

Director of Operations

Location: Primarily based in Rwanda, with regional travel as required

Reporting to: Co-Founding Directors (CEO and Business Director), currently based outside Rwanda

Contract type: Salary and incentive package tailored to experience, with flexible options to match candidate needs and NjordFrey's early-stage context.

About NjordFrey

NjordFrey is a Rwandan social enterprise deploying climate-smart, tech-enabled aquaponic systems that significantly boost fish and crop yields for smallholder farmers. Our mission is to transform food security, income generation, and climate resilience across Sub-Saharan Africa through technology, training, and strong local partnerships.

Since launching, we have built Rwanda's first commercial aquaponic farm and grown a lean, committed team spanning operations, supply chain, technical development, finance/HR and project management. Our two co-founding directors bring complementary expertise in engineering, technology and product innovation, business development and project delivery. They collectively shape strategic direction, oversee finance and technical development, and guide the enterprise's growth. Day-to-day operational delivery in Rwanda is led by our experienced in-country team (see [here](#) for more on our work).

As we prepare for our next phase of scaling and replication, we are recruiting a senior in-country operational leader to become NjordFrey's **senior-most executive on the ground**. This person will translate strategic priorities into disciplined, scalable operations; lead and strengthen the country team; and act as the key bridge between founders, partners, funders, and field operations.

Role Purpose

The **Director of Operations** will anchor NjordFrey's operations in Rwanda, ensuring our first commercial sites performs reliably and efficiently, while designing and executing the rollout of additional sites over the next 12–24 months. This role is central to how we work: fast learning cycles, pragmatic innovation, high accountability, and tight collaboration between local teams and the founding leadership.

Success in this role will be defined by:

1. **Operational excellence** at the flagship site plus clear systems, SOPs, and learning loops that enable replication.
2. **Winning and delivering new operational partnerships** that directly support growth and help sustain the role's cost base.
3. **Leading the rollout of new aquaponic sites**, ensuring quality, financial discipline, and strong community and partner relationships.

This role is a core bridge between NjordFrey's strategic leadership and all on-ground project teams, strengthening the organisation's ability to scale with integrity, efficiency, and impact.

Core Responsibilities

1. Operational Leadership

- Oversee day-to-day operations of all operational sites, including our internal flagship site and external project sites, ensuring fish/crop yields, quality, and efficiency targets are met.
- Partner with the Technical Leads to optimise systems for local conditions and troubleshoot operational issues.
- Implement and continually refine SOPs, inventory systems, vendor management, and site protocols.
- Ensure project compliance with donor, regulatory and partner requirements.

2. Scaling and New Site Rollout

- Translate NjordFrey's five-year strategy into clear operational milestones and site expansion plans.
- Lead all aspects of new site establishment: scoping, site readiness, design adjustments, team recruitment, training, and launch.
- Create and maintain a "new site" playbook that captures what it takes to scale efficiently without compromising standards.
- Codify planning, budgeting, procurement, timelines, and performance targets for each new site.

3. Partnerships, Growth & Financial Performance

- Work with founders to secure partnerships, grants, and contracts on the ground in Rwanda that finance site expansion and operations.
- Own operational delivery for these partnerships, ensuring commitments are met and relationships are strengthened.
- Map and manage unit economics, KPIs, and core financial drivers across sites.
- Feed operational insights into fundraising, investor updates, proposals, and strategic decisions.

4. People, Culture & Capacity Building

- Recruit, lead, coach, and support all staff, including Team Lead, Site Manager(s) and farm staff, fostering a positive, accountable, and safety-first work culture.
- Formalise staff roles, onboarding processes, and training programs.
- Model values-driven leadership and ensure alignment with NjordFrey's mission.

5. Stakeholder & Community Engagement

- Maintain strong relationships with suppliers, partners, communities, and government actors.
- Represent NjordFrey in stakeholder discussions, donor visits, and technical collaborations.
- Support customer engagement and farmer-facing activities that strengthen demand and impact.

Key Experience & Skills

Essential

- 7+ years' experience in senior operations management in agribusiness, aquaculture, controlled environment agriculture, or similar sectors in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Demonstrated success leading multi-site or high-growth operations from pilot to scale.
- Strong analytical and financial management capabilities; comfortable building and tracking KPIs and unit economics.
- Excellent people leadership skills with a track record of building high-performing, values-aligned teams.
- Ability to work effectively across cultures and communicate clearly with both local and international stakeholders.

Desirable

- Experience in aquaponics or advanced horticulture systems.
- Experience delivering donor-funded or impact-driven projects.
- Fluency in Kinyarwanda and/or French.

Leadership Characteristics

We're looking for someone who is:

- **Hands on & strategic:** grounded in operational detail, yet able to see the system and plan ahead.
- **Builder minded:** thrives in early-stage contexts where systems must be created, not inherited.
- **A bridge:** comfortable aligning field realities with founder-driven strategy, technical inputs, and partner expectations.
- **Culturally intelligent:** able to build trust with Rwandan based teams while bringing strong operational discipline.

- **Entrepreneurial & resilient:** able to take initiative, problem solve in real time and navigate resource constrained environments.
- **Impact-driven:** motivated by improving food systems, farmer livelihoods, and climate resilience.

Why Join Us

This is a rare opportunity to shape the operational backbone of a high-potential, mission-led enterprise at a pivotal moment. This includes:

- Play a defining leadership role in a high-potential, mission-driven enterprise.
- Lead national operations with real autonomy and influence over company direction.
- Build systems that will shape NjordFrey's long-term model across East Africa.
- Directly contribute to climate resilience, food security, and rural income generation.
- Clear growth pathway into a future senior management role based on strong performance.

How to Apply

To apply, please submit your application via [this application form](#) and include:

- Your CV (2-page max)
- A brief cover letter explaining your interest in this role and any relevant experience