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Head of Programmes (Madagascar)

The Head of Programmes will play a key role in shaping and strengthening SEED's programme portfolio, providing leadership, management oversight and technical guidance to our international Programme Managers. The role will support teams to develop and deliver high-quality, impactful programmes that respond to community priorities, reflect good international practice and contribute to SEED's strategic objectives and commitment to community-led development.

Working across SEED's programme portfolio, the role will connect international Programme Managers with national Heads of Department and the Director of Programmes and Operations, strengthening collaboration and ensuring that programmes benefit from shared learning and expertise. The Head of Programmes will provide senior oversight while creating space for innovation, reflection and continuous improvement, helping teams to deliver programmes that are effective, responsive and ambitious in their impact.

The postholder will be a programme professional with five to eight years of international development programme design and delivery experience, able to provide practical advice whilst creating a supportive and positive management environment for international Programme Managers.

Candidates without programme management, people management and grant writing experience will not be considered for the post.

This is a new post for our expanding team and is therefore for a six-month period and, after review, has the potential to extend. It is paid at a local salary, with a contribution to flights of £1,200 and insurance of up to £650.

Key responsibilities

- Provide oversight to SEED's programmes across Community Health, Education, WASH, Sustainable Livelihoods and Conservation, ensuring an integrated and coherent approach to programme delivery.
- Work closely with Programme Managers, providing expert advice and constructive challenge to ensure programmes are well designed, appropriately resourced and delivered to a high standard in line with SEED's strategic objectives, policies and values.
- Review programme plans, budgets, proposals, reports and other key programme documentation, providing guidance and quality assurance where required.
- Maintain an overview of programme performance, identifying emerging issues, opportunities, gaps and areas requiring additional management attention.
- Ensure that programmes respond appropriately to community priorities and feedback and remain relevant to changing needs and circumstances.

- Lead on the oversight of SEED's programme development pipeline, ensuring that future programme opportunities are identified and developed sufficiently in advance of existing projects ending.
- Provide oversight into project budgets, ensuring that financial and narrative reporting is accurate, timely and of a high standard.
- Identify opportunities for programmes to complement and strengthen one another and encourage integrated approaches across SEED's programme portfolio.
- Provide high-quality line management to SEED's international Programme Managers through regular supervision, ongoing performance review, annual appraisal and supportive professional development.
- Provide additional management and programme capacity where required to cover staffing gaps or periods of increased workload, ensuring continuity and quality of programme delivery.
- Build a positive, collaborative and accountable team culture in which Programme Managers feel supported while taking ownership of their programmes and responsibilities.
- Work closely with Programme Managers and the MEL Coordinator to ensure that programmes are designed with appropriate monitoring, evaluation and learning processes.
- Ensure that evidence, learning and community feedback are actively used to adapt programmes and inform decision-making.
- Work closely with Malagasy Heads of Department to ensure effective collaboration between international Programme Managers and Malagasy colleagues and that programmes draw appropriately on local knowledge and expertise.
- Work closely with the Director of Programmes and Operations to ensure that SEED's programmes continually develop in line with organisational strategy, evidence and community feedback.
- Where appropriate, represent SEED's programmes to donors, partners and other external stakeholders.
- Ensure all of SEED's policies and procedures are evident throughout the work of the department, including those for safeguarding, whistleblowing and anti-corruption, and undertake continual training to ensure these are promoted at all times

Person specification

Experience and qualifications

- At least a first-degree-level qualification or equivalent professional experience in international development or a related discipline.
- Minimum of five years' professional experience in programme management in the Global South.
- Minimum of three years' experience in grant writing, with a proven record of successful funding applications.

- Minimum of five years' professional experience in line management, including supervising, reviewing and mentoring international staff.
- Experience of living and working in the Global South, with the ability and desire to work effectively with teams from different economic and cultural backgrounds and across multiple language barriers.

Technical and professional skills

- Sound knowledge of international development frameworks and contemporary global issues facing countries in the Global South.
- Familiarity with programme and project management tools, including logical frameworks, Theory of Change models, budgets, activity plans and monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) frameworks.
- Excellent problem-solving and analytical skills, with a demonstrable ability to gather, assess and assimilate facts and data from a range of sources and use these to inform decisions.
- Proven ability to recognise and appropriately manage challenging situations and find practical solutions.
- High degree of written and spoken English, with the ability to edit and produce high-quality English-language documents for donors and publication.
- French language skills to at least B2 level would be highly desirable.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office, particularly Word, Excel and PowerPoint.
- Ability to work to tight deadlines in an organised manner and to a consistently high standard.

Staff management, support and development

- Ability and desire to build capacity within both international and national teams, supporting colleagues to develop their skills and professional confidence.
- Excellent listening and verbal communication skills, combined with a flexible, patient and supportive approach to managing people.
- Ability to provide clear guidance, advice and support to colleagues in relation to SEED's ethos, policies and procedures, helping to protect their safety and the reputation of the organisation.
- Ability to support staff to develop the professional and social attitudes required for living and working in another country and, where necessary, to manage and address aspects of staff behaviour appropriately.
- Demonstrable awareness of and comfort with increased social and professional responsibility, including the ability to exercise sound judgement when supporting and managing others.

Cross-cultural working

- Strong cross-cultural negotiation skills, with curiosity about and respect for effective ways of working in different cultural contexts.
- Cultural sensitivity and respect, with the ability to build positive and effective working relationships across cultural, economic and professional differences.

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- Ability and desire to work collaboratively across multiple language and cultural contexts and to support effective communication between international and national colleagues.

Communication, teamwork and personal qualities

- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, with the confidence to give clear guidance while maintaining positive and respectful relationships.
- Ability to work effectively both independently and as part of a team.
- Passion, curiosity and motivation for the role, with the ability to enthuse and motivate others.
- Demonstrable commitment to SEED's ethos and approach, with the ability to act as a positive ambassador for the organisation at all times.
- Ability and commitment to work in accordance with, and advocate for, all of SEED's policies and procedures, including safeguarding those with whom SEED works and reporting concerns appropriately.
- A flexible, patient and professional approach, with a strong awareness of the responsibilities associated with working internationally and representing SEED.

Application procedure

Interested applicants should send a CV and covering letter in English outlining why they wish to take up this position and how their skills and experience match the requirements in the job description criteria to our hiring team at applications@seedmadagascar.org.

Please note: AI-generated cover letters and recruitment exercises will not be processed. We value concise and focused applications. To help us review all submissions efficiently, please include the dates you were in your previous employment, and limit your CV to a maximum of four pages. Unfortunately, longer CVs cannot be considered.

Application Deadline: Monday, 30th November. Applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis throughout this period. Candidates will complete an exercise, long-listed applicants will have an initial informal interview with Madagascar based staff and short-listed applicants will then be offered an interview with the London team.

SEED Madagascar actively encourages equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace and aims to create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.