

VACANCY FOR:

CLIMATE SMART AGRO FINANCE SPECIALIST

JOB TITLE: Climate-Smart Agro Finance Specialist

REPORTS TO:: Chief Executive Officer



MARKET CONTEXT

Nigeria's agricultural sector, which employs over 70% of the rural population and contributes approximately 22% to GDP, faces significant challenges in energy access and climate resilience. The sector remains heavily dependent on fossil fuel-powered equipment, inefficient irrigation systems, and outdated processing technologies that contribute to high operational costs and environmental degradation.

Current agricultural operations are characterised by limited access to reliable electricity for processing and storage facilities, dependence on diesel-powered irrigation systems and machinery, post-harvest losses exceeding 40% due to inadequate cold storage and processing infrastructure, and vulnerability to climate variability affecting crop yields and food security.

The transition to climate-smart agriculture presents substantial opportunities for Nigeria to enhance food security, improve farmer incomes, and contribute to national climate goals. This transition requires investment in renewable energy solutions for agricultural operations, energy-efficient processing equipment, smart and solar-powered irrigation systems, and climate-resilient infrastructure. Conservative estimates indicate that achieving comprehensive energy transition across Nigeria's agricultural value chain will require investment of at least US\$15 billion over the next Decade.

However, agricultural companies face significant barriers in accessing capital for energy transition investments largely due to perceived high-risk profile of agricultural lending, limited collateral and credit history among smallholder farmers and agribusinesses, lack of specialised financial products tailored to agricultural energy investments, and insufficient understanding among financial institutions of climate-smart agricultural technologies and the revenue potential.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

InfraCredit, in partnership with the Shell Foundation, British International Investment (BII), UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), and other strategic development partners, is co-developing a five-year catalytic programme aimed at accelerating rural electrification and sustainable agriculture in Nigeria. The initiative addresses the critical financing gap restricting smallholder farmers and agro-processors from accessing affordable, clean energy-powered Productive Use of Energy (PUE) equipment.

The initiative is anchored under the Climate Finance Blended Facility (CFBF) structure combining concessional and commercial capital, alongside a technical assistance grant. With an initial pilot fund size of \$1.7 million (\$1 million concessional loan and \$0.7 million technical assistance grant), the programme seeks to unlock access to clean, electric-powered agricultural processing technologies for smallholder farmers and agro-processors, particularly in unserved and underserved regions of Nigeria to:

- Facilitate local currency financing for PUE equipment
- Reduce foreign exchange exposure risk for rural SMEs
- Promote climate-smart agricultural processing powered by decentralized clean energy
- Aggregate demand via OEM partnerships and farm aggregator networks
- Pilot scalable asset financing models such as lease-to-own for sustainable adoption
- Generating real-world data and learning to support replication and scale

The project aims to support up to 560,000 farmers by 2030, improving productivity, rural incomes, and energy demand for mini-grid developers.



PROBLEM STATEMENT

Nigeria's agricultural sector faces a critical energy crisis that threatens food security and economic growth across the nation. Despite employing over 70% of the rural population and contributing 22% to GDP, the agriculture sector is severely hampered by unreliable grid electricity, with 10 grid collapses recorded in 2024 alone. This energy instability forces Nigeria's 40 million smallholder farmers and agribusinesses to rely heavily on expensive diesel generators, which is estimated to consume 50-60% of production costs and collectively cost agro processors over NGN1 trillion (\$2.2 billion) annually

The resulting high operational costs erode profitability, undermine competitiveness, and create significant barriers to adopting climate-smart agricultural technologies that could enhance productivity and resilience. This energy bottleneck directly impedes progress toward Nigeria's Agricultural Transformation Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal 2, creating an urgent need for sustainable, distributed renewable energy solutions.

The transition to climate-smart agriculture through renewable energy integration faces a substantial \$15 billion financing gap, compounded by systemic market failures and investor hesitancy.

Despite Nigeria's pension funds managing NGN16.8 trillion (7.8% of GDP), less than 1% of the respective infrastructure assets are allocated to agriculture, reflecting broader institutional reluctance to invest in the sector. Some of the key barriers include macroeconomic instability, regulatory uncertainty, limited fiscal incentives, and a lack of bankable project pipelines that demonstrate clear returns on renewable energy investments in agriculture.

Private investors remain sceptical due to perceived risks, while there is insufficient awareness of how distributed renewable energy can transform agricultural value chains through solar-powered irrigation, cold storage, and processing facilities. Addressing these challenges requires targeted interventions to de-risk capital, develop standardized green finance instruments, improve project preparation, and engage institutional investors through viable transaction structures that align with Nigeria's dual priorities of agricultural modernisation and clean energy transition.

InfraCredit has developed Climate Smart Agro strategy which seeks to aggregate, de-risk and unlock domestic institutional investments to support eligible climate-smart agricultural projects in Nigeria to contribute towards meeting Nigeria's food security goals, and the SDG targets of ensuring sustainable agriculture and clean energy access as well as enhancing farmers economic livelihood, whilst putting Nigeria on a path to achieve net zero emissions by 2060.

To support the climate-smart agro PURE execution capacity to bring these projects to financial close within key performance milestones agreed with co-funding and development partners, InfraCredit supported by technical assistance is seeking a climate-smart agro specialist to work alongside its climate-smart deal team in originating, structuring and executing PURE projects to achieve targeted annual transaction values for climate-smart agro sub-sector.



SCOPE OF WORK

The Climate-Smart Agro Specialist will be required to carry out the following activities:

Transaction Structuring and Credit Assessment

- Design and structure innovative financing models tailored to agricultural energy projects, incorporating risk-sharing mechanisms and blended finance approaches.
- Develop financial models and assessment frameworks that account for agricultural seasonality, commodity price risks, and climate variability while modelling for PUE projects.
- Conduct comprehensive credit assessments for agricultural energy projects while incorporating technical & commercial, operational risks amongst others.
- Structure transactions and innovative financing enhancement mechanisms appropriate for different categories of climate-smart agro related projects

Pipeline Development and Transaction Origination

- Establish systematic approaches for identifying, evaluating, and developing climate-smart agro financing opportunities.
- Design and implement project screening criteria specific to agricultural energy transition investments.
- Develop standardised due diligence frameworks for assessing agricultural energy projects, including technical, financial, and impact evaluation methodologies.
- Create and maintain comprehensive project pipeline tracking systems with sector-specific metrics and milestones whilst using the transaction reporting systems

Sector Strategy and Market Development

- Develop comprehensive market assessments of energy transition opportunities across agricultural value chains, identifying priority sub-categories and investment themes
- Design sector-specific investment strategies that address unique characteristics of agricultural energy projects and align with facility objectives..

- Build strategic partnerships with agricultural technology providers, original equipment manufacturers, and energy service companies including mini-grid operators

Impact Measurement and Reporting

- Establish sector-specific impact measurement frameworks that capture agricultural productivity, climate, and socioeconomic outcomes.
- Develop regular reporting systems for tracking activities and performance in agricultural value chain.
- Prepare case studies and documentation to demonstrate impact and attract additional partners.
- Coordinate with development impact team to ensure detailed impact assessment and MEL reporting.

Stakeholder Engagement and Knowledge Sharing

- Build relationships with development partners, donors, other stakeholders and investors focused on climate-smart agro space.
- Facilitate knowledge sharing and learning exchanges among agricultural energy project stakeholders.
- Design and implement capacity building programs for agri businesses seeking energy transition investments.
- Create educational resources and toolkits for development partners and donor agencies interested in financing energy transition projects for agro companies.

Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) and Process Management

- Develop and implement SoPs guiding investment/financing strategies, execution and operational workflows.
- Document responsibilities, timelines, and approval requirements for climate smart agro activities.

- Provide critical data and update climate-smart agro transactions and database on the transaction reporting system.
- Ensure all transaction related documents, reports, templates, and operational materials are organised and up to date.
- Monitor transaction performances and generate regular reports to development partners.



