



Candidate Brief

Senior Scientist, Seed Systems

CABI Africa

January 2015



CABI BACKGROUND

CABI (www.cabi.org) is a not-for-profit development-led organization supported by a solid scientific research base and a world class publishing service. Our mission is to improve people's lives worldwide by providing information and applying scientific expertise to solve problems in agriculture and the environment. Our work increases food security and protects biodiversity.

We have over 350 staff based in 16 countries. We have offices in Brazil, China, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Pakistan, Switzerland, Trinidad & Tobago, the UK and the USA.

CABI is an intergovernmental organization that can trace its origins back to 1910. Our mission and direction are influenced by government representatives from our 46 member countries who help guide the activities we undertake. These include scientific publishing, development projects and research, and microbial services. We are also leading a major new initiative, Plantwise, which aims to improve food security and the lives of the rural poor by reducing crop losses.

Publishing

We produce key scientific publications, including CAB Abstracts – the world-leading database covering agriculture and environment and Global Health - the definitive bibliographic database for public health information. We also publish multimedia compendia, books, ebooks and full text electronic resources aiming to further science and its application to real life. Behind each of our products is a team of subject specialists committed to delivering the most relevant and authoritative information to researchers worldwide.

Development projects and research

Our staff research and find solutions to agricultural and environmental problems. We use science, information and communication tools to help solve issues of global concern. Our work is arranged around four core themes:

- **Commodities** – we work to enable smallholder commodity farmers to compete in global markets. We diagnose and control plant pests and diseases, and help farmers get a better price for their crops. We work on crops such as coffee, cocoa, wheat, rice and cotton.
- **Invasive species** – we are helping to reduce the spread and impact of invasive weeds such as Japanese Knotweed, water hyacinth and insects such as coffee berry borer and cocoa pod borer. We also advise countries at a policy level about agriculture, trade and the environment.
- **Knowledge for development** – we work with farmers, extension workers, researchers and governments to deliver agricultural knowledge and develop communication strategies and systems.
- **Knowledge management** - we use information and communication technologies to provide farmers, researchers and policy makers with the information they need to make informed decisions and to lift people out of poverty.

Microbial services

We manage one of the world's largest genetic resource collections, the UK's National Collection of Fungus Cultures. We conduct microbiological identifications, provide cultures for sale, and offer preservation and consultancy services. We are also screening our collection, looking for natural products such as antibiotics, vitamins and enzymes.

Plantwise

Plantwise aims to increase food security by providing knowledge. It helps poor farmers in developing countries improve their livelihoods by losing less of what they grow to plant health problems. This will be achieved through expansion of the plant clinic network which CABI has already begun to establish, supported by the creation of a global knowledge bank of information on plant health, pests and diseases. Plantwise will be a global programme, comprising an integrated set of projects and activities. www.plantwise.org



THE ROLE

Job title:	Senior Scientist, Seed Systems
Salary range:	Commensurate with skills and abilities
Grade:	6
Reporting to:	Deputy Director, Development
Direct reports:	TBA
Key peer group:	Project Managers and Senior Scientists in CABI Africa and other CABI centres worldwide
Location:	Nairobi, Kenya or Accra, Ghana

Background on Good Seed Initiative (GSI)

The purpose of the Good Seed Initiative is to improve the seed systems on which poor and small-scale farmers rely in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. The initiative focuses on landraces and improved varieties of cereals, legumes and vegetables that smallholder farmers want to grow, either for consumption by their own households or for which there is a viable and growing demand from consumers or agribusiness. Crops targeted are mostly open pollinated varieties (OPVs). At the heart of the initiative are five complementary and overlapping strategic objectives:

1. Better farmer-saved seed. To improve the quality of farmer-saved seed, for either own use or for use by others in the local community, through non-commercial and unregulated (informal) systems
2. New improved varieties from landraces. To increase access, especially by the poor, to traits and qualities found in promising landraces, such as disease tolerance, by taking them through the stages of testing and development of varietal descriptors to formal varietal release, thus paving the way for commercialisation.
3. More effective pro-poor formal seed systems. To strengthen commercial and regulated seed systems in ways that are economically and environmentally sustainable, and which better meet the needs of the poor.
4. Sustained and growing demand for quality seed. To create more dependable and growing demand for quality seed of improved varieties through strengthening agricultural value chains.
5. Addressing crop health issues that impact on seed systems. To exploit CABI's comparative advantage in the area of plant health to support others to address crop health issue that impact on seed systems.

Purpose of the Role

CABI implements research and development projects across Africa in all four core themes described above. Seed systems work primarily falls within Knowledge for Development, but there are links to the other themes including Plantwise. CABI has established a good foundation in seed systems work in Africa, and there is an opportunity to extend and expand our work to increase the contribution in this important area. The seed systems scientist will play a key role in leading the initiative, coordinating and implementing project activities in the African region, as well as planning and developing new proposals. Project work includes supporting seed production, seed commercialisation and raising awareness of the importance of high quality seed. The scientist will also have the opportunity to contribute to other programmes and projects where their expertise is relevant. The role requires working closely with a variety of public and private sector partners in the



region, facilitating multi-stakeholder processes at national and regional levels. Additional responsibilities will include capacity development of private and public partners in activities related to seed systems.

Roles and responsibilities

- With public and private sector partners, plan, organise, and implement seed production and commercialisation plans, and provide technical backstopping.
- Engage with private sector, outgrowers and community-based seed producers in developing a sustainable market for seed, and monitor the production of high quality seeds for marketing
- Working with partners, improve their capacity through development of training modules on seed production, seed business management, seed multiplication, seed marketing, quality assurance, etc.
- Ensure effective networking, collaboration and communication with and between implementing partners
- Undertake and support research and evaluations of seed systems with partners in the region, to learn how best to promote seed system development.
- Analyse and document progress with implementation of the Good Seed Initiative as a strategic programme.
- Support and link with other CABI initiatives such as the Africa Soil Health Consortium (ASHC), Plantwise and build opportunities for synergies
- Support the continued development of the Good Seed Initiative as a long-term strategy, representing CABI at regional and international conferences, and developing funding propositions to donors.
- Closely collaborate and coordinate activities with Global Director, Knowledge for Development to improve overall project performance.



CANDIDATE PROFILE

Knowledge & Skills

- Deep knowledge and demonstrable experience in seed value chains, seed sector development, seed quality, design and management of field trials.
- Demonstrated ability to facilitate and build effective partnerships across the various parts of the seed supply chain
- Knowledge of methods in social science to support seed systems analysis, and of statistical methods for data analysis.
- Knowledge of agricultural development in Africa, and demonstrated ability to think strategically in developing and managing effective business plans
- Extensive experience of project development and management, including budget management
- Ability to synthesize scientific and technical information, and present or package it to communicate messages effectively to policy makers, scientists, extensionists, seed businesses and other audiences.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Fluency in English essential, with language skills in French desirable.

Education & Qualifications

- PhD in a relevant social or biological science
- At least 10 years' experience on seed systems particularly in developing countries

Personal Characteristics

- Ability to manage and motivate staff, build effective teams and encourage individual development and growth
- Ability to work both persuasively and diplomatically in a team-based environment with a high degree of complexity and ambiguity
- Hands-on problem-solver with strong analytical abilities and end-product focus

Special Circumstances

- Willing and able to travel away from home base and office for considerable periods.

NOTE

This job description is not intended to be exhaustive. It is expected that the post holder and CABI will adopt a flexible attitude and accept that the duties may have to be varied according to circumstances, in particular changing corporate requirements and individual development needs.



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

CABI is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from candidates irrespective of age, gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation or marital status. No applicant will be disadvantaged by conditions which cannot be shown to be justified and selection will be based on merit.

By taking the [CABI Equal Opportunities Survey](#), you will be helping us to follow best practice recommendations that employers should monitor selection decisions to assess whether equality of opportunity is being achieved. Please follow the link to take the survey.

(If the link does not work please cut and paste the following URL into your web browser http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CABI_Equal_Opportunities_Survey)

The information in the survey will be treated as confidential and used for statistical purposes only, forming no part of the selection process. This information will be received separately from your application.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply please send the following to recruitment@cabi.org quoting Job Reference **11/2015** and state where you saw this advertisement:-

1. a covering letter describing in full how you meet the candidate profile, and to include details of your current remuneration;
2. a full Curriculum Vitae;
3. the names and contact details of three referees, one of whom must be your current or most recent employer – referees will not be contacted without your prior permission

**Please note closing date for receipt of applications is Midnight
GMT UK, Friday 27th February 2015**

(this page intentionally blank)