



VIRUNGA | FOUNDATION

RÉPUBLIQUE DÉMOCRATIQUE DU CONGO

The Virunga National Park, classified as a UNESCO World Heritage site, is the oldest park in Africa. It covers 7,800 km², is home to some of the last mountain gorillas, and is considered one of the most biodiverse places in the world.

To anchor the conservation of the Park in a sustainable framework for the benefit of surrounding communities (5 million people, of whom 70% live below the poverty line as defined by the World Bank), the Virunga Foundation has launched a vast socio-economic development program in the North Kivu Province called the Virunga Alliance. In addition to the conservation of the Park, the VF has established four development priorities: electricity, support for entrepreneurship and development, agriculture, and tourism.

Virunga Development is the company that implements the agro-industrial transformation initiatives and entrepreneurship support of the Virunga Foundation in North Kivu. These factories include a flour mill, a chocolate factory, a biscuit production line, and a soap factory, as well as palm oil presses. They play a crucial role in regional economic development while adhering to the strict environmental standards of the park and international donors. In this context, we are recruiting a **COO**.

The **COO** will be responsible for ensuring operational management and coordination of the various production units; focusing on process optimization, continuous performance improvement, product quality, safety, and profitability of each factory. He or she will also be responsible for implementing the company's strategies on the ground.

Responsibilities:

- Ensure the coordination of activities across the different production units (soap factory, oil mills, chocolate factory, flour mill, biscuit factory, bakeries).
- Supervise daily operations to guarantee effective production while meeting quality, deadline, and production KPIs as agreed upon with the management of Virunga Development.
- Develop and harmonize production and maintenance strategies between the factories to maximize efficiency and reduce costs.
- Coordinate relationships between service departments and their communication with the production units.
- Supervise production managers and their respective teams in each unit and support them in developing their skills.
- Ensure ongoing training for staff on good production practices and safety standards in the food industry.
- Participate in defining the strategic and operational objectives of the company in collaboration with the CEO and other members of the management team.
- Develop and implement short- and long-term operational plans for each production unit.
- Identify and evaluate opportunities for process optimization and continuous improvement.
- Ensure cost optimization in production while maintaining product quality, manage the operational budget, and propose solutions to improve the profitability of the units.

- Ensure that all production activities comply with local, national, and international regulations by implementing processes to guarantee adherence to environmental, health, and safety standards.
- Supervise and develop a "quality control" department responsible for supporting production units in bringing products to market and in certification processes (IFS, ISO, etc.).
- Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) for each factory, monitor their achievement, analyze operational performance, and propose corrective actions if necessary.
- Encourage innovation in production processes to maintain the competitiveness of the company.

The COO will report directly to the CEO of VD as well as the general manager and will supervise the following departments:

- Each production site
- The agriculture department
- Central technical services (Maintenance + Capex)
- The quality control department

Qualifications and Required Skills:

- University degree in industrial engineering, operations management, or a related field.
- Minimum of 10 years of experience in an operations management role, preferably in the food or manufacturing industry, with at least 5 years in a leadership position.
- Strong skills in production management, process optimization, quality management, and regulatory compliance.
- Proven leadership capabilities, management of multidisciplinary teams, and communication skills.
- Proficiency in French and/or Swahili; good knowledge of English is an advantage.
- Ability to work under pressure.
- Excellent organizational skills.
- Initiative and results-oriented.
- Ability to live in remote areas, far from major cities.

To apply:

- Please send your CV (max two pages) to VD's HR department at recruitment@virunga.org and eklausner@virunga.org
- Mentioning in the subject: Application COO N°04/VD/2024