

Advertisement

Junior Professional Officer Genetic Resources and Food Security Policy Specialist

Bioversity International



Closing date: 20 May 2012

I General information

Title:	Genetic Resources and Food Security Policy Specialist
Sector of Assignment:	Policy and food security
Country:	Kenya with frequent visits to Rwanda, Uganda
Location (City):	Nairobi
Agency:	Bioversity International
Duration of Assignment:	Initially one year with the possibility to extend up to 3 years
Grade:	P1 step 1 or P2 step 1 in the first year, depending on the level of education and relevant working experience

Note : this post is opened in the context of the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) scheme sponsored by the Government of the Netherlands and is addressed exclusively to **candidates from developing countries** – see criteria at the website of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

<http://www.minbuza.nl/en/key-topics/development-cooperation/associate-experts-programme>

II Duties, responsibilities and Output Expectations

General

The Genetic Resources and Food Security Policy Specialist will provide scientific support to the Netherlands-financed project “Strengthening national capacities to implement the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources Project: Genetic Resources Policy Initiative (GRPI) Phase II”.

The GRPI II project supports efforts in a number of countries, including Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, with complementary subregional level activities at the East African level, to implement the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources, with particular emphasis on the Treaty’s multilateral system of access of benefit sharing. The project dedicates particular attention to analyzing how the multilateral system can be implemented in ways to maximize its contribution to the food security. In this context, emphasis will be placed on a) ability to respond to climate change-related challenges to food security and b) developing capacity of farmers to participate directly in the multilateral system.

The Associate Expert will work with teams of researchers comprised of national partners, and experts from Bioversity, CIAT, the Treaty Secretariat, and University of Reading, University of Illinois and the Catholic University of Louvain to:

1. Conduct ‘national interdependence and food security studies’ in the three countries

Summary of duties and expected output

- Collect and analyze information concerning the extent to which the three countries have relied, for food security, on plant genetic resources from other parts of the world.

- Focus on the history of domestication of crops in, or their introduction to, the countries concerned, more recent germplasm flows into and out of those countries, and analyses of pedigrees of modern varieties released in those countries.
- Estimate the value of foreign sourced crops and germplasm to the food security and economic well being of the three countries.
- Following methods described in successive bullet points, the research teams will estimate future levels of dependence of the countries on plant genetic resources to ensure their food security, particularly in light of climate change.

2. Identify climate change-related challenges to agricultural production in the countries, and identify potential sources of genetic diversity as part of national strategies to adapt to those challenges

Summary of duties and expected output

- Collect and analyze information about actual and predicted climate changes, and the impacts of those changes on agricultural production systems in the countries concerned.
- Use the 'Climate analogues' tool¹ (recently developed by the Climate Change and Agricultural Food Security research programme of the CGIAR) to determine where the predicted climate of the three countries have a current day analogues
- Identify potentially useful germplasm from other parts of the world as inputs into the three countries' climate change adaptation and food security strategies and using information systems.
- Identify priority traits and associated germplasm in close collaboration with breeders, researchers and farmers organizations.

3. Identify policy and legal options for implementation of the Treaty in ways that address bottlenecks and promote availability and use of germplasm for breeding and direct use in farmers fields

Summary of duties and expected output

- Document and analyze flows of plant genetic resources and related information within the country, and identify bottlenecks that may exist between farmers, national research and breeding organizations, genebanks and international sources of PGRFA.
- Analyze the influence of organizational, community and national-level policies with respect to those flows, and identify options for policy reforms to overcome those bottlenecks.
- Identify options for implementation of the Treaty in general, and the multilateral system in particular, in the three countries, using the information generated through this, and the other two research activities above.

4. Build capacity/empower farmers and farming organizations to take advantage of the multilateral system and direct participants in that system

Summary of duties and expected output

- Work with farmers' organizations to raise their awareness about the Treaty in general, and the potential utility of germplasm and information that is available to them through the multilateral system.
- Conduct case studies, working with farmers, to identify potentially useful germplasm, and requesting it through the multilateral system; where possible, follow the use of that material by the farmers.
- Identify appropriate and support activities/mechanisms to boost the capacity of farmers' organizations in the three countries to participate in the three research activities described

¹ A paper on the Climate Analogues Tool is available from:

<http://ccafs.cgiar.org/sites/default/files/assets/docs/ccafs-wp-12-climate-analogues-web.pdf>.

The tool is available from <http://gismap.ciat.cgiar.org/analogues/>

above.

5. Organize activities to draw together participants from the different countries and international experts on an as-needs basis to compare project activity developments, build capacity, develop common research products

Summary of duties and expected output

- There will be annual meetings of researchers from the countries support by the GRPI 2 project. The JPO will assist in the design, organizations and support of those meetings.

6. Develop research and capacity building products, including peer reviewed publications, workshop reports, draft policies

Summary of duties and expected output

- Assist in designing research activities related to the areas described above, participate in the research, and monitor its progress, and contribute to a rolling assessment of how that research could be revised based on lessons learned as the project progresses.
- Lead author, or co-author, research outputs including journal articles, book chapters, workshop reports, videos, and blog posts.

