
JOB DESCRIPTION

Operations Associate

Position Title	Operations Associate
Company	Start-up gold trading & export company
Location	Sierra Leone (field-based, with frequent travel to sourcing and mining regions)
Department	Operations
Reports To	Business & Operations Manager
Employment Type	Full-Time
Direct Reports	None (individual contributor)

1. Company Overview

The organisation is a start-up in the gold trading, aggregation, and export sector in Sierra Leone. The company is building a compliant, transparent, and scalable gold supply chain by partnering with local miners, international buyers, and financial institutions. The Operations Associate will be a key early hire on the ground — the hands-on support that keeps sourcing and day-to-day operations moving.

2. Role Purpose

The Operations Associate is a **hands-on, field-facing role** supporting the Business & Operations Manager across the full sourcing-to-export cycle. The post-holder will spend significant time in the field — building rapport with miners and agents, helping source and aggregate gold, and executing the day-to-day steps of buying, testing, weighing, recording, and moving product safely. This is a doing role for someone trustworthy, energetic, and detail-oriented who wants to grow with the business and is comfortable handling valuable assets with discipline and integrity.

3. Key Responsibilities

Supply Sourcing & Aggregation (Field)

- Travel regularly to mining and sourcing areas to identify and engage artisanal and small-scale miners (ASM), agents, and suppliers.
- Build and maintain day-to-day rapport with suppliers, acting as a reliable, trusted point of contact in the field.
- Help aggregate gold from multiple sources and coordinate its safe movement to the company's processing or testing point.
- Gather and relay market intelligence — local pricing, supply conditions, and new sourcing opportunities — to the Manager.

Operations Execution

- Carry out the day-to-day steps of buying, testing, weighing, smelting support, and storage under the Manager's direction and the company's SOPs.
- Operate and care for testing and weighing equipment correctly, following calibration and chain-of-custody procedures.
- Prepare lots for export and support the logistics and movement of gold and cash.
- Flag bottlenecks, errors, or anything unusual quickly so they can be resolved.

Quality, Records & Accuracy

- Help ensure accuracy and transparency in every purity and weight measurement.
- Maintain detailed, accurate, and timely records of purchases, inventory, and transactions.
- Follow controls designed to prevent losses, theft, shrinkage, or fraud, and report any discrepancy immediately.

Compliance & Documentation Support

- Collect and verify supplier documentation, supporting Know Your Customer (KYC) and source-of-gold requirements.
- Keep operational and transaction paperwork complete, organised, and up to date.
- Support the Manager in operating within Sierra Leone mining, trading, and export regulations.

Risk & Security Awareness

- Follow security and chain-of-custody protocols at all times when handling, storing, or moving gold and cash.
- Stay alert to operational, security, and counterparty risks in the field and escalate concerns promptly to the Manager.
- Handle all assets with care, discipline, and integrity.

General Support

- Provide flexible, hands-on support across operations as the start-up's needs evolve.
- Assist with setting up aggregation points and operational arrangements as the business scales.

4. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- Reliability and quality of sourcing support — volume and consistency of gold sourced through the Associate's efforts.
- Accuracy of purity, weight, and record-keeping; zero unexplained discrepancies.
- Strength of day-to-day supplier relationships in the field.
- Adherence to SOPs, security protocols, and chain-of-custody discipline.
- Completeness and timeliness of documentation and KYC records.
- Responsiveness in flagging and resolving operational issues.

5. Qualifications & Experience

Education

- Diploma or Bachelor's degree in a relevant field, or equivalent practical experience. Formal qualifications are valued but a strong, trustworthy field operator will be considered on merit.

Experience

- 1–3 years' experience in gold or commodities sourcing, mining operations, logistics, field sales, or a comparable hands-on role is an advantage.
- Familiarity with Sierra Leone's mining regions and ASM communities is a strong plus.
- Comfort with travel and field conditions is essential.

6. Skills & Competencies

- High integrity and trustworthiness — comfortable being entrusted with valuable assets and cash.
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to build rapport quickly with miners and agents.
- Practical, hands-on, and willing to do the legwork; reliable and self-motivated.
- Careful and accurate, with strong attention to detail in measurement and record-keeping.
- Alert to risk and security in the field; sound common-sense judgement.
- Basic numeracy and comfort with simple record-keeping tools.
- Willingness to learn gold testing, weighing, and handling procedures.
- Local language skills relevant to mining communities are an advantage.

7. Working Conditions

- Frequent and sometimes extended travel to remote mining and sourcing locations.
- Field-based work in varied and sometimes demanding conditions.
- Exposure to high-security operational environments.
- Extended or irregular working hours during sourcing runs or export cycles.

8. Compensation & Benefits

- Competitive salary aligned with the company's start-up structure.
- Performance-based incentives tied to sourcing and operational targets.
- Travel, accommodation, and logistics support for field work.
- Opportunity to grow with the business as operations scale.

9. Code of Conduct & Ethics

- Strict adherence to anti-corruption and anti-fraud policies.
- Commitment to ethical sourcing and transparency.
- Compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements.