

Project Director, CREST

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Company: International Rescue Committee

Location: Nairobi

Category: other-general

Requisition ID: req49636

Job Title: Project Director, CREST

Sector: Education

Employment Category: Fixed Term

Employment Type: Full-Time

Open to Expatriates: No

Location: Nairobi, IHUB, Kenya

Work Arrangement: Hybrid

Job Description

Since 1992, the IRC has provided life-saving services to refugees and vulnerable local communities in Kenya. Currently, the IRC works in two refugee camps, Dadaab and Kakuma, in northern Kenya. The IRC also supports communities in Turkana County, as well as in Kenya's capital, Nairobi. Through a variety of upcoming programming, the IRC will soon begin addressing effects of climate change in Kenya as well. Extreme weather events linked to climate change are increasing in frequency and severity. Disasters, shocks, and natural hazards linked to climate change—including droughts, extreme heat, floods and landslides—are estimated to disrupt the education of nearly 40 million children per year globally, many of whom already live in crisis-affected settings and face compounded challenges to completing basic education. In 2022, prolonged periods of drought in East Africa are estimated to have caused million children to drop out of school in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia, with another 4 million children at risk of joining the out-of-school ranks,

according to UNICEF. When schools close due to climate-related shocks or stressors, it has detrimental effects on learning and earning, increasing the risk of dropout and repetition and affecting disadvantaged students - including girls -- the IRC has secured a 30-month, £3 million Accountable Grant from the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) to help reduce the impact of climate-related disruptions to schools, students and communities. The Climate Resilient Education Systems Trial (CREST) will use community-driven approaches, combined with innovative finance to ensure that support reaches schools and families when and where it is needed when a climate-related crisis hits. The trial will help to build an evidence base that can be scaled in countries that are at a greater risk of climate disasters, to improve the resilience of schools and education systems and support children.

IRC is seeking a Project Director who will be responsible for strategic and operational oversight of this new project to carry forward all agreed project deliverables with FCDO and ensure the successful design and implementation of the project. The Project Director will work in collaboration with all project staff, including the IRC Kenya's technical coordinators for economic recovery and development (ERD), child protection (CP) and education, and IRC ERD, CP, education and anticipatory action technical unit staff based in IRC headquarters. The role is based in Nairobi with frequent travel to the project sites. Hiring for this position is contingent on final project approval which we anticipate receiving in the next 4 weeks.

Key Responsibilities:

Leadership – 60%

- Provide strategic and operational leadership, vision, and direction for the project, defining implementation activities to achieve the greatest impact toward project goals and objectives;
- Develop, review, and monitor in coordination with key project staff, annual work and performance plans to ensure long-term and short-term priorities are on track;
- Oversee technical direction and project delivery to ensure activities are in line with the performance framework and meet all standard operational policies and procedures;
- Oversee management of partners and provide financial and operations support that optimizes resources through sound budgets, consistent financial tracking, and timely submission of reports to the donor;
- Report to donor through both formal and informal debriefings, annual and semi-annual reports;
- Maintain active and cooperative relationships with all key stakeholders, including government officials, project partners, other implementing agencies, and related institutions;
- Recruit, hire, and manage national staff and consultants as needed to carry out activities.
- Maintain a working knowledge of project financials, working with and supporting the financial officer to ensure that appropriate systems and procedures are

in place and being follows.

- Represent the project and the organization in public and ensure distribution of information about project achievements and lesson learned;
- Support project staff by creating and maintaining a work environment that promotes teamwork, trust, mutual respect, and empowers staff to take responsibility.
- Ensure sign-off and submission of high-quality, timeline deliverables during inception and implementation phase.
- Collaborate with IRC operational and finance teams to ensure smooth pilot planning and implementation, ensuring that IRC systems are prepared to support effectively throughout the project life cycle

Relationships and Communication – 20%

- Ensure that project communications are timely, relevant and accurate, including regular status updates.
- Liaise with other relevant project focal points in the region and in the sector to ensure that synergies and complementarities are incorporated in the CREST project.
- Represent project in conversations with key stakeholders, including the donor, coordination bodies, and policymakers.
- Enhance the visibility of education opportunities in climate crisis and expand the financial portfolio of this project.

Technical – 20%

- Serve as the main liaison with the HQ technical unit focal points, identifying when and how they can add most value, and ensuring that they provide technical insight and support to project activities and objectives.
- Lead needs assessment, design, and prototyping process, in collaboration with technical leads.
- Lead and document the process of developing and implementing integrated contingency / preparedness plans to ensure educational continuity, as well as the technical design of the pilot, by engaging at different stakeholder levels including school, country, national and within the IRC.
- Monitor technical quality of implementation and lead process of continuous adaptation and improvement as pilot evolves.
- Work with partners to track long-range and short-term forecasts in order to prepare for a potential response.
- Regularly produce project learnings and oversee their internal and external distribution plan.

Preferred Qualifications and Skills: The Project Director for CREST will need to meet the requirements below:

- Must have 8-10 years of professional experience managing complex humanitarian programming that is large-scale, cross-functional, and multi-location, including overseeing teams across different locations, responding to complex humanitarian crises and/or post-conflict situations.
- Experience in cross-sectoral cash deployment, disaster risk finance, or climate effects on education in Kenya highly preferred.
- Exceptional advance planning and organizational skills. Able to effectively prioritize and follow multiple activities and deadlines simultaneously in a fast-paced and sometimes ambiguous environment.
- Analytical, strategic, and proactive in developing creative, innovative solutions to

complex challenges. •Fluency in English (written and spoken) is essential, with demonstrated exceptionally strong writing and presentation, communication and representation skills. •Ability to navigate interpersonal and inter-departmental organizational and personnel dynamics to keep focus on goals and products. •Flexible to adapt to changing requirements while also holding a firm sense of project needs and values. •Strong commitment to the IRC's mission, purpose and values. •Must be able to work independently while being a team player with strong cross-cultural communication skills and sensitivity to interpersonal differences and a range of viewpoints. •Experience with training and staff capacity building, managing and supporting partners, and representing projects to donors or clients. •Advanced degree in relevant field desired, including Political Science and Public Administration, Climate Science, Disaster Risk Finance, International Relations, Public Policy; or equivalent experience. **Working Environment**The position is based in Nairobi, with expected travel to all project locations. **Key Working Relationships**•**Direct reporting:**Senior Director, Education•**Indirect reporting to** Deputy Director of Programs•**Directly supervises:** CREST Project Coordinator •**Other internal contacts**Technical Coordinators in ERD and Education; Partnership Coordinator; MEAL Coordinator; Grants Team; IRC ERD, CP and Education Technical Units, including Anticipatory Action Specialist and Research teams **External:** Implementing Partner Focal PointsApplicants must have the right to work in Kenya.#LI-FC1#LI-HYBRID

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