



foundation RURAL ENERGY SERVICES

FRES is recruiting:

Regional Operations Manager / Business Developer

Full- time

Job description

About FRES

With its 20-year track record, the Foundation Rural Energy Services (FRES) is a pioneer in bringing off-grid solar energy to rural Africa. Even in the most challenging and hard to reach areas, avoided by competitors, FRES has become a trusted supplier of solar energy to businesses, communities and households. With our work in rural Africa we contribute directly the core pledge of the SDGs: to leave no one behind.

Central to our success is our belief in local entrepreneurship. FRES establishes commercial utilities under local management that gradually extend their reach from village to village and district to district. Currently FRES has operations in Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau and Uganda and aims to add more countries to our network over the next few years.

FRES' small head office in Amsterdam oversees and supports the activities of local companies in Africa. By providing strategic and operational support, it guides the companies on a roadmap to self-reliance. The head office is also responsible for fundraising, procurement, developing partnerships and the expansion into new countries.

Current estimates indicate that by 2030, half a billion people will still remain without access to energy, predominantly living in rural Africa. This makes our experience and work even more relevant and urgent! By supporting the growth of our current companies and adding new countries to our network we aim to grow our coverage tenfold by 2030.

FRES Netherlands is currently looking to fill the position of Regional Operations Manager / Business Developer, with a special focus on Francophone African countries.

Position and role

The Regional Operational Manager supervises and supports the FRES operations in French speaking countries (currently Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau). By virtue of this position, she/he will also become a board member of these individual companies.

In the role of Business Developer, he or she will lead strategic projects which will benefit all FRES companies, such as focusing on improving operational excellence, developing partnerships, or reviewing our products and services portfolio. The Regional Operational Manager will collaborate with other Business Developers focusing on Anglophone and (future) Lusophone countries and will report directly to the Managing Director.

The role will be to provide direct strategic and operational support to the companies, in order to deliver on their strategic and operational objectives. The main focus will be to assist the companies to expand and increase the profitability of their operational business models through successful marketing, improving customer loyalty and improving payment rates. For this function, a good command of French is essential.



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As the main language within FRES Netherlands is English, fluent English is also required. Business expertise following on from a formal education in business and/or relevant work experience is required. If you are inspired by the mission and ambition of FRES, enjoy improving business models – not on paper but in reality – within a challenging setting that is rural Africa, and you have the creativity to enable operations to be smarter, leaner, more effective, then this may be a role for you. The role will include visiting the companies at least twice a year, should the security situation (Mali, Burkina Faso) allow.

Activities

- Develop and agree on annual plans, targets and budgets for each FRES company
- Support the identification and implementation of local business improvement activities
- Identify growth opportunities within the companies in the portfolio
- Conduct operational reviews and prepare operational reports for the FRES board
- Develop and manage relationships with relevant partners and institutions in countries
- Visit local companies on a regular basis to perform internal audits and field missions
- Ensure that the FRES companies meet their obligations and targets
- Run strategic business development projects benefitting all companies

Skills and experience

- Fluent, proficient English and French (verbal and written)
- Work experience with organizations in African countries
- Operational business experience, ideally in the field of solar energy
- Strong analytical and presentation skills
- Strong skills and experience in writing reports
- Leadership and supervisory skills
- Good interpersonal and intercultural skills
- University degree in business administration or education, and/or experience at comparable level

Conditions

The position is in principle full-time, a four-day work week can be discussed. Working at the headquarters in Amsterdam is preferred. Working at distance, with regular visits to the head office can be discussed. FRES offers a competitive salary in accordance with the standards of the Dutch NGO sector.

Contact

For further information about FRES, our work and the position, please check our website www.fres.nl or send an email to ido.verhagen@fres.nl. Are you interested? Send your motivation and resume to ido.verhagen@fres.nl. Do so before 31 October but do not wait longer than necessary: applications will be processed on a first come, first served basis.