

JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Programme Officer - Gender

Grade: J

Reports To: Head of Gender Section

General Information

The Commonwealth Secretariat is the principal intergovernmental body of the Commonwealth, responsible for advancing and achieving the shared goals of the association's 53 member governments in advancing democracy, development and respect for diversity.

The Secretariat is headed by the Secretary-General who, as the Chief Executive of the organisation, is responsible and accountable for overall leadership, management and delivery. There are also three Deputy Secretaries-General responsible for the political, social development and economic, and corporate goals and programmes of the Secretariat. The Secretary-General and the three Deputy Secretaries-General comprise the Management Committee, which supports the Secretary-General in the management of the Secretariat through providing advice and through taking decisions for which the Committee is collectively accountable.

The Secretary-General and the three Deputy Secretaries-General need to interact regularly and widely with a large number of constituencies. These include senior representatives and counterparts in governments, other inter-governmental organisations, civil society groups and the media. In addition to the support received from line divisions, the Secretary-General and the three Deputy Secretaries-General rely on the availability of expert advice and assistance in their own executive offices to help them carry out such duties.

The Gender Section is based in the Secretary-General's Office division, in reflection of the highest level of political priority accorded to gender equality by the Commonwealth at large and by the Secretariat itself, and to ensure that gender mainstreaming is embedded in the Secretariat at all management levels and in all aspects of the Secretariat's work in a coordinated and coherent fashion.

The objective of the Gender Section is to support member states to advance international commitments and protocols on gender equality, including at present the implementation of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015.

The Section's work under the Strategic Plan is focussed on several priority areas:

- Gender equality mainstreamed in national frameworks and policies;
- Gender equality mainstreamed in the Secretariat's programmes and projects;
- Women's capacity is enhanced for economic and social development; and,
- Political empowerment of women and access to justice for women.

The Gender Section has three inter-linked functions:

- implementing the Secretariat's gender work, designed to promote women's rights and gender equality in Commonwealth countries through advocacy, policy advice, capacity building, and technical assistance;
- convening triennial meetings of Commonwealth Ministers responsible for Women's Affairs, and annual meetings of Commonwealth Women's National Machineries;
- leading and coordinating systems and mechanisms for effective gender mainstreaming within the Commonwealth Secretariat including advice for staff on gender issues and tools development.

Job Summary

The Programme Officer assists the Head of Gender Section and designated Adviser to implement the Secretariat's gender work as set out in the Strategic Plan and associated Work Plan, covering social, political and/or economic matters.

Duties include supporting the Head and the Adviser in their advocacy, knowledge generation, partnership-building and other strategies and activities; under guidance, liaising with member government representatives, technical experts and partners; and, assisting to develop and deliver appropriate projects and other initiatives linked to the Commonwealth Gender Plan of Action and Secretariat's Strategic Plan objectives on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Task Description:

- Provide support for the design, development and delivery of programmes and activities and capacity-building initiatives that promote women's rights and gender equality in Commonwealth countries in accordance with the goals of the Strategic Plan and outcomes of the Work Plan;
- Assist in the provision of technical advice on gender mainstreaming and gender-related issues, including through research;
- Liaise with member government representatives, technical experts and partners as directed and guided, to advance the Work Plan and to meet member governments' gender-related needs;
- Monitor, evaluate and report as directed on progress in implementing Secretariat work on gender and gender mainstreaming, and on women's social, political and economic empowerment in Commonwealth countries;
- Liaise with other Secretariat divisions to support consistent focus and delivery of gender results within policies and programmes delivered internally and externally;
- Draft and prepare consultancy correspondence, financial authorisation documentation, contracts, terms of reference, and other aspects relating to the employment and monitoring of external experts retained to support the Secretariat's gender work, and maintain a related tracking/monitoring system
- As required, prepare internal or external reports and briefs; and,
- Adheres to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy.
- Performs any other duties as may be required from time to time.

Person Specification:**Education (desirable):**

- A degree in economics, political science, development studies, gender/women studies, or related field.
- Additional training or certification in gender/women studies.

Experience:

- At least five years proven track record in the area of gender and/or women's economic empowerment;
- Experience of work with developing countries
- A sound knowledge of relevant gender systems, tools, strategies, emerging international trends on gender, and multi-disciplinary team approaches;
- A proven commitment to gender equality, women's advancement, and promoting transformative change pertaining to women's rights;
- Demonstrable team spirit and proven capacity to network and build effective partnerships and work collaboratively on programmes/projects activities to meet set goals and targets; and,
- Experience in one or more Commonwealth countries, regional or multilateral organisations, or developing countries on gender issues.

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.

Identifies biases in systems & processes

Working with Others

Regularly shares information of value with colleagues

Shows commitment to delivering on key agreements made to colleagues

Makes an effort to view a situation from the other party's perspective as well

Demonstrates awareness and sensitivity to colleagues' pressures

Utilises networks to ensure similar goals are achieved collaboratively

Develops long term relationships across cultures and/or geographical boundaries

Uses relationships to identify the best people to help in the completion of tasks

Tactfully deals with difficult people to gain buy-in and manage their expectations

Developing & Applying Expertise

Takes advantage of opportunities to develop an area of expertise

Takes learning from previous experience and applies them appropriately

Demonstrates willingness to learn new skills and/or approaches

Adapting & Innovating

Recognises opportunities for improvement and proposes change with impact and effect

Helps others evaluate and strengthen ideas

Quickly grasps new concepts and how to apply them

Demonstrates flexibility e.g. by working beyond own remit in order to achieve an objective inter alia

Will effectively reorganise activities when faced with changing contexts and demands

Welcomes and adapts to new ideas and/or approaches

Adapts personal style to meet the needs of others

Accountability

Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines.

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

Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines (L1)

Ensures timely delivery of outputs (L1)