III Training component: Learning elements and expectations

Upon completion of the assignment the JPO will have/ will be able to:

- Received formal training in assessing climate analogues in different parts of the world and how to use that information to identify potentially useful genetic resources in other parts of the world that are available through the multilateral system of access and benefits sharing
- Received formal training in facilitating multi-stakeholder research
- Received training on survey methods, data compilation and analysis
- Attended a meeting of the governing body of the international treaty to observe the administration of an international legal agreement
- Received regular feedback to encourage he/she to reflect on experiences, draw lessons and present these in publications or presentations

The JPO training programme includes the following learning elements:

Year 1

- the general concepts of why plant genetic resources are critical to food security, and why countries are interdependent upon those resources for food security.
- overview of climate change predictions and the potential impact on agricultural production, including an introduction to frameworks of analysis related to those problems
- the content of the International Treaty, and get an 'insiders' view' of how the Treaty is administered by its Secretariat (in Rome) and how country parties contribute to its ongoing development and administration at international levels
- the global system of conservation and use of plant genetic resources
- structure and function of national agricultural research systems in Uganda, Kenya and Rwanda
- the modalities by which farmers participate (or not) in determining national agriculture research priorities (with a special focus on plant breeding)
- designing research projects, including designing surveys and methods for collecting data related to uses and exchanges of plant genetic resources

Year 2

- challenges that exist between different groups of actors involved in agricultural research, breeding, development and food production
- incentives and disincentives for different groups of actors to participate in the cooperative efforts to use and conserve plant diversity as envisaged by the International Treaty
- climate changes experienced in the three countries, and their likely impacts on different crop production

- internationally and nationally coordinated information systems concerning plant genetic resources

Year 3

- policy and law development in the three countries
- drafting legislation and administrative guidelines

IV Supervision

Title of supervisors: Dr. Michael Halewood, Policy Research Theme Leader (based in Rome); and Dr. Carlo Fadda, Senior Scientist, In situ Conservation Research Theme (based in Nairobi)

Content and methodology of supervision

The global project within which the JPO's work will be situated is managed by the Policy Research Theme Leader. The JPO will first spend time (one month) with Michael Halewood in Rome to be introduced to the project overall and to make connections with other Rome-based experts involved in the project. Once the JPO moves to Kenya (with frequent trips to Uganda and Rwanda) he or she will communicate frequently with Michael by phone, skype and email. The Research Theme Leader, Policy will frequently visit the project sites in the three countries, making those visits with both Carlo Fadda, and the JPO. Carlo Fadda will have daily interactions with the Associate Expert, as he or she will be located in the same offices in Nairobi.

Biodiversity International has a comprehensive and integrated Performance Management process involving the setting (in agreement with supervisors) of individual objectives linked to strategic plans, the identification of specific outputs and measures, regular review of progress made towards the achievement of objectives, formal feedback sessions with identification of strengths and weaknesses, final appraisal of work objectives and behavioural indicators and lessons learned for the next cycle. This formal process provides the framework within which the planning, execution and supervision of the JPO's work will take place. As part of the induction programme, the JPO will be given a thorough brief about the performance management process by the Human Resources Unit. In this process, the JPO will be supported by relevant staff at Biodiversity International Headquarters and by collaborators in the field.

V Required Qualifications and Experience

Education:

Master degree or equivalent degree in one of the following area:

- Economics
- Public policy
- Sociology
- Some other demonstrably relevant area of social science

Working experience :

Preferably 2 to maximum 4 years of relevant working experience, including internships and voluntary work

- Research experience in the areas of public policy making, with specialization in agriculture policy and food security;
- Working experience in developing countries;
- Working experience in East Africa is very desirable.

Languages : Excellent Command of English; working knowledge of French is an advantage

Key competencies

- Ability to work in multicultural, multi-disciplinary teams
- Ability to contribute to the planning and implementation of research activities concerning public policy-making processes within countries

VI Background information on Agency/Department/Section

Bioversity International (“Bioversity” for short) is the world’s largest organization undertaking research on agricultural biodiversity, dedicated to addressing global issues related to food security, poverty, climate change and environmental degradation. We are a nonprofit organization, active in over 100 countries worldwide, with more than 350 staff working from some 16 country offices. We are one of 15 centres of the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centres (CGIAR).

VII Information on living conditions at Duty Station

The Associate Expert will be located at Bioversity’s Sub-Saharan Africa office, located at the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) Campus in Gigiri at the northern outskirts of Nairobi, Kenya, next to the UNEP HQ and the US Embassy. Nairobi, located at 1660 m altitude, with a pleasant climate throughout the year, offers a good choice of shops, restaurants, entertainment, sports facilities and more. A range of housing options are available. Furnished houses are rare but furnished service apartments are available. *General Security:* Like many other growing cities/countries in the world, security of persons and property should not be taken for granted. Bioversity follows the regular security advice provided by ICRAF’s Security Officer and provides an allowance for residential security services. Having a car will be necessary.

VIII How to apply

Please apply online through Bioversity Job Opportunities web page (http://www.bioversityinternational.org/about_us/job_opportunities.html) by clicking the “Apply” button, completing the online application and attaching the required information, no later than **20 May 2012**.

Please note that in the application you are required to provide the contact details (address, telephone number and e-mail address) of at least three referees, which Bioversity will contact for short listed applicants.

Applicants will receive acknowledgement of receipt of their submission
Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.