



The Commonwealth

## JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

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**Job Title:** Planning and Monitoring Officer  
**Division:** Strategic Planning and Evaluation Division  
**Grade:** H

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**Reports To:** Adviser and Head - Planning Section

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### 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 role of the Strategic Planning and Evaluation Division (SPED) is to identify the global context in which the Commonwealth Secretariat pursues its mandates from governments, to stimulate policy and activities across other divisions to respond accordingly, and to service the meetings of the Secretariat's governing bodies.

Working closely with all divisions of the Secretariat, SPED is responsible *inter alia* for the preparation of the Secretariat's 4-year Strategic Plan; acting as the secretariat to the Commonwealth Secretariat's governing bodies (the Board of Governors and Executive Committee of the Board and other related committees); managing the Secretariat's programme of evaluation studies; coordinating the work of the Policy and Planning Committee (PPC) and Senior Management Group (SMG); facilitating strategic thinking and planning; supporting corporate management through the Committee on Corporate Services (CCS) and the Strategic Human Resources Committee (SHRC); promoting results-based management (RBM) including by monitoring, evaluating and reporting on programme quality, progress and performance; and promoting the adoption of good practices identified in evaluation studies.

The Division's structure reflects these responsibilities, being broken down into a Planning Section, Evaluation Section and RBM Team and the Director's office. In addition, the Division interacts internally with all divisions and externally with representatives of member governments to pursue its responsibilities.

### JOB SUMMARY

The Planning Section is comprised of: the Head of Planning and two planning officers. The Section is responsible for: developing and reporting on the Strategic Plan; coordinating the Secretariat's annual budget and workplan process; managing the Secretariat's planning and budgeting processes and systems; supporting the governance of the Secretariat, through the servicing of the Secretariat's governing bodies (the Board of Governors, its

Executive Committee and their sub-committees or working groups); organizing the annual Diplomatic Induction Programme jointly with the Commonwealth Foundation; providing planning support and advice to divisions, including in the planning of Ministerial Meetings; overseeing implementation and the ongoing development of the Secretariat's programme management and information system.

The Planning Officer Monitoring is part of the SPED team and supports all matters related to monitoring of the Secretariat's Strategic Plan. This will include focusing on developing monitoring reports to help inform decision making within the Secretariat and with the governing boards. The officer will be expected to strengthen the quality of monitoring conducted by divisions through provision of advice on monitoring reports.

## **TASK DESCRIPTION**

The post-holder will support the following three areas of the Planning Section's work:

### **A. Monitoring**

- a. Develop monitoring reports to track the progress across the Secretariat in achieving the outcomes of the Strategic Plan;
- b. Provide advice and support to divisions in the development of monitoring plans for their project design documents;
- c. Ensure monitoring guidelines and standards are met;
- d. Support the creation of good monitoring practices in the Secretariat by planning and conducting spot audits of monitoring practices by divisions and follow up with feedback and suggestions;
- e. Work closely with the Results-based Management team to ensure timely inputs into the Secretariat's Programme Management and Information System

### **B. Strategic Planning and Monitoring**

- a. Support and contribute to the review and development of the Secretariat's 4-year Strategic Plan; including assisting with the coordination of the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan;
- b. Keep track of the challenges and issues raised through monitoring reports from divisions to see how this will impact on the ability of the Secretariat to meet the objectives of its Strategic Plan;
- c. Contribute to the preparation of the Secretariat's six-monthly reports and the Annual Performance Report for presentation to the Secretariat's governing bodies' meetings.
- d. Co-ordinate and contribute to divisional and inter-divisional meetings to support determining how divisions can achieve the strategic planning outcomes through ministerial meetings; including logistical arrangements

for the meetings and chairpersonship of these meetings, preparing the summaries of these meetings and circulating them to meeting participants and relevant Divisions.

- e. Undertake research, where and when necessary, on issues of strategic importance and relevance to the implementation of the Secretariat's Strategic Plan.

### **C. Other**

- a. Support the division's work in governance and Results Based Monitoring.
- b. Maintain and organise an electronic and paper record of monitoring reports
- c. Draft, edit and proof read letters, briefs, speeches, memoranda and other documents related to the Planning Section's work.
- d. Provide minute taking and summary record duties as required.
- e. Adhere to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and the Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy'
- f. Perform other duties as may be required from time to time.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

### **Education:**

A post-graduate degree in development studies, international relations, economics, public administration or related field.

Desirable: A post-graduate degree in one or more of the above disciplines.

### **Experience:**

A minimum of 5 years working experience in development programmes and projects, in a planning agency or an international/inter-governmental organization. Considerable working experience in monitoring RBM systems and performance assessment. Familiarity with spreadsheets and databases is required.

Desirable: Preparation of major strategic, policy and sectoral planning documents, and preparation of budgets.

## 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

### Planning and Analysis

Breaks long term plans into clear milestones

Builds in contingencies for potential obstacles

Takes corrective action if activities are off track

Uses past experience to inform future planning

Quickly and accurately identifies subtle themes and relevant issues in complex information

### Developing and Applying Professional 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

### Managing Resources

Identifies targets for team activities and manages progress against objectives

Plans and manages activity spend accurately against budget

Takes responsibility for team activity and finds solutions to set backs in a timely and professional manner

Effectively motivates team e.g. by recognising and promoting team and individual

contribution inter alia

Recognises strengths and weaknesses in others, structuring teams based on this knowledge

Drives forward results of others

Takes ownership for team wellbeing

### **Decision Making**

Considers the relevant justifications for a particular course of action

Takes context into consideration when making decisions

Makes effective decisions when acting on behalf of a senior colleague, seeking advice where appropriate

Bases actions and approaches on the root cause of an issue, rather than the symptoms

### **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.

### **Leadership & Development**

Mentors colleagues effectively e.g. by suggesting development goals and providing on the job coaching inter alia

Provides constructive feedback to team members and colleagues with confidence and sensitivity