



Senior Specialist – Blended Finance

Location: Nairobi, Kenya

Job Reference: SS/IMTF/04/2025

AGRA and its Work

AGRA is an African-led institution that actively supports the drive towards inclusive agricultural transformation and sustainable food systems. We do this by empowering the continent's 33 million small-farming households to transform their agriculture from a struggle to survive to profitable businesses. The continent's farmers regularly face challenges, and we aspire to provide uniquely African solutions that respond to their agricultural and environmental challenges, leading to increased harvests for reduced hunger and more income.

Working in alignment with the development priorities of our focus countries, we enable farmers to access improved and high-yielding seeds, gain knowledge on sustainable farming, and link to profitable markets. In our work, we aspire to build the alliances, partnerships, and networks required to drive an inclusive agricultural transformation. We work with our partners to create an equitable youth-friendly environment that harnesses the youth dividend on the continent to drive growth and facilitate open employment opportunities for young women and men. We achieve our key objectives through a focus on the following four areas of intervention:

1. Policy and state capability - We support governments in creating an enabling environment for private sector involvement in agricultural transformation.
2. Seed systems – We trigger higher productivity by increasing the availability and access to improved seeds by farmers, allowing them to increase their harvests for food security and better incomes.
3. Sustainable farming – We support farmers in building resilient farming systems for sustained high yields through interventions such as mechanization and irrigation.
4. Inclusive markets and trade – We work to increase the linkages between farmers and other market actors for a positive, sustained cycle of commercialization and reinvestment.
5. Youth, Gender, and Inclusiveness – We enable women and youth to contribute to and benefit from agriculture for their economic empowerment.

Implementing Our New Strategy Through People

People are the heart of our organization and remain the true drivers of our delivery and our impact.

We work with incredible people and partners who have roots in farming communities across the continent, combined with an inclusive and diverse workforce from over 24 nationalities. Our commitment to a call to action goes beyond ourselves as we arise to catalyze African Food Systems' transformation by being *Deeply collaborative, Executing Excellently, Sincerely Constructive, and Increasingly Entrepreneurial*, aligned with our values of (I-RISE; Integrity, Respect, Innovation, Stewardship, and Equity).

We are looking for people who are passionate about Africa to join our innovative, growing, and multidisciplinary team. Together, we can grow Africa's food systems by improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. Want to join us?



The Position

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Senior Specialist – Blended Finance supports governments and public institutions, including development banks, to play their role of leadership in creating an enabling environment that motivates potential funders (like DFIs/IFIs and financial services providers) to enter the food systems/agricultural sector, which is perceived as risky with low returns. This role influences governments and public institutions to make the agricultural finance sector more attractive for financial sector players through effective design and deployment of public sector instruments like input subsidy, guarantee schemes, and other de-risking tools and policies.

The ideal candidate will forge partnerships between Governments, public institutions, and financial sector players in the development, funding, and deployment of blended finance instruments that address the risks and gaps in financing the agricultural sector. S/He will support the development of models and instruments that enable the financial ecosystem to effectively fund the agricultural sector. The role holder will actively co-develop innovative risk mitigating instruments (including insurance) that unlock financing for Agribusinesses and farmers and promote, where necessary, the use of digital channels for financial services delivery to reduce risk and costs of financing the agricultural sector.

Key Duties and Responsibilities:

- Assess, analyze, and understand the Agricultural Finance situation in each of AGRA's 15 focus countries in relation to the country plans, focus value chains, availability of youth-focused funding, and AGRA's investment portfolio.
- Identify risks and market gaps in financing the input and output markets for the identified value chains in collaboration with the AGRA country staff.
- Identify relevant public sector partners (Ministries, Central bank, de-risking schemes, DFIs/IFIs, donors) that are instrumental in designing and deploying de-risking instruments and relevant policies and regulations that enhance financing of food systems with a focus on the agricultural sector.
- Support AGRA's country teams to engage public sector actors and enhance their role in reducing the cost and risk of financing the agricultural sector by introducing innovations and best practices through consultancies, convenings, and catalytic grants.
- Initiate dialogue with public sector partners on their role in financing the agricultural sector and the support that AGRA could bring to expand and improve financing of food systems. This could be through consultancies, grants, and convenings.
- Engage with public sector actors to support them in identifying opportunities and potential partners that improve access to financial services for food system actors.
- A trusted technical advisor to the Governments and, based on skills and evidence, advocates for the deployment of public funds to catalyze agricultural finance in the countries.
- Build strong networks in agricultural finance and stay abreast of market developments to proactively disseminate knowledge and experience to AGRA's partners, networks, and other stakeholders in Africa.



- Develop and optimize tailored solutions that grow the agricultural finance sector (using public and donor funding) as a project proposal or program, including facility structuring, negotiations, documentation, and delivery.
- Achieve Resource Mobilization for AGRA and the focus countries to expand the blended finance portfolio and profile of AGRA.
- Optimizes relevant data and information and analytics to support the Head – Inclusive Finance to drive effective negotiations with governments and donor agencies involved with dense, functional networks of blended finance partners throughout AGRA’s program area.
- Document and disseminate learnings derived from the blended finance work.

Key Qualifications and Experience Required:

- Bachelor’s degree from a reputable academic institution in a relevant field, such as public finance, agricultural economics, or business economics
- A master’s degree in (agricultural) business, macroeconomics, or another relevant field is desired.
- Experience in financial development, preferably in a public (funded) institution or an agricultural finance program in Africa
- Good knowledge of the structure and functioning of public sector institutions that can reduce the cost and risk of agricultural finance.
- Demonstrated expertise in designing and implementing blended finance structures that mobilize private capital to support inclusive and sustainable agricultural development.
- Experience in the financial and agricultural sector and working with relevant public institutions that influence the functioning of the financial ecosystem.
- Ability to align blended finance mechanisms with development outcomes and climate resilience in the agriculture sector.
- Proficiency in structuring concessional finance instruments (e.g., guarantees, subordinated debt, technical assistance) tailored to agricultural value chains and rural development context.
- Ability to work effectively and build the knowledge base of both national and regional teams in the specialized field of blended finance for food systems.
- Knowledge of market systems development (MSD) approaches and their interaction with blended finance intervention.
- In-depth understanding of the financing needs and challenges across agricultural value chains, especially in smallholder-dominated markets.
- Knowledge of the public regulatory regimes operating at the national level to identify areas for improvement in the financial instruments and products available to the agricultural sector.
- Proven experience working with bilateral and multilateral donors, development finance institutions (DFIs), and philanthropic organizations to mobilize capital and align funding with agricultural development objectives.
- Demonstrated ability to build partnerships that enhance the scalability and sustainability of blended finance interventions in agriculture.
- Excellent writing skills (ToRs, grant proposals, and knowledge documents) and communication skills (conducting webinars, chairing meetings, panel and moderation roles).



If you believe you are the right candidate for this position, please submit your application, including a detailed CV (with your email and telephone contacts), to recruit@agra.org. Please quote the job reference number **SS/IMTF/04/2025** in the subject line of the application e-mail.

Applications must be received on or before 25th April 2025. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

For more information on AGRA, visit www.agra.org.

AGRA is an Equal Opportunity Employer