



UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY

Duty Station: Bonn, Germany

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Research Associate

Current and future risks of urban and rural flooding in West Africa - An integrated analysis and ecosystem-based solutions (FURIFLOOD)
(Personnel Service Agreement - PSA)

Organizational Unit	United Nations University - Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS)
Reference Number	2020/UNU/EHS/PSA/RA/61
Applications to	hrbonn@vie.unu.edu
Closing Date	18 September 2020

United Nations University Objectives:

The United Nations University (UNU) is an international community of scholars, engaged in research, postgraduate teaching and capacity development and dissemination of knowledge in furthering the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The mission of UNU is to contribute, through research and capacity building, to efforts to resolve the pressing global problems that are the concern of the United Nations and its Member States. For more information, please visit <http://unu.edu>.

United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS)

UNU-EHS, established in December 2003, is part of the UNU system, a worldwide network of Research and Training Institutes. Its mission is to advance human security through knowledge-based approaches to reducing vulnerability and environmental risks. For more information, please visit www.ehs.unu.edu.

Environmental Vulnerability & Ecosystem Services (EVES) Section

The EVES section at UNU-EHS conducts original, policy relevant research addressing the vulnerability and resilience of social-ecological systems. Specifically, EVES aims to understand how social ecological systems are affected by environmental hazards of diverse nature such as water and land degradation, floods, droughts, and other hazards. EVES not only considers the impacts of single hazards, but also investigates multiple hazard situations, identifying cumulating or cascading impacts and feedbacks between hazards of contrasting nature such as floods and droughts. The concept of ecosystem services is of central importance in most of the research conducted by EVES researchers.

For detailed information please visit: <https://ehs.unu.edu/about/departments/evs#overview>

About FURIFLOOD

The German-African inter- and transdisciplinary FURIFLOOD project is planned for funding (final approval still outstanding) by the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) and aims at generating scientific knowledge regarding climate drivers of current and future extreme events related to flooding in West Africa. Based on this, the project aims at deriving and evaluating ecosystem-based strategies to reduce current and future risk to flooding using a participatory approach. The planned case studies will be in the tropical region of West Africa, and thus complement and build on results of the first BMBF-funded WASCAL research program in the Sudan Savannah zone.

The planned outputs of the FURIFLOOD project are (i) the compilation of a comprehensive catalogue of past extreme precipitation events for ten WASCAL countries and the monitoring of loss and damage as basis for the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, (ii) a list of indicators to measure current and future flood risk in different regions of West Africa representing the most relevant meteorological, hydrological, hydraulic, infrastructural and socio-economical aspects, (iii) an assessment of future rainfall extremes based on bias-corrected output from regional climate models and pseudo-global warming simulations to estimate the influence of changes in atmospheric dynamics in a warmer, moister climate, (iv) a guidebook to plan and evaluate ecosystem-based approaches for flood risk reduction, and (v) a webGIS-based decision-maker platform, which allows users to quickly assess current and future flood risk and learn about adequate risk reduction measures.

UNU-EHS will contribute research on flood-related impacts, the assessment of current and future exposure, vulnerability and risk to flooding, and the development and evaluation of ecosystem-based approaches to reduce current and future flood risk.

Responsibilities

Under the authority of the Director of UNU-EHS and the guidance of the EVES Head of Section, the successful candidate will be entrusted with the following tasks:

- Structured review and documentation of past and present ecosystem-based and hybrid measures to reduce flood risk in the tropical region of West Africa.
- Collection and compilation of a flood loss and damage database for the countries of the FURIFLOOD focal areas (Ghana, Togo and Benin) with focus on the Sendai Framework Monitor.
- Derivation of an indicator library as basis for assessing flood risk in West Africa through complementing results of the BMBF-funded WASCAL research program.
- Conducting an indicator-based risk assessment for local watersheds in the study area.
- Conceptualization and organization of workshops for stakeholder consultations in West Africa, and in other locations, including Bonn (Germany).
- Exploring potential trends of exposure and vulnerability indicators using a participatory, scenario-based approach.
- Participatory derivation of ecosystem-based measures to reduce flood risk and their evaluation through a scenario-based integration in hydrological models in collaboration with project partners.
- Travel to undertake fieldwork in West Africa (relevant travel restrictions/regulations allowing).
- Contribute to project reporting duties as required by the coordinator of the consortium.

Required Qualifications and Experience

- Master's degree in Geography, Geosciences, Geographical Information Systems, Statistics, Spatial Planning, Environmental Sciences, Environmental Management or other relevant disciplines;
- Experience in vulnerability and risk assessment, ecosystem-based approaches for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation;
- At least intermediate knowledge of spatial analysis and Geographic Information Systems (ArcGIS, QGIS, etc.);

- Statistical skills and experience with statistical software packages (SPSS, STATA, etc.);
- Experience in workshop organization and stakeholder dialogue is an asset;
- Experience in developing country contexts is required, the candidate should be especially fit for service in a tropical climate;
- Track-record in scientific writing is an asset;
- Strong ability to carry out work independently;
- Excellent communication skills, including fluency in written and oral English and French is strongly required;
- Strong team player with strong interpersonal skills demonstrated by the ability to work in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity;
- This position entails a high degree of travel (relevant travel restrictions/regulations allowing).

UNU is committed to diversity and inclusion within its workforce, and encourages all candidates, irrespective of gender, nationality, religious and ethnic backgrounds, including persons living with disabilities to apply and become part of the organization.

UNU has a zero-tolerance policy on conduct that is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations and UNU, including sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination.

Contract and Remuneration:

This is a full-time employment on a twelve (12) months Personnel Service Agreement (PSA) contract with possibility for renewal subject to satisfactory work performance and availability of funds, with the combined duration of appointments not exceeding six (6) years. Remuneration will be within the range of the PSA pay scheme applied by UNU in Bonn, at PSA 3 level, commensurate with qualifications and experience. The position still depends on written approval of the project funds.

This is a locally recruited post and no relocation allowances apply. The successful candidate will be employed under a local contract and will not hold international civil servant status nor is he/she a “staff member” as defined in the United Nations Staff Rules and Regulations.

Starting Date:

Latest starting date is 01 January 2021

Application Procedure:

Interested applicants should submit their applications by e-mail (to hrbonn@vie.unu.edu), and must include the following:

- A cover letter setting out how the qualifications and experience match the requirements of the position;
- A curriculum vitae and a completed and signed [UNU Personal History \(P.11\) form](#) downloadable from the [UNU website](#). Please avoid using similar forms provided by other United Nations organizations;
- An indication of the reference number of the vacancy announcement (2020/UNU/EHS/PSA/RA/61).