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PROGRAM MANAGER- (Integrated Agriculture, Market System and Education)

About Mercy Corps

Mercy Corps is a leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible. In a disaster, in hardship, in more than 40 countries around the world, we partner to put bold solutions into action – helping people triumph over adversity and build stronger communities from within. Now, and for the future. Mercy Corps has been operating in Nepal since 2005, implementing programs in food security, agriculture, market development, financial services, youth engagement, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. We take a systems- based approach in our programming, with the aim of improving the lives and potential of vulnerable individuals and communities across Nepal.

Program / Department Summary

World Food Program (WFP) Nepal as a lead/prime organization in partnership with Mercy Corps and other partners, is going to implement a four year School Feeding Program funded by USDA/Food for Education. In the consortium, Mercy Corps provides strategic leadership for program's two of the sub-activities 'Local Purchase of Food: Hybrid Food Basket' and 'Home Grown School Feeding: Technical Assistance Post-Hand Over'.

The aim of the Mercy Corps' interventions is to facilitate the development of a fully sustainable and locally managed food system for schools. This includes designing and implementing the strategy and detailed roadmap for schools to self-manage a cash-based program where they locally procure and manage relationships and contracts with local producers, cooperatives and suppliers to supply the appropriate and necessary school meal food items during relevant timeframes. The program activities will link school feeding programs to smallholder farmers, farmer's cooperatives, school management, community groups and local government to enhance the program's long-term sustainability. The target area of the program covers five districts in the Sudurpachhim Province (Darchula, Bajhang, Doti, Achham, and Bajura) and one district in the Karnali Province (Jajarkot).

General Position Summary

The Program Manager will provide overall leadership, management and strategic vision to the implementation of Mercy Corps' components of the Home Grown School Feeding Program, ensuring that Mercy Corps meets its targets and deliverables on time and within budget. The Program Manager will supervise program staff and ensure accountability to Mercy Corps policies and donor rules and regulations. They are responsible for managing relationships with local partners, program participants, and donor representatives, contributing to the achievement of country goals through innovation and program development; displaying expertise in market systems development and agricultural development sectors.

This position will also support country leadership for maintaining relationship with provincial and federal government, AIN, National Clusters, Donors and UN

Hiring organization

Mercy Corps

Employment Type

Full-time

Salary Grade

M3

Job Location

Kathmandu, with at least 50% travel, Nepal

Valid through

15.11.2021

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agencies for coordination, influence and scale. Being a lead in youth, children and education program, this position will closely work with DoP and other team members for business development initiative.

As gender and social inclusion (GESI), governance and M&E are cross-cutting components of all Mercy Corps programs, the Program Manager is required to own these components and ensure GESI sensitivity and integration, governance practices and M&E systems are integrated into their work area.

Essential Job Responsibilities

The specific duties and responsibilities of the Program Manager include, but are not limited to, the following:

Strategy & Vision

- Provide overall strategic direction, leadership, technical and operational management of the project team to ensure the timely and qualitative delivery of program objectives
- Support development of cross-team coordination mechanisms to ensure effective collaboration and integration across key program areas and functions
- Recognize opportunities for innovative action and create an environment where alternative viewpoints are welcomed
- Set direction by prioritizing and organizing actions & resources to achieve objectives and contribute to country-wide strategy development
- Develop and organize activities to leverage existing and secure new resources and support for programs

Program Implementation

- Lead the development of detailed implementation plans, flowing from annual strategic work- plans, and ensure the delivery of the same
- Ensure that resilience is closely integrated into all sector areas with an overarching resilience approach, in line with Mercy Corps' global model
- Lead the socialization of the program with Government of Nepal stakeholders at the federal, provincial and district and Palika levels as required, ensuring necessary approvals and collaboration as required

- Lead technical input, guidance and communication for the program's governance strategies, providing technical direction, developing work plans in collaboration with consortium lead, and program staff.
- Work closely with lead agency and other consortium partners on coordinating and mainstreaming governance and capacity building activities throughout all aspects of the program
- With the rest of the program team, drive the development and roll out of systems that support program quality and integrated implementation approaches across sectors, partners, and program
- Integrate community approaches, gender sensitivity and capacity building into all activities as appropriate
- Provide managerial and programmatic oversight to partners and sub-grantee(s).
- Ensure agriculture lead provides support partner teams for technical support to cooperatives and farmers engaging in school-driven contract farming for school meals.
- Oversight of the MC procurement specialist and direct procurement processes of locally grown foods and distributions to targeted school.
- Produce written reports on program activities, capturing the impacts of activities

Project Management

- In close collaboration with the project team, finance, operations and administrative staff ensure that all components of the project are implemented in alignment with donor and Mercy Corps policy guidelines
- Ensure program implementation is on time, target and budget, using effective M&E systems to reach desired impacts
- Create and maintain systems ensuring effective and transparent use of financial resources for timely and informative reporting in line with donor and Mercy Corps policies and procedure

- In coordination with the monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) Coordinator, ensure that robust MEL knowledge management and quality assurance systems are in place, adhered to and used as decision-making tools to inform adaptive management, while also capturing best practices and lessons learned across programs
- Ensure strong CARM system is in place monitor the register so that issues are analyzed for patterns and resolved
- Cultivate a deep understanding of safeguarding issues in the program context and provide input into best practices
- Fulfill Mercy Corps' Program Management Minimum Standards based on the Program Management at Mercy Corps guidelines
- Ensure all interventions adhere to Mercy Corps' Gender Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Do No Harm principles, and beneficiary accountability standards

Team Management

- Create a work atmosphere conducive to professional growth and development of excellent personnel at all levels, proactively seeking out capacity building opportunities and engaging in the career development of program staff
- Identify technical skills gaps of project and partner staff to provide necessary support through training, workshops, and materials as per need
- Contribute to team-building efforts and ensure the integration of all team members into relevant decision-making process
- Provide technical support to the project and partner staff in reviewing project learning and understanding best practices, producing notes for a file on the same
- Implement and ensure all team members, including partners, are effectively using the performance planning and management system, establishing performance expectations and regularly providing constructive feedback

Finance & Compliance Management

- Monitor adherence to the grant agreement, Mercy Corps and donor policies and procedures and relevant external rules and regulations

Business development

- Work closely with DoP and business development team for exploring new business and participate in donors and partners meeting as required.
- Constantly collect, analyze and share latest information related to Education, Children and Young people issues.
- Assist DoP in preparing concept note, detail proposal and budgeting to contribute for the new program opportunities.

Influence & Representation

- Liaise with local, provincial and federal level government officials, local NGOs and civil society organizations to ensure support for and acceptance of Mercy Corps' programs.
- Coordinate with Mercy Corps Technical Support Unit (TSU) teams to leverage supports and acquire technical guidance in a regular basis. Learn and share program progresses and lessons in the TSU .
- Communicate effectively to ensure overall project targets and donor obligations are met
- Demonstrate flexibility, resilience, and ability to maintain positive relationships and composed

Security

- Ensure compliance with security procedures and policies as determined by country leadership
- Proactively ensure that team members and community operate in a secure environment and are aware of policies

Accountability to Program participants

- Mercy Corps team members are expected to support all efforts toward accountability, specifically to our participants and to international standards guiding international relief and development work, while actively engaging communities as equal partners in the design, monitoring and evaluation of our field projects
- Team members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and respect local laws, customs and MC's policies, procedures, and values at all times and in all in-country venues

Others

- Ensure proper integration of child safeguarding and GESI aspects into sector specific project planning and implementation.
- Mercy Corps as a humanitarian agency is expected to respond as and when crisis and humanitarian situation engulfs. As an MC employee all staff are expected to be part of humanitarian and emergency response in addition to their regular roles and
- Create and sustain a work environment of mutual respect where team members strive to achieve excellence.
- Conduct themselves both professionally and personally in such a manner as to bring credit to Mercy Corps and not to jeopardize its humanitarian mission
- Other duties as assigned by their supervisor and/or Country Director

Supervisory Responsibility

Agriculture Specialist, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Coordinator and Procurement Specialist.

Accountability

Reports Directly to: Director of Programs

Works Directly with: Country Leadership, Mercy Corps Support Functions Team and partners (local NGOs, civil society actors, government bodies, etc.), overall project manager at WFP and other WFP consortium members.

Knowledge and Experience

- Bachelor's Degree in Education, Development Studies, Economics, or any other relevant fields. Master's Degree preferred.
- Minimum 5-7 years' relevant professional experience managing agricultural development or market systems development programs, preferably in far-west regions, and at least 3 years' of managerial experience
- Strong management skill including supervising technical/field teams and implementing partners.
- Prior experience in budget management and reporting required
- Experience of managing programs involving large-scale commodity procurement a distinct advantage
- Experience in designing or managing programs with multiple stakeholders (including related government line agencies) involved in the implementation
- Excellent spoken and written English and Nepali language skills and ability to interact effectively with international and national staff.
- Previous experience with US government-funded grant (USDA, USAID, etc.) rules, regulations and requirements is preferred.
- Awareness of the particular needs and related program considerations for children, vulnerable and marginalized communities.
- Established the ability to manage and communicate effectively with team members of varied work styles.
- Demonstrated flexibility and creativity in planning and problem-solving.
- Proven ability to learn quickly, lead a program to achieve stated results and objectives.
- Experience working with governments, civil society, national and international organizations.
- Effective verbal and written communication, multi-tasking, organizational and prioritization skills.
- Ability to effectively represent Mercy Corps and its interests to key stakeholders.
- Ability to work effectively with an ethnically diverse team in a sensitive environment.

Success Factors

The successful Program Manager will combine exceptional management skills and experience in maintaining donor and partner relationships. They will have an outstanding ability to develop, implement and manage market systems and agricultural development programs within the current and future program structure of Mercy Corps in the country. They will also have proven experience with cross-cultural team and capacity building, individual staff development and strong mentoring skills. Prioritizing, problem solving, ability to seize opportunities, attention to detail and strategic vision are essential.

The most successful Mercy Corps staff members have a strong commitment to teamwork and accountability, thrive in evolving and changing environments and make effective written and verbal communication a priority in all situations. Mercy Corps Team members represent the agency both during and outside of work hours when deployed in a field posting or on a visit/short term assignment to a field posting. Team members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and respect local laws, customs and MC's policies, procedures, and values at all times and in all in-country venues.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Achieving our mission begins with how we build our team and work together. Through our commitment to enriching our organization with people of different origins, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of thinking, we are better able to leverage the collective power of our teams and solve the world's most complex challenges. We strive for a culture of trust and respect, where everyone contributes their perspectives and authentic selves, reaches their potential as individuals and teams, and collaborates to do the best work of their lives. We recognize that diversity and inclusion is a journey, and we are committed to learning, listening and evolving to become more diverse, equitable and inclusive than we are today.

Organizational Learning

As part of our commitment to organizational learning and in support of our understanding that learning organizations are more effective, efficient and relevant to the communities they serve, we expect all team members to commit 5% of their time to learning activities that benefit Mercy Corps as well as themselves.

Equal Employment Opportunity

We are committed to providing an environment of respect and psychological safety where equal employment

opportunities are available to all. We do not engage in or tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender identity, gender expression, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability (including HIV/AIDS status), marital status, military veteran status or any other protected group in the locations where we work.

Safeguarding, Ethics & Integrity

All Mercy Corps staff members are expected to behave ethically and demonstrate the highest integrity in their professional and personal life. Mercy Corps has zero tolerance to any form of fraud, corruption, abuse, harassment or exploitation. Any breach of our policies or misconduct will lead to disciplinary action or may lead to termination. Mercy Corps has zero tolerance for abuse, sexual misconduct and sexual exploitation (PSEA) of the people we work with and our own staff members. All staff must commit to internal policies.