

Vacancy Advert

Role: Executive Director – Cubango-Okavango River Basin (CORB) Fund

Duty Station: Gaborone, Botswana (with extensive regional travel)

Tenure: Initial 1-year contract, renewable based on performance

Terms of Reference

1 Background

The Cubango-Okavango River Basin (CORB) is a transboundary system that flows through Angola, Botswana and Namibia. It emanates from the Angolan highlands and is drained by the Cubango River (known as the Kavango in Namibia and the Okavango in Botswana) which forms the border between Namibia and Angola, as well as by its main tributary, the Cuito, and flows 1,260 km before spilling into the Okavango Delta in northern Botswana.

The CORB supports an astounding variety and abundance of terrestrial and freshwater animal and plant life, and it is essential to the livelihoods of more than a million people who directly rely on its natural resources and ecosystem services. The Basin is still relatively underdeveloped, yet it faces many interrelated challenges: increasing water abstraction for commercial agriculture, deforestation and forest degradation driven by commercial logging and charcoal production, largescale hydropower infrastructure development, and the rapid growth of a population that relies almost exclusively on subsistence resource-based livelihoods. These challenges are exacerbated by the effects of climate change and result in deviations from historical flood-pulse patterns. Loss of freshwater resources in the Basin will present a risk for both the people and the unique but fragile ecosystems that depend on them.

The CORB Fund is a public benefit organisation was established as a Company Limited by Guarantee in December 2019, to address the urgent challenges facing the Basin and to deploy an alternative resilient development pathway. Angola, Namibia and Botswana are members of the Fund and are represented by their respective Ministries in charge of Water. The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) Secretariat is providing support to the Fund as the Process Agent, The CORB Fund Board of Directors comprises seven members and includes representation from all 3 Member States and independent members.

The Fund's objective is to cover a multitude of areas at the intersection of livelihoods and environment to ensure the preservation of the basin and its socio-economic development. A detailed [Value Proposition](#) was developed in 2021 and demonstrates the relevance of the proposed resilient development strategy, with a projected combined benefit-cost ratio of livelihood and environmentally-focused interventions of nearly 7-to-1.

The Fund is entering into implementation phase and seeks an Executive Director to be based in Gaborone, Botswana with the possibility of extensive travel.

2 Executive Director Role

The Executive Director is the Chief Executive Officer of the CORB Fund. She/he is responsible for the overall leadership and management of the Fund's operational and administrative functions. Working under the guidance of the CORB Fund Board, the Executive Director defines the organization's strategic vision and is accountable for its implementation and the results achieved.

The Executive Director maintains strong relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders, including but not limited to Members of the Board, national government, development finance institutions, NGO's, implementation partners, Donor's and Funders, that are important collaborators in the CORB Fund's mission and activities.

3 Duties and Responsibilities

The Executive Director reports directly to the CORB Fund Board. As head of the Secretariat, the Executive Director works closely with the leadership of the Board and its standing Committees. The Executive Director's primary responsibilities are as set out below.

3.1 Managing Finances, People and Systems

The executive Director will:

3.1.1 Operational management

- a. Ensure that the Fund's organizational structure, operational policies and other business processes are sound and be able to effectively deliver on the strategic objectives defined by the Board;
- b. Exercise authority over personnel and human resource matters and further strengthen performance management by tracking key performance indicators across the organization;
- c. Management of the CORB Fund's project pipeline and exercising authority through performance management of projects under implementation by tracking key performance indicators across the whole portfolio;
- d. Maintain a positive work environment that facilitates collaboration and information sharing and is conducive to attracting, retaining, and motivating diverse talent;
- e. Lead the Secretariat's internal management committees as the mechanism for ensuring aligned internal leadership and implementation; and
- f. Effectively manage operational or financial matters to deliver on the mandate of the CORB Fund, including by seeking additional authority from the Board as may be needed to address risks that arise proactively and effectively.

3.1.2 Financial management

- a. Present annual financial budgets for Board approval that link to the workplan, and more routinely throughout the fiscal year, multi-year resource projections for the transparent management of resources;
- b. Ensure the overall transparent and effective financial and administrative functionality of the CORB Fund and its assets;

- c. Reporting to funders on project progress and financial expenditure; and
- d. Oversee the management and implementation of all organizational contracts according to corporate procurement systems and practices that deliver value for money and focus on the primary work of the Fund.

3.2 Official Representation Partner Engagement

- a. Represent the CORB Fund before any competent authority in liaison with the Chair of the Board.
- b. Build and maintain effective relationships and operational collaboration with public and private partners, such as governments of implementing countries, United Nations agencies, bilateral donors, non-governmental organizations, the business sector, civil society actors, implementation partners, and communities;
- c. Represent the Fund and its work with external stakeholders to build effective partnerships with public and private entities to support the work of the Fund;
- d. Interact with governments at the highest political level to advocate for an appropriate level of national resources to be directed towards the Fund; and
- e. Maintain effective communications with all stakeholders.

3.3 Strategic Leadership and Delivery

- a. Lead in the implementation of the CORB Fund's programme;
- b. Develop, operationalize, lead and monitor the implementation of the CORB Fund's Strategy and ensure the effective implementation of new business models and instruments to deliver on the strategic objectives;
- c. Represent the CORB Fund Secretariat at the highest level, ensuring its role within the basin is well understood, through direct engagement with policymakers and the execution of an effective media/communications strategy;
- d. In close collaboration with the relevant Committee(s) of the Board, ensure that there are strong fiduciary controls in place to monitor the use of CORB Fund resources;
- e. Effectively manage risk in the portfolio and the Secretariat's operations, including, but not limited to, the development of rigorous management and communications systems to ensure the implementation of and strict adherence to Board decisions and other CORB Fund policies in a timely manner; and
- f. Ensure meaningful monitoring and evaluation of, and learning from, CORB Fund programs and performance and the provision of accurate analysis and routine reporting on the impact and performance of the Fund's portfolio.

