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SENIOR MONITORING EVALUATION & LEARNING (MEL) OFFICER

Hiring organization
