

Call for application for the recruitment of a post-doctoral researcher

“Assessing local food systems, and household dietary intake among central African hunter-gatherer communities”

Background

During the period 2022–2025, the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the International Center for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) are implementing a support program for applied research in ecology and social sciences (RESSAC). Its goal is to strengthen the impact of this research on the sustainable management of forest ecosystems in Central Africa. RESSAC provides funding for applied research as proposed by consortia of partners based on an academic and scientific framework.

Following recommendations of external reviews of proposals, RESSAC has selected the proposal titled “**Assessing local food systems, and household dietary intake among central African hunter-gatherer communities**” submitted by a consortium including the University of Douala (ENSET - Cameroon), Université du Cinquantenaire Lwiro (UNI-50, Democratic Republic of Congo), Czech University of Life Sciences (CZU/FTA, Czech Republic), and the Cameroonian NGO **Millennium Ecologic Museum (MEM) as the consortium leader**.

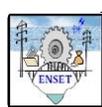
The Millennium Ecologic Museum will host the post-doctoral researcher at its headquarters in Yaoundé where workspaces and computer equipment will be made available.

Research goal and objectives

The goal of this project is to assess local food systems and the sustainability of household dietary intake within hunter-gatherers’ communities of central Africa. It focuses on the following objectives:

- Study and characterize the farming system of hunter-gatherers with reference to farm size and spatiotemporal dynamics, cultivated crop species, yields, and use of harvested crops (self-consumption, trade, gifts),
- provide a record of dietary intake, nutritional status, a description of the pattern of dietary transitions, and a nutrient profiling and functional properties assessment of the most consumed diet among central African Hunter-gatherers,
- undertake a nutrient profiling and functional properties of most consumed wild foods of the central African hunter-gatherer’s diet;

The study is targeting the central African hunter-gatherers’ communities. The following groups are the target population of this study: the Bakola/Bagyeli, the Baka, and the Twa groups respectively in Cameroon, Congo and Democratic Republic of the Congo.



Methodology

To achieve the above objectives, the following key activities will be implemented:

Activity 1: Assessment of farming systems of hunter-gatherers

The approach to implementing this activity will include field visits and household interviews. Field Observations and Surveys of hunter-gatherers' farms: -
Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion about the farming experience:
Following the area measurements,

Activity 2: Dietary assessment central African Hunter-gatherers

First, a literature review will be conducted to record exhaustive historical information on the authentic diet composition of hunter-gatherer groups.
The fieldwork will be conducted in the village camps of the hunter-gatherers. The nutritional surveys will cover the different seasons within a year to assess dietary intake, and nutritional transition. The participants will be women and men selected through simple random sampling according to household lists by the Chief of each village.

Activity 3: Assessment of the nutritional status of hunter-gatherers

A cross-sectional study will be conducted to assess the nutritional status. After careful compliance with relevant ethical considerations, the nutritional status of the studied population will be assessed through the measurement of anthropometric data. Anthropometric measurements will be collected from at least 500 hunter-gatherers, following standard protocol and instruments.

Activity 4: Assessment of nutrient content and functional properties of the diet of central African hunter-gatherers

Analyses will be carried out on frequently consumed traditional dishes, with a focus on phytochemical, proximate, and nutrient analyses, as well as assessment of glycemic index (GI) of most frequently eaten meals.

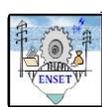
Activity 5: Feedback meeting with stakeholders

Feedbacks meetings at village level and a stakeholder workshop will be organized to share the results with actors and decision-makers interested in the promotion of food security among hunter-gatherers.

Tasks

The tasks of the post-doctoral researcher are as follows

- Ensuring operational monitoring of the proper implementation of activities
- -Ensuring close monitoring of the Masters students under the supervision of the project's scientific supervisors.
- Ensuring the quality of data collected by the Masters students
- Prepare methodological notes with data collection tools
- Collecting data in the field
- Process and analyze the data collected
- Write technical reports and scientific articles



Deliverables

- Methodological note with data collection tools
- Technical report
- At least 02 articles accepted in renowned scientific journal
- At least one policy brief published

Term and condition

- 18 month contract (start February 2024 to end July 2025)
- The postdoctoral researcher will be supervised administratively by Dr Nguenang Guy Merlin and Scientifically By Pr Fongzossie Evariste (University of Douala) and Dr Nguenang Guy Merlin (MEM), Rodrigue BATUMIKE, Researcher (Université du Cinquantenaire Lwiro, DRC), Prof. Dr. Ir. Patrick Van Damme (Czech University of Life Sciences).

Qualification

- Hold a doctorate degree in biological sciences or related fields; and demonstrate research experience of at least 2 years in the following fields nutritional Biochemistry, nutritional epidemiology;
- Good command of French and English,
- Organisational skills/autonomy, meeting deadlines and communication;
- Ability to work in remote areas of central Africa;
- Ability to establish contacts with resource persons in Central Africa ;
- Ability to collect, process and analyze socio-economic, biological and nutritional epidemiology data;
- Mastery of relevant statistical analysis software;
- Ability to articulate empirical approaches with theoretical and conceptual approaches in scientific approaches ;
- Ability to write scientific and financial reports ;
- Ability to write scientific articles for international peer-reviewed journals ;
- Ability to make operational use of research findings (policy brief, facts sheets, etc.);
- Female applicants will be given preference in cases of equal competence

Application procedure

Complete applications must include

- A detailed CV (Three contacts persons for the reference)
- A letter of motivation stating explicitly what contribution you will make to the project (demonstrating why you're a good candidate for the position);
- A methodological note indicating your understanding of the mission and how the objectives of the project will be achieved;

These applications should be sent as a digital file with the title: candidature-POST-DOC-projet RESSAC-MEM to the following addresses ecologicmuseum@yahoo.com with a copy to gnguenang@hotmail.com, fongzossie@gmail.com. Deadline for applications is set for 15 February 2024, 23:59 (Central African time, GMT+1).