



## **THE AFRICAN SCIENTIFIC, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION COUNCIL**

**Impact of COVID-19 on Africa's Food and Nutritional Security  
Working Group ToR  
(Draft)**

## Introduction

The African Union's Executive Council Decision (EX.CL/Dec.747 (XXII)) established ASRIC as a specialized Technical Advisory Body to the African Union with African Union, Scientific, Technical and Research Commission (AU-STRC) as its Secretariat. The ASRIC promotes scientific research and innovation in order to address the challenges of Africa's socio-economic development. It also mobilizes African research excellence and provides a platform for dialogue among African scientists and serves as a voice of the scientific community in building and sustaining continental research and innovation nexus.

Launching the ASRIC and its Congress in November 2018 was a land mark in the Science, Technology and Innovation impact on Africa's future and prosperity. The ASRIC Congress is composed of African scientists from all the African National Science Academies, National Research Councils, top Science, Technology and Innovations (STI) Institutes in Africa, Diaspora Scientists and Partners. The Congress decides on the implementation of key science and technology programme and projects in accordance with the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024) and the overarching continental framework AU Agenda 2063.

The STISA-2024 is the first of the ten-year incremental phasing strategies to respond to the demand for science, technology and innovation from various impact sectors. The STISA-2024 is built upon four pillars, one of which is **building technical and professional competencies that** are anchored on six distinct priority areas that contribute to the overall development of Africa. One of the priorities is **Eradication of hunger and achieving food security.**

According to the latest Africa's Pulse, the World Bank's biannual economic update for the region, economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa has been significantly impacted by the ongoing corona virus outbreak. The report forecasts a sharp fall in virtually every aspect of livelihood and the first major recession in the region over the past 25 years. COVID-19 will cost the African region between \$37 and \$79 billion in output losses for 2020 due to a combination of facts like trade and value chain disruptions that impact commodity import and export, reduced foreign exchange and inflows from remittances, tourism, direct foreign investments, foreign aid, capital flight, fragile health systems, environmental pollution and unequal trade balances.

These economic turn-downs of Covid-19 will ignite a food and nutritional security crisis in Africa. According to the Pulse report, agricultural production in the continent is projected to potentially contract between 2.6% in an optimistic scenario up to 7% if there are trade blockages. Food imports would decline substantially reaching 13% to 25% due to higher transactional costs. Other factors including fears of virus contaminated imports and exports as well as importing vessels which might spike resistance by the populace against imports.

In light of the above mentioned and building on ASRIC's mandate as advisory body to the AU and its Member States, the onus lies on ASRIC, to respond to these challenges.

The ASRIC is launching a working group that will address the **Impact of Covid-19 on Africa's Food and Nutritional Security.**

### **Objective**

The working group has the objective to develop a guided response that will minimize the impact of Covid-19 on Africa's Food and Nutrition Security in order to ensure the wellbeing of Africa's citizens.

### **Mandate of the Working Group**

The working group is mandated to:

- a- Develop a situational analysis on the food and nutritional security in Africa in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- b- Develop a guideline to assist Member States in developing their own regulation on transport/shipment of foods and agro-products i.e. (in country movement and transboundary movement) in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- c- Examining the consequences of Covid-19 by critically examining crop yields, agro safety, nutrition, food security, plant improvement programmes, environmental pollution and impact on less fortunate vulnerable members of society and proffering solutions to overcome these impacts and estimated cost of the proffered interventions.
- d- Develop policy brief and policy guidelines to address the current and future (similar) challenges to food and nutrition security in Africa.
- e- Examine the possibilities and the way that Covid-19 may present any opportunity for our continent to domesticate the economy through promotion of local production, value addition and processing, regional trade thus reducing foreign domination and reliance on imports.
- f- Identify research gaps/opportunities to strengthen the continent's capacity to respond to future threats to Food and Nutrition Security

### **Deliverables**

The working group is to work and deliver as per the actions identified in its mandate.

### **Duration**

The period is for one year with a possibility of extension for another one year based on the needs of the programme and availability of fund.

### **Modus Operandi**

1. You will remain in your place of domicile;
2. You are expected to work with colleagues virtually for now;
3. You will be invited for meetings anywhere within the continent if the need to be.

## **Service Reward**

- Members of the working group are participating voluntarily i.e. the participation in the Board will not attract any payment but should incase there is meetings that involves travels, the ASRIC will borne the cost of your travels and daily subsistence allowance according to the UN rates.
- At the end of the programme you will receive a recognition certificate from the ASRIC for your valuable contribution to the continent and ASRIC in this difficult time.