

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Programme Manager

Location: Olenguruone, Nakuru County

Duration: Fixed Term Contract extending to 5 years subject to funding

Project: *Harmony in Habitat: Empowering Communities for Nature's Resilience*

Reports to: Mau and Western Kenya Landscapes Coordinator

Application Deadline: Friday, 25 July 2025

Key Relationships:

Internal

- Rhino Ark team based at the HQ
- Joint project team based in Olenguruone

External

- WWF Kenya, the lead project partner
- Donors, government agencies, and local communities

About Rhino Ark

Rhino Ark is a charitable trust working to conserve Kenya's mountain ecosystems, protect endangered biodiversity, and secure livelihoods for future generations. Our efforts are focused on key conservation areas including the Aberdares, Mt. Kenya, Mau Eburu, Kakamega and the Mau complex, where we work with communities to develop sustainable conservation solutions. We are known for our fencing programmes, forest rehabilitation, and pioneering community engagement approaches.

Purpose:

The Programme Manager is responsible for overseeing implementation of programmes and coordinating the delivery of activities for the Mau ecosystem component of the 'Enhancing Protection and Management in the SOKNOT Ecosystem in Kenya' project. This role ensures that the project is completed within the agreed time frames and budget, while maintaining compliance with donor requirements and Rhino Ark's internal regulations. The officer's role will ensure delivery of programme goals and facilitate the smooth coordination of actions with partners across the programme area. The Programme Manager will ensure clear, timely reporting on programme activities and will be responsible for the programme team comprising community field officers, the Joint Surveillance Unit and the support staff (accounts and administration) based at the programme office in Olenguruone. This position is part of a donor-funded project and is therefore contingent on the availability of project funding.

Project goals include but are not limited to:

- a. Establish an ecosystem level platform in Mau, outline core decisions needed in the landscape, and agree upon collaborative decision-making processes.
- b. Support the participatory development of an Ecosystem Management Plan for the Mau Forest.

- c. Support the review of the Participatory Forest Management Plans in the Mau (Nyangores, Nairota, Olenguruone, Olpusimoru and Kiptunga).
- d. Establish 1 additional community ranger team in the Mau (at least 30% women).
- e. Build technical capacity and knowledge in scouts, community and government rangers in the Mau ecosystem.
- f. Restoration of 700 ha of degraded forests in Mau.
- g. Develop and enhance the tourism sector in the SW Mau ecosystem.
- h. Support women and youths to increase sustainable primary production primarily with one Community Forest Association (CFA) in honey harvesting to improve collection, processing and packaging, conduct quality assurance, and link producers to markets.
- i. Support the participatory development of a Sub-Catchment Management Plan for the Upper Amala sub-catchment of the Mara River basin

In addition, the Programme Manager will supervise WWF-Kenya activities in the Mau under the same project. These activities include;

- a. Build capacities of target communities, especially women, youth and indigenous groups, for participation in decision making processes within at least 5 CFAs.
- b. Strengthen inclusive governance structures within 5 CFAs.
- c. Develop/strengthen and institutionalise gender-responsive policies/guidelines on zero tolerance to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and safeguards.
- d. Carry out human rights training for duty bearers and rights holders in the Mau ecosystem.
- e. Support the participatory development of a Sub-Catchment Management Plan for the Upper Amala sub-catchment of the Mara River basin.
- f. Capacitate recipients of FSTP for the implementation of specific tasks within the management plans; organise and monitor FSTP.
- g. Develop and institutionalise policies and guidelines for ranger employers to ensure professionalism, gender equality and social inclusion
- h. Restore 20 km of riparian zone in Mau.
- i. Conduct business opportunity assessments/socio-economic surveys.
- j. Strengthen capacities of target communities (targeting especially female-headed households) for improved food production (building capacities on improved livestock management and agricultural practices).
- k. Knowledge exchange between communities and support for extension service provision.
- l. Strengthen value chains and value addition of existing agricultural and livestock systems.
- m. Develop alternative nature-positive enterprises in Mau ecosystems beyond existing livelihood options.
- n. Provide small grants for start-up, product development and strengthening green investments.
- o. Youth and women entrepreneurship skills development

Responsibilities:

Project Coordination

- Oversee activities of Rhino Ark and WWF team in charge of implementing the Mau ecosystem component of 'Enhancing Protection and Management in the SOKNOT Ecosystem in Kenya' project.
- Coordinate the implementation of the project as outlined in the project plan and funding documents.
- Ensure the project is delivered on time and within budget, and in accordance with donor requirements and Rhino Ark's regulations.
- Liaise with the project team and WWF Kenya staff to ensure effective execution of all planned activities.
- Lead the integration of participatory approaches and frameworks in the project.
- Oversee monitoring and evaluation of project activities to ensure they meet project goals, objectives, and timelines.

Financial and Operational Management

- Develop annual, quarterly, and monthly work plans and budgets in collaboration with the project finance team.
- Ensure effective management of project finances and resources, in compliance with donor and Rhino Ark's financial regulations.
- Work with the finance team to ensure adequate cash flow, financial accountability, and timely reporting of financial transactions.
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date financial records to meet donor and Rhino Ark's auditing requirements.

Partnership and Stakeholder Management

- Build and maintain strong relationships with project partners, government agencies, community-based organizations, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Represent Rhino Ark at key project-relevant meetings, workshops, and other fora as necessary.
- Ensure effective collaboration with WWF Kenya and other partner organizations.

Capacity Building and Development

- Lead efforts to build the capacity of staff, partners, and stakeholders in areas relevant to the project in conservation management, community engagement, and project implementation.
- Provide strategic advice and technical support to project partners, stakeholders, and community members.
- Oversee the development and implementation of the project's capacity-building activities.

Reporting and Communication

- Prepare and submit accurate and timely project reports to Rhino Ark, WWF-Kenya, donors, and relevant stakeholders.
- Contribute to project communications, including fundraising materials, reports, and web content.
- Ensure that all project communication aligns with Rhino Ark's institutional values and donor requirements.

Other Duties

- Assist in the preparation and submission of financial reports, ensuring compliance with all necessary regulations.
- Provide regular updates on project progress and financial status to Rhino Ark's senior management.
- Carry out any other tasks as assigned by the Executive Director or delegated authority that are in line with the position.

Essential Skills

- Strong organizational and project management skills.
- Excellent written and spoken English, with proficiency in Swahili preferred.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills with the ability to manage relationships with diverse stakeholders.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office and project management software.
- Ability to prioritize tasks effectively and manage multiple projects concurrently.

Experience

- 5 years proven experience in managing large-scale, donor-funded projects, preferably in conservation or environmental sectors.
- Experience in budgeting, financial management, and reporting.
- Experience working in cross-functional teams, across different organizations.
- Track record of successful stakeholder and partnership management.
- Experience in field-based project management and community engagement.

Qualifications

- Advanced degree in conservation, environmental studies, project management, social sciences or a related field.
- Relevant certifications in project management.