



JOB DESCRIPTION

Project Officer: DRC Community Forests

Effective from: 1st January 2021

Reporting to: Programmes Finance and MEL Coordinator

Duration of Contract: 2 years (with possibility of extension)

Deadline: 29th November 2020

Overview: This is an excellent opportunity for someone with a strong commitment to social and environmental justice to join our London-based team to deliver a ground-breaking new project in the DR Congo supporting local and indigenous communities to protect and thrive in their rainforest home. Highly organised and with a sharp attention to detail, you will support technical and financial aspects of the project while working closely with our local partners to deliver its aims.

The Rainforest Foundation UK

Founded in 1989, the mission of the Rainforest Foundation UK (RFUK) is to support indigenous peoples and traditional populations of the world's rainforest in their efforts to protect their environment and fulfil their rights to land, life and livelihood by:

- Secure and control the natural resources necessary for their long-term wellbeing and managing these resources in ways which do not harm their environment, violate their culture or compromise their future.
- Develop means to protect their individual and collective rights and to obtain, shape and control basic services from the state.

Our approach differs from that of other organisations in that we are committed to both human rights and environmental protection. We firmly believe that the best way to protect the rainforest is through empowering indigenous peoples and local communities to defend their ancestral lands. We promote the establishment of community rights to rainforest lands, tackling the root causes of deforestation, and paving the way for local people to benefit fairly from the use and protection of forest resources.

RFUK is recognised as a leading force in the protection of tropical forests and their inhabitants, particularly in the Congo Basin region of Africa. As well as delivering high quality on-the-ground practical projects, often in difficult conditions, the organisation is also known for its strong policy and advocacy work in promoting forest peoples' rights.

We are part of a network of sister organisations, which also include the Rainforest Foundation US and the Rainforest Foundation Norway, and currently work with over 15 indigenous and NGO partners in the Peruvian Amazon and across West and Central Africa.

The Programmes Team

The Programmes Team at the Rainforest Foundation UK is the main team responsible for the implementation of our projects, with our work broadly split into the following thematic areas:

- Land rights and community-based forest management;
- Participatory mapping, community forest monitoring, and land-use planning;
- Threats to forests from the extractive industries, infrastructure development and agroindustrial expansion;
- Conservation effectiveness and the impacts of strict nature protection and forest offset schemes;
- Indigenous peoples' rights, gender and social inclusion.

The Project: USAID Funded Improving Livelihoods and Land Use in the Democratic Republic of Congo through Community Forests

The adoption of the Community Forests Decree in 2014 and its main bylaw in 2016 in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is arguably the most significant legal reform related to tropical forests and forest peoples' rights in recent years. This framework could impact as many as 40 million forest-dependent people and with tens of millions of hectares potentially available to develop pro-poor, community models of forest management.

Since its creation, RFUK has been continuously advocating and supporting the development of [community-based forest management in the Congo Basin](#) – something that is now widely recognised as being key to delivering strong conservation and development outcomes. Under a [DFID \(now FCDO\) funded project \(2016-2019\)](#), RFUK headed a consortium of Congolese and international NGOs that played a central role in laying the foundations for community forestry in DRC. The project facilitated the development and adoption of the [National Strategy for Community Forestry](#); consolidated the Multi-stakeholder Roundtable for Community Forestry as a deliberative policy making body; accompanied nine communities to apply for their community forest concessions; trained and built capacities among civil society and government officials at all levels; and produced a [ground-breaking body of resources](#), studies and tools to inform best practice in DRC and beyond.

USAID and other donors are now supporting RFUK and our consortium partners to build on these efforts to trigger a new phase of development of community forestry in DRC. The project, which will run from September 2020 to September 2025, has the central objective to consolidate community forests as a viable forest use model that enhances livelihoods while protecting forests. To this end, the project will pursue four main strands of work:

- Promoting land use planning, sustainable management and income generating activities in pilot community forests in Equateur, North Kivu and Maniema provinces;
- Tackling deforestation and protecting biodiversity in target sites;
- Advocating for the continued improvement of the legal framework and promoting transparency and good practice;
- Building capacities in government and local civil society.

Activities will be implemented in the field by a consortium of Congolese NGOs based in Kinshasa, Goma, Mbandaka and Kindu.

Responsibilities

The DRC Community Forests (CF) Project Officer will work from the Rainforest Foundation's London office, under the supervision of the Programmes Finance and MEL Coordinator to provide financial, administrative and technical support to ensure the DRC CF project objectives are achieved. The Project Officer will assist with planning, coordination, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the project.

The post-holder will work closely with the DRC CF project team, which includes the Chief of Party (based in Kinshasa) and Project Coordinator (based in London), and with partner organisations in the DRC. S/he will also have a close working relationship with other staff and consultants in the RFUK Programmes, Tech and Policy Teams.

The DRC CF Project Officer will be responsible for the following tasks:

1. Project management (technical) – 30 %

- Support the DRC CF Project Coordinator, Chief of Party and other staff to ensure the project and policy strategy is implemented by all partners and in line with the overall RFUK Programmes Strategy;
- Develop, monitor and lead on the administrative aspects of contracts for local partners and consultants and make sure they are aligned with RFUK policies;
- Contribute to the preparation of narrative reports of the project ensuring compliance with any requirements of the donor project management procedures;
- In coordination with other members of the team, contribute to the implementation of the project Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan;
- Undertake monitoring trips to DR Congo to review project progress with local partners and undertake any other work required to ensure the implementation of the project;
- Contribute to the continuous monitoring of the security situation in the DRC, referring to local information and the relevant sources, and ensure compliance with RFUK's security policies and procedures;
- Participate in regular internal coordination meetings concerning RFUK's community forests work, and represent RFUK in any similar meetings with external organisations;
- Support the implementation of project evaluations, including managing consultants' contracts and providing inputs in the evaluation process;

2. Project management (financial) - 40 %

- Work closely with the DRC CF Project Coordinator and Programmes Finance and MEL Coordinator to ensure adequate budget, financial and administrative management of the project according to RFUK procedures;
- In coordination with other project staff, prepare annual project budgets, monitor budget variance, and produce regular and accurate financial forecasts, to ensure efficient use of funds;
- Develop implementing partner and consultants budgets and oversee their use of project funds by reviewing financial reporting and forecasting, monitoring expenditure evidence and preparing risk-adjusted requests for funds transfer;

- Process and monitor project expenditure, in line with the agreed project budgets, ensuring all expenditure is compliant with donor requirements and RFUK's policies, including RFUK Procurement policy;
- Prepare financial reports of the project ensuring compliance with donor requirements and publish project financial information to IATI standards, as required;
- Reconcile project expenditure with organisational accounts and prepare monthly cash flow forecasts and internal reports;
- Support the coordination of project expenditure audits (RFUK and implementing partners);
- Supporting with the purchase of project equipment, when required and according to RFUK and donor procurement procedures and maintain accurate project equipment inventories, including of assets held by implementing partners.

3. Support to local partners – 20%

- Maintain permanent liaison with NGO partners involved in the project in order to implement and monitor the project activities;
- Work closely with partner organisations to build their admin and financial management capacities, particularly to ensure good financial management and compliance with donor and RFUK policies, including specific safeguards and project management requirements, following the relevant recommendations of RFUK's due diligence process and the recommendations ensuing from project audits;
- Where relevant, provide inputs on documentation prepared by local partner organisations.

4. Other – 10%

- Maintain digital and hard copy project documentation;
- Ensure good coordination with other members of the Programmes Team and regular communication and information-sharing with them and the wider organisation;
- Developing and maintaining a Resource Depository of the DRC CF project, compiling partners' documentation and feedback and developing RFUK's internal documentation on specific methodologies, results, impacts, etc, and uploading relevant resources to the CF Resources Hub (<https://cf-resources.com/>);
- Contribute to the development of RFUK's organisational knowledge base, such as by providing contacts for the central database, or technical briefs, resources and tools on issues such as security and project related themes;
- Assist in supervising the work of consultants, researchers, interns and volunteers as appropriate;
- Support the preparation of funding proposals, in particular project budgets, relevant for the development of the RFUK Programmes strategy;
- Contribute to the development and implementation of the Programmes strategy, and especially of its Community Forests component;
- Participate in RFUK's strategic development, including attending internal meetings, strategy away days, etc.;
- Perform other tasks as may from time to time be requested by the Programmes Finance and MEL Coordinator, the Head of Programmes or the Executive Director.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Detail	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge and Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 2 years' experience of project management support in a charity or in an international development context; • Experience supporting the management of large scale and complex projects; • Experience administering substantial development project budgets, tracking expenditure and processing payments; • Demonstrated ability to produce quality financial and technical reports; • Experience working with local NGOs; • Degree in international development, political science, land or forest management, forestry, anthropology, or a related field; • Fluent in English, written and spoken, with professional working proficiency in French; • High level of competence in using software packages, including main Microsoft Office applications, particularly Excel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working experience in Africa, especially in/or the Congo Basin; • Experience in land rights and/or natural resources rights; • Experience in advocacy and/or legal support; • Experience of working to tight deadlines; • Experience in managing USAID-funded projects; • Experience reviewing third party financial reports • Experience working in developing countries; • Experience coordinating and supporting consultants.

Detail	Essential	Desirable
Personal Skills and Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy with and commitment to the Rainforest Foundation's Vision and Mission; • Proven ability to work efficiently in a multinational team; • Excellent interpersonal and communication skills – written and oral; • Careful and conscientious with demonstrable attention to detail; • Excellent organisational and time management skills with the ability to work under pressure and to multiple deadlines; • Willingness and ability to travel in Africa; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest in Human rights & environmental issues; • Ability to quickly familiarise with new technical topics; • Capacity to analyse legal context and policy opportunities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness and ability to learn on the job, keen to undertake training and developing additional technical knowledge and skills. 	
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SUMMARY, TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Hours, remuneration and place of work

The post is offered on a fixed term contract until 31st December 2022, with possibility of extension (subject to a 6-month probationary period).

The post is a full-time post, based on a 35-hour working week.

The starting salary is from £28,420 to £32,651 gross per annum, depending on experience, including London weighting.

Monthly salary is paid by Bank Automated Credit transfer, on the 25th of every month.

Holidays, sick pay and other benefits are provided in accordance with statutory requirements. 30 days paid leave per year are offered.

Workplace pension (4% employer contribution).

The place of work is: Units 2-4, The Atelier, Old Dairy Court, 17 Crouch Hill, London, N4 4AP, although remote working is currently encouraged, under government COVID-19 guidance. This is a non-smoking environment. There is no parking provided for the postholder, although bicycles can be stored at location provided.

Equal Opportunities

RFUK is an equal opportunities employer, and makes no discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, age, physical abilities, religious or sexual persuasion.