EXPECTED OUTCOMES / OUTPUTS

The workstream is expected to deliver the outcomes outlined below:

1. Comprehensive sector strategy document outlining investment priorities, target markets, and implementation roadmap for climate-smart agriculture investments
2. Enable productive use of energy (PUE) AssetCo financing transactions in line with the Climate-Smart Agro strategy.
3. Standardised due diligence and project assessments frameworks designed for agricultural energy transition projects.
4. Build and maintain project pipeline of eligible agricultural energy financing opportunities.
5. Preparation, structuring and presentation of climate-smart agro transactions in line with InfraCredit's eligibility criteria and credit standards.
6. Maintaining and establishing strategic partnerships key players in the sector including OEMs, technology providers, development partners and donor agencies.
7. Implementation of knowledge sharing programs for climate-smart agro related projects
8. Regular sector performance reports demonstrating productivity, climate impact, and financial ratios amongst others.
9. Detailed standard operating procedure for execution of transactions under the climate-smart agro productive use of energy strategy.
10. Up-to-date and real time transaction database and pipeline information.



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Originate and develop climate-smart agro productive use of renewable energy project pipeline of eligible PUE transactions or agricultural energy related deals of over NGN 15 billion.
- Develop and design standardised due diligence framework and project assessment tools as well as reporting templates covering the critically important due diligence work streams across PUE asset categories including solar irrigation, processing equipment, cold storage, e-mobility solutions.
- Present and defend climate-smart agro PURE transactions in line with InfraCredit's eligibility criteria to Board committees of up to NGN 10 billion.
- Negotiate and execute climate-smart agro PURE transaction fee letters of up to NGN 5 billion across the PUE categories.
- Prepare and structure up to five productive use of renewable energy projects using the PUE AssetCo financing model across the PUE categories which enables transactions of up to NGN5 billion reach financial close.
- Enable climate-smart agro PURE transactions that directly impact a minimum of 15,000 smallholder farmers, of which 30% should be women farmer participation within the first 12 months, with economic improvements and a goal to scale the impact on farmers income and livelihood by 5X.
- Prepare and maintain standard operating procedures (SOPs) covering all aspects of climate-smart agro PUE strategy execution, including transaction origination, due diligence, structuring, execution and monitoring processes, with full adherence while ensuring quarterly documentation of all processes and responsibilities, timelines, and approval requirements.
- Maintain comprehensive, real-time transaction database capturing all pipeline transactions, with weekly, monthly and quarterly updates and strategic pipeline assessments whilst ensuring data accuracy and providing automated reporting for both internal and external stakeholders.

- Timely preparation and delivery of all project pipeline information, project funding reports, other transaction resources whilst ensuring compliance with reporting obligations for all stakeholders on quarterly and annual basis.
- Design and deliver comprehensive knowledge exchange programs for climate- smart agro stakeholders through frequent and/or quarterly roundtables, workshops, conferences, and learning series.
- Establish and maintain strategic partnerships with key sector players including OEMs/technology providers, development partners, donor agencies, and other climate-smart agro stakeholders



QUALIFICATION, EDUCATION AND REQUIREMENTS

Candidates for the role should possess the following qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics, Environmental Science, Finance, Agricultural Engineering, or closely related field; Master's Degree (MBA, Agricultural Development Finance, or Development Economics).
- Relevant professional qualifications in agriculture, finance and other related subject areas are an advantage.
- Up to eight years of experience in agricultural development, rural finance, or climate finance, with at least three to five working with development finance institutions (DFIs).
- Good experience working with multilateral development agencies, development finance institutions (DFIs) and donor agencies.
- Proven experience in transaction structuring, credit assessment, and analysis for agricultural and/or infrastructure projects.
- Deep understanding of agricultural value chains, farming systems, and rural economic dynamics in Nigeria.
- Financial modelling and structuring complex risk sharing and blended finance transactions as well as risk assessment and mitigation strategies
- Knowledge of renewable energy technologies, energy efficiency solutions, and climate-smart agricultural practices.

- Sound understanding of blended finance mechanisms and development finance structures and strategies
- Strong analytical, project management skills and systematic problem-solving abilities, with excellent communication, writing and stakeholder engagement capabilities.
- Ability to effectively manage competing deadlines for projects in a fast-paced work environment, with varying degrees of supervision.
- Acute attention to detail and a dedication to providing high-quality reports.
- Proficiency in the use of all Microsoft Office applications, particularly MS. Excel and MS. Power Point.



COMPENSATION

Negotiable



WWW.INFRACREDIT.NG