

JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Adviser, Technical Assistance Unit

Division: Technical Assistance Unit

Grade: H

Reports To: Head, Technical Assistance Unit

General information

The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC) is the principal means by which the Commonwealth Secretariat delivers targeted development assistance to member countries. To address specific development challenges, the CFTC provides capacity-building and institutional strengthening assistance to member countries, particularly the 32 countries classified as small states, many of whom make up the 21 least developed and low-income countries across the Commonwealth. The CFTC works to enhance socio-economic progress by advancing democracy, good governance, human rights and the rule of law, human development, gender equality, youth empowerment, education, health and sport, among others.

The provision of assistance, through the provision of technical expertise from around the Commonwealth, is recognised as a key strength of the organisation. The timely and flexible delivery of this assistance in response to member states' needs and capacity development priorities is a key outcome within the Secretariat's current strategic plan.

The Technical Assistance Unit is responsible for management of long term technical assistance projects across all programmatic areas of the Secretariat. It provides specialised, professional project development and management expertise to the design and implementation of institutional capacity development projects to ensure demonstrable impact that contributes to the achievement of all organisational strategic outcomes.

Job Summary

The Adviser, Technical Cooperation is a member of a flexible and responsive team of specialist project management professionals providing project design and management expertise to enable the effective delivery of institutional strengthening and capacity development assistance to Commonwealth member countries across all programmatic areas of the Secretariat.

Working closely with specialist technical advisers in all programmatic areas of the Secretariat, the post holder is responsible for project managing and playing a driving role in the appraisal, design, implementation and evaluation of technical cooperation and capacity building projects.

The post holder will be required to assist in policy formulation on technical cooperation approaches and contribute to the ongoing review and improvement of technical cooperation procedures. S/he will be required to develop effective working relationships with lead technical divisions, assigned Member Countries and other internal and external stakeholders (including international development partners) in order to lead the development of projects.

Task Description

The post holder will be expected to provide specialist project design and management expertise to the development of tailored technical solutions in response to a wide range of development challenges identified by member countries.

Working in close collaboration with specialist technical advisers, the post holder will:

- Drive, coordinate and contribute to the analysis, review and evaluation of requests from member countries for technical cooperation, ensuring the full range of technical, political, logistical and human factors are considered and that requests are evaluated in compliance with the objectives of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Strategic Plan.
- Drive the preparation of projects drawing on input from all relevant stakeholders ensuring high technical quality and consistency and transparency in managerial, administrative and financial aspects, including compliance with Commonwealth Secretariat corporate policies.
- Drive the implementation of a wide portfolio of projects across all programmatic areas of the Secretariat, employing specialist project management skills to ensure that projects are delivered effectively and achieve impacts that directly contribute the strategic objectives of the organisation.
- Coordinate specialist inputs from members of the project implementation teams throughout implementation and ensure effective communication of progress and results to both internal and external audiences.
- To inform project design and develop 'best fit' solutions to complex development challenges, undertake political economy analysis and problem diagnostics, through needs assessments and situational analysis.
- Lead ongoing project monitoring and review, including missions to member countries, ensuring that all necessary stakeholders are consulted and that discussions include perspectives from across the Secretariat. Provide advice to member governments on early corrective action where necessary to ensure projects remain on track.
- Advise and guide technical Divisions, as well as Member Countries, on the development of actionable proposals for technical assistance projects.
- Develop performance assessment methodologies, indicators and metrics to be incorporated at the project design stage to ensure project impact is measurable, demonstrable and in compliance with the Secretariat's requirements for results-based management (RBM).
- Manage financial performance to ensure that projects remain within agreed project budgets and the overall programme budget and take remedial action where necessary.
- Contribute to internal and external discussion of international development approaches, championing unique approach of the Commonwealth to the delivery of development assistance.

- Communicate effectively with internal and external stakeholders to ensure understanding and effective utilisation and implementation of the technical assistance programme.
- Contribute to country/regional briefs on technical cooperation and capacity building activities.
- Adheres to the gender equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter and the Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy.
- Any other tasks as may be assigned from time to time.

Person Specification

Education

- Degree or a post-graduate qualification in Development Studies, Political Science, Economics or a related Social Science discipline.

Desirable

- PRINCE2 certified or similar project management qualification.

Experience

- At least 8 years relevant work experience, including a proven track record of developing and managing complex technical cooperation projects in developing countries.
- A sound understanding of government operations within developing country settings.
- Substantial specialist expertise in project design, management, monitoring & evaluation (organisational/institutional), project budgeting and forecasting.
- Specialist expertise and knowledge in international development thinking and practice.
- Sound understanding of Project Cycle Management (including the Logical Framework) and Results-Based Management (RBM) approaches.
- Strong track record of leading and coordinating multi-faceted project teams.
- Experience within a Government Agency in a developing country or international development organisation with responsibility for project development, design and management.
- Excellent written and oral communications skills.

Desirable

- Experience of working 'in the field' in developing country contexts
- Experience in evaluation of development assistance programmes.

Competencies:

Respect for Diversity

Works effectively with people from all backgrounds.

Treats all people with dignity and respect. Treats men and women equally.

Shows respect and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates understanding in daily work and decision making.

Examine own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses and does not discriminate against any individual or group.

Changes systems and processes when biases are identified

Working with Others

Promotes team work and removes barriers to effective team working

Provides advice and guidance for others sensitively and where appropriate

Establishes ownership for relevant activities from the outset

Develops a wide network, including senior level contacts to facilitate activities and further own knowledge

Manages expectations of member states e.g. to ensure the alignment of what is requested and what Commonwealth Secretariat can offer

Demonstrates an ability to negotiate with and influence senior colleagues and contacts

Proactively liaises with other divisions, partners & third parties

Developing & Applying Expertise

Applies specialist knowledge to achieve anticipated results

Proactively identifies how to develop specialist knowledge

Presents self as credible to both internal and external contacts

Adapting & Innovating

Encourages and works with others to develop innovative approaches

Drives forward improvements and innovations within own area of responsibility, adding value where appropriate

Develops creative ideas into something practical and workable

Encourages others to demonstrate flexibility to ensure that objectives are achieved

Adapts approach and/or reconsiders decisions in light of new information

Promotes new ideas that are picked up by senior colleagues

Understands the motivations and objectives of differing groups and adapts approach accordingly



Accountability

Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines.

Ensures timely delivery of outputs within defined cost and quality standard parameters.

Takes responsibility for own shortcomings and compliances.