

Farmers Field School (FFS) Officer

Organizational context

Past and current engagements

IFAD is a long-time trusted partner of the Government of Liberia. Prior to the civil war, IFAD has invested US\$11.1 for two completed projects with a total cost of US\$23.8. After a 20-year suspension, IFAD restarted its engagement in Liberia.

IFAD's country strategy, ongoing and future operations aim at addressing Liberia's challenges of low agricultural productivity, high post-harvest losses, substandard road access, widespread rural poverty, recurrent food insecurity and limited access to adapted financial services.

The Results-Based Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (RB-COSOP) 2011-2015, which has now expired, was the first RB-COSOP for Liberia. It has been followed by a Country Strategy Note (2017-2018) with the following strategic objectives:

- **Strategic objective 1: Smallholder farmers' access to finance, inputs, skills and markets is improved.**
- **Strategic objective 2: Smallholders' organizational capacities and access to MoA extension services are improved.**

A new Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (RB-COSOP) will be initiated in 2018.

Currently, IFAD's portfolio in Liberia includes one completed, 2 ongoing, 1 ratified and 1 pending projects.

The **Agricultural Sector Rehabilitation Project (ASRP)** was approved in 2009 and completed on 30 June 2017. The project closing date is 31 December 2017. Activities under that project are limited to those related to closure.

The **Smallholder Tree Crop Revitalization Support Project (STCRSP)** is in the amount of US\$ 24.9 million, and the IFAD financing of US\$ 16.8 million was approved in December 2011. It follows a value-chain approach and supports the rehabilitation of feeder roads and the rehabilitation of cocoa and coffee plantations. The project builds on a strong public-private partnership. STCRSP also aims at strengthening the financial management and institutional development of seven cooperatives and the capacity building of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) at the decentralized level to enable the cooperatives to benefit from extension services, bargaining power and lower transaction costs. The STCRSP Completion date is 30 September 2017 and the Closing date is 31 March 2018.

Economic Recovery of Liberian Rice Farmers in Ebola Affected Counties (Japanese Grant) is a Grant financed by the Government of Japan for an amount of US\$ 2.1 million. The Grant was declared effective on 17 March 2017. Its goal is to empower the rural poor, particularly women, to overcome the impact of the Ebola crisis, increase their food security and build sustainable, agricultural - rice bases - livelihoods. The project aims to reach 1,800 rural poor rice farmers (at least 60% women) in five counties: Grand Cape Mount, Bomi, Grand Bassa, Montserrado and Lofa. The Grant completion date is 31 August 2017 and the closing date is 30 November 2017.

Planned IFAD engagements

Two projects were approved by IFAD's Executive Board in December 2015. **The Tree Crops Extension Project (TCEP)** was approved by the IFAD Executive Board on 30 December 2015. It became effective on 08 June 2017. TCEP includes an IFAD loan of US\$

13 million and an Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP) grant of US\$ 4.5 million. The project will consolidate and complement the on-going STCRSP project, towards developing a viable and sustainable smallholder cocoa and coffee sub-sector in Liberia's main producing belt.

The TCEP will intervene in Nimba County, in at least 8 statutory districts. Its duration will be 6 years. The TCEP will adopt a value chain approach to link cocoa farmers, organized at grassroots level in traditional community-based labor groups and Farmers Field Schools (FFS), to markets and services through cooperatives and Private Sector Partners (PSPs).

The Rural Community Finance Project (RCFP) was also approved in December 2015 but the project has yet to be ratified. It is anticipated that this will occur before the 2017 summer recess. The project includes an IFAD loan of US\$ 5.5 million and a grant of US\$ 0.5 million and will improve access to rural financial services on a sustainable basis, enabling the development of the rural sector. It incorporates lessons-learnt on financial inclusion from Sierra Leone, where the IFAD-financed RFCIP helped establish a large network of Rural Financial Institutions, including both Financial Services Associations and Community Banks.

The concept note for a second phase to the Tree Crops Project in Lofa is under formulation.

Country Programme Approach

The Ministry of Agriculture is the implementing Agency for this and all IFAD funded projects in Liberia through a dedicated Programme Implementation Unit (PIU). In this regard the Ministry of Agriculture, (MOA) working in partnership with IFAD is recruiting a Farmer Field School Officer to support the organization and empowerment of farmers in the IFAD funded projects in Liberia. It is thought that a single Programme Management Unit with the required additional thematic expertise in the team depending on the projects within the programme would be cost effective, while facilitating cross learning and knowledge management and building synergies between projects.

Post's Organizational Accountability

Under the direct supervision of the Project Manager and overall supervision of the Programme Coordinator, the FFS officer is responsible for developing and implementing the project's thematic strategy on Farmers Field Schools, organization and empowerment of Farmers. He/she has a key role in assisting project implementation through the farmers' Cooperatives in the County as required in their thematic specialized areas to achieve the projects objectives.

S/he will be granted a one (1) year fixed term contract renewal upon satisfactory evaluation and subject to funds availability **with 6-months' probation period**

Key results expected / major functional activities include:

Specifically, the Farmers Field School (FFS) Officer will:

Methodological support to the FFS:

- Design and Coordinate the development of the FFS implementation strategy with special attention given to the following points: FFS for nutritious sensitive and

sustainable agriculture; farm management and establishment of farm business schools;

- Contribute to the development of FFS curriculum, modules and training materials;
- Assist in designing FFS baseline survey and the development of monitoring and reporting tools;
- Review the project implementation strategy and mechanisms and where necessary propose improvements;
- Capture lessons learned, success stories/good practices, document and disseminate.
- Work closely with the project team and the M&E Unit to draft periodic project progress reports;
- Work closely with the project team and M&E unit to develop the Annual Work Plan and Budget;
- Ensures that knowledge exchange activities (visits and field days) are prioritized appropriately and reflect the projects' strategy and objectives;
- As appropriate, actively identify and pursue synergies with sister projects under the country programme.

Hands-on support to FFS:

- Assess training needs in different areas of Farmers' Groups, Groups facilitators and Master Trainers;
- Assist Master Trainers in planning and implementing "Training of Facilitators";
- Coordinate and report on exchange/exposure visits;
- Coordinate with relevant County officers to ensure follow-up/technical support to the FFS and report on such activities;
- Coordinate with cooperatives for ensuring delivery of quality services to the Farmer groups and communities and report on such activities;
- Monitor and document Training of Facilitators conducted by the Master Trainers and evaluate the quality of the trainings;
- Elaborate, Supervise, monitor and document strategies and activities for organization and empowerment of Farmers' Group/Associations/CBO's activities.

Technical/Functional competencies

- **Innovative Performer** able to generate innovative solutions, assess risk, make decisions and take accountability for his/her actions;
- **Leader** able to combine strong management, organizational and leadership skills with insight, seeking continual improvement and collaborative engagement within the team; able to achieve results through motivating people and influencing partners;
- **Planner/organizer** able to meet tight deadlines in a high-pressure and high-energy environment; flexible and able to multi-task;
- Capable team player
- Strong analytical skills.
- Technical skills necessary: in FFS, sustainable agriculture, farm management, value chain, farmers' organizations.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills

Education:

- A degree in Agriculture from a recognized University with specialization in Extension services

Experience:

- A minimum of 8 years professional experience, preferably in Agricultural extension related projects.
- A minimum of 4 years professional experience in development and coordination of FFS for a donor funded project
- Knowledge of cocoa cropping system is an added asset.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Knowledge of MS Windows, Word, Excel, PowerPoint.
- Willing and able to be based permanently in remote and rural locations.
- Able to adapt to circumstances to communicate with the rural communities.

Interested and qualified applicants should address their applications including letter of interest along with Curriculum Vitae and copies of relevant Diplomas/Certificate to the below address via email:

Recruitment Team**IFAD Projects****Ministry of Agriculture**

Email: recruitment.ifadprogramme@gmail.com

Deadline for submission of Applications **August 15, 2017**

QUALIFIED WOMEN ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY