

JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Programme Officer
Division: Technical Assistance Unit
Grade: I

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. Working closely with all divisions of the secretariat, TAU has responsibility for: Delivery of all long term technical assistance projects ensuring a results based management approach through robust project design, management, monitoring and reporting; advising divisions on technical assistance approaches and design; advising senior management on technical assistance policy; liaising with member country officials regarding Commonwealth assistance and their requirements; promoting good practice within the development assistance work of the Secretariat; and supporting the promotion of the Commonwealth's technical assistance work.

Job Summary

The Programme Officer is an integral part of the TAU team. Under the supervision of the Head of Unit, s/he will be responsible for providing project administration and management support to the Technical Assistance Unit on a wide portfolio of projects across all programmatic areas including the maintenance and monitoring of the Unit's budget and project management system and the coordination of the unit's reporting.

The Programme Officer will be required to develop effective working relationships with assigned Member Countries and liaises internally with the Thematic Advisers across the Secretariat on the appraisal, design and evaluation of appropriate and relevant technical cooperation and capacity building projects.

Task Description

As part of the Technical Assistance team, the post holder will be expected to:

- Provide support to the project management of technical assistance programmes to meet identified needs of member countries as well as capacity development requirements of national and regional institutions;
- Provide project management support to the work of the Technical Assistance Advisers and the Head of Section in preparing, managing and updating project budgets, contracts/funding agreements and arrangements with partner institutions;
- Contribute to project documents using input from all relevant stakeholders and ensuring high technical quality and consistency in technical, administrative and financial aspects, including compliance with the Commonwealth Secretariat policies and requirements for results-based management (RBM);
- Plan and manage the technical assistance budget, financial disbursements and payments; including the review and preparation of project and financial reports, maintaining the Unit's financial database and preparing statistical information for decision making;
- Provides advice and guidance to delivery partners and external funding agencies on financial disbursements and reporting to meet Secretariat procedures and audit requirements;
- Assist in the development and implementation of results based management (RBM) processes for programmes and projects, including monitoring, evaluation and reporting;
- Maintain and regularly update web and intranet pages and coordinate with Communications divisions to develop technical assistance articles and case studies;
- Coordinates the recruitment process for technical assistance projects and oversees the contract award and management;
- Coordinate regular team meetings and ensure that programme management and monitoring tools are kept up to date;
- Prepare and coordinate contributions to country/regional briefs on technical assistance activities;
- Provide input to the strategic development and operational functioning of the Unit;
- Undertake field visits for the development, implementation and evaluation of technical assistance projects;
- Participates in regular professional development training to support the activities of the Unit;
- 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.



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Person Specification

Education

- Bachelor's Degree in Development Studies, Economics or a related Social Science discipline

Experience

- At least 3 years relevant work experience in/with international development assistance, including a proven track record of supporting technical cooperation projects in developing countries;
- A sound understanding of project cycle management and Results-Based Management principles;
- Strong IT skills, particularly in the area of budgeting, forecasting, financial analysis and reporting.
- A sound understanding of government operations within developing country settings;
- Excellent written and oral communications skills

Desirable

- Experience within a Government Agency in a developing country or a development organisation with responsibility for project development, design and management.
- Experience in evaluation of development assistance programmes.
- Post graduate qualification in a relevant field.

Competencies

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

Communication

Interacts and communicates effectively with internal/external contacts
Ensures information is communicated to all the appropriate people
Provides feedback to more senior colleagues effectively, providing justification where necessary
Uses the correct method of communication, depending on the message and the audience
Anticipates objections in dialogues and prepares convincing responses
Delivers difficult messages with tact and sensitivity

Planning and Analysis

Schedules activities according to deadlines and importance
Liaises with various parties in diverse locations to organise activities
Agrees new timescales when faced with competing activities
Balances a focus on detail with a broader perspective
Effectively interprets inquiries and quickly identifies elements that do and do not fall within their remit, dealing with them appropriately

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

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

Accountability

Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines.



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

Adapting and 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