agriculture and rural development.
- Expertise with and knowledge of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

- Analytical and conceptual skills with ability to write concept notes, project documents and papers and ability to analyze and integrate diverse information from various sources.

Desirable Qualifications and Skills

- Additional educational and professional qualifications, as well as certificates relevant to the professional profile to be conferred.
- Proficiency in all programs in the Microsoft Office Suite; experience in other computer programs desired.
- Sound knowledge of the Result Based Management approach.
- Extent and relevance of experience with International Organizations.
- Good command of spoken and written Italian.

Qualified female applicants are encouraged to apply for this position as CIHEAM Bari aims to ensure an inclusive working environment and is committed to achieving a gender-balanced staff.