3.4 Mobilizing and Sustaining Resources

- a. Support the Board in its core function of mobilizing public and private sector funding to support the mission of the CORB Fund and provide strategic guidance for resource mobilization;
- b. Oversee and advance the development of new funding streams for the Fund, broadening the donor base and encouraging increased investment in programs from implementing countries;
- c. Lead in the development of funding concept notes, proposals and project preparation;

- d. Ensure the highest level of confidence among public and private donors in the CORB Fund operations and impact to support longer term predictable financing being contributed to the Fund; and
- e. Engage with other regional groups of implementing and non-implementing countries, communicating the Fund's purpose and aiming to secure their support.

3.5 Working with the Board

- a. Report to the Board on the operational, administrative, and financial aspects of the CORB Fund at each Board meeting;
- b. Ensure that the Board is made aware, in a timely way, of key strategic and other material operational challenges the Secretariat is encountering in the course of its work;
- c. Represent the management of the Secretariat at Board Meetings, and ensure effective and timely preparation and distribution of all materials in accordance with Board mandated policies and procedures;
- d. Participate in Committee meetings, and assist the Committees of the Board, and other technical support structures;
- e. Assist the Board Chair in evolving and strengthening the overall governance of the CORB Fund; and
- f. Communicate Board decisions to the CORB Fund's staff, and other relevant stakeholders, where appropriate.

4 Skills and Qualifications

Suitable candidates for the role of Executive Director will be able to prove their:

- Advanced degree in Development Finance, Business Administration, Natural Resources Management, Integrated Water Resources Management or similar;
- Track record of at least 7 years as a senior manager of complex and diverse organizations within development finance;
- Track record in building and strengthening a strong aspirational organizational culture based on the CORB Fund values;
- Experience in the mobilisation of resources and interacting with donors, and private sector financiers;
- Experience working in funds similar to the CORB Fund and with the operationalization of the same;
- Success as builders of mutually supportive multi-cultural teams;
- Leadership of organizations operating in changing regional/global contexts;
- Exposure to a range of partnership models in both financing and delivery of programs;
- Sensitivity to issues relating to HR management, diversity, gender equity, and human rights internally and externally; and
- Fluency in English and experience of working in a multi-lingual environment.

It will be desirable for candidates to bring:

- Credentials in the creation and cultivation of successful partnerships with governments, civil society actors, and the private sector;
- Substantive knowledge and experience in one or several of the following areas:

international development, integrated water resources management or natural resources management; financing;

- Experience of working effectively in and/or with the riparian countries of the CORB Fund;
- Proficiency in English is required (oral and written) with proficiency in Portuguese, highly desirable.

5 Competencies

The core competencies required for the role are:

5.1 Operational Management Skills

- a. Exceptional management skills of people, finances and systems, with a proven capacity to motivate and lead a multi-disciplinary management team to achieve organizational goals according to a risk-aware implementation framework;
- b. An energetic, hands-on and proactive approach to support the operationalization of the CORB Fund;
- c. Team-building ability, the capacity to instil a culture that values measurable achievement, mutual support, and compliance with organizational processes;
- d. A focus on sustainable results that deliver improved outcomes for affected populations;
- e. A grasp of detail and an understanding of natural resources management and/or development finance through grant and/or loan-making and grant/loan-management, or comparable financing mechanisms, balanced by well-developed delegation and senior team management skills;
- f. An ability to make difficult decisions when required on organizational development; and
- g. A facilitative approach that enables effective delivery with and through partner organizations.

5.2 Strategic Capability

- a. A strong analytical mind and the ability to grasp the nature and direction of the Fund strategy and help shape it in the future;
- b. The capacity to work collaboratively with a large and complex Board in the development and articulation of its vision and on its translation into tangible results and longer term impact;
- c. An appreciation of the issues facing partners in implementing countries and opportunities that exist to alleviate barriers to successful implementation of programs;
- d. A clear focus on organizational goals amid multiple competing risks and demands; and
- e. The capacity to prioritize effectively in order to deliver results.

5.3 Advocacy and Representation Skills

- a. Strong public-speaking and influencing skills;
- b. Presence, gravitas, humility and empathy in dealings with partners from a variety of backgrounds;
- c. An ability to engage and operate effectively at the highest political levels; and
- d. Understanding of and an ability to strategically lead on resource mobilization activities.

5.4 Personal Attributes

- a. Strong inter-personal skills;
- b. Role model of ethical standards and integrity;
- c. Familiarity and ease with a variety of cultures and comfort with diverse groups;
- d. Strength of personality and robustness of intellect; and
- e. The ability to work with a multi-constituency board as a credible partner: informing its decisions and deriving the maximum advantage for the CORB Fund from its collective experience.

6 Contract Duration

The initial term of appointment for the Executive Director is for 1 years and is renewable subject to performance.

7 Additional Information

Candidates must be willing and able to travel extensively as needed.

8 Applications

Interested candidates should submit:

- A cover letter (max 2 pages) with salary history and requirements including outlining their suitability and motivation.
- A detailed CV including a minimum of three referees.
- Only short-listed candidates will be contacted within 4 weeks after the application deadline
- Qualified female candidates are strongly encouraged to apply
- Questions can be directed to: phera@okacom.org
- Applications should be sent to: Executive Secretary – phera@okacom.org copy joyce@okacom.org and olerato@okacom.org
- Deadline: 12 September 2025 – 00:00 (Midnight) Botswana Time.