The World Vegetable Center (WorldVeg) is a non-profit, autonomous international agricultural research center with headquarters in Taiwan and five regional offices around the globe. WorldVeg conducts research and development programs that contribute to realizing the potential of vegetables for healthier lives and more resilient livelihoods. For more information please visit our website: worldveg.org

WorldVeg is implementing a 5-year research project entitled “Safe locally produced vegetables for West Africa’s consumers” (SAFEVEG) funded by the European Union and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which started on 1 November 2020.

The Project will strengthen the role, production and availability of vegetables in local food systems in West Africa, thereby contributing to climate resilience across the vegetable value chain, increased incomes for and sustainable land use by smallholder farmers, and better nutrition for farm families and other consumers. SAFEVEG will be implemented in Benin, Burkina Faso, and Mali and will operate around urban centers in each country, involving rural and peri-urban farmers and consumers. SAFEVEG activities will raise awareness of the benefits of vegetable consumption and new vegetable production technologies, including farmer adoption of quality seed of locally adapted and climate resilient varieties, and safe agricultural practices. Demand and supply come together in vegetable business networks that create stable business relationships among consumers, traders/retailers, and farmers. SAFEVEG also aims to strengthen the capacity of national agricultural research systems and other partners in vegetable research and development and to generate evidence on the impact of policies and interventions promoting vegetable consumption and production.

WorldVeg is offering a 4-year PhD student fellowship, for undertaking research in Food Systems, to support the SAFEVEG project.

The PhD student, with the guidance of WorldVeg’s Lead Expert in Food Systems, will conduct Food Systems Assessments with a focus on vegetables for Benin, Mali and Burkina Faso, and analyze the impact of food system interventions. The student is encouraged to identify an academic supervisor at a university in good standing in one of the three project countries, to complement the joint academic supervision of the WorldVeg Lead Expert in Food Systems. The student will be based in the location/country of the university at which the student chooses to enroll, with occasional travel to other SAFEVEG project countries. The student will report administratively to the WCA-CH Regional Director; and academically and technically to the Lead Expert in Food Systems and the university advisor.
By the end of the 4th year of the internship, the student is expected to complete conceptual work through course work and review of literature to understand food systems and their assessment; methodological work to define and refine assessment approaches; empirical work to assess and analyze food systems change with relation to vegetables within and across the three project countries; and submitted a PhD thesis.

The Person: The student should fulfill the following requirements to be considered for the fellowship.

Essential:
- A national of one of the three project countries
- An MSc degree in development studies, social science, public policy, or a related discipline with a strong focus on applied social and/or policy research.
- Demonstrated ability in multi-disciplinary, multi-method applied research – and willingness to learn and think across disciplines and professions.
- Demonstrated interest in food, agriculture development and healthy diets.
- Able to speak and write French fluently, with very good working knowledge of English.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including academic writing and presentation.

Desirable:
- Familiarity with the vegetable sector and public health in West Africa.

Fellowship Benefits: Full coverage of tuition fees at an accredited university in one of the three project countries; a monthly stipend to cover living expenses for up to 4 years; and funds to cover research costs and reimbursement of travel costs related to the PhD among the project countries. In addition, the student will benefit from the combined academic supervision of the university professor and the WorldVeg food systems expert; and inclusion and interaction with researchers and partners under the broader SAFEVEG project.

How to Apply: Applicants should submit: 1) a letter of application explaining their suitability and motivation for the position and date of availability; 2) their curriculum vitae; 3) details of the university and academic supervisor identified (along with a letter of confirmation from the professor); 4) a recent passport size photograph; 5) names and addresses (including telephone/fax/e-mail) of two referees; 6) a short plan of 250 words outlining how they would approach starting a food systems assessment. The email subject line should clearly indicate “PhD student fellowship – food systems research”. Please submit your application by e-mail to worldvegbenin@gmail.com before February 1st 2021. We will plan for online interviews towards the end of February and offer the fellowship in March with a likely starting date of 1 April 2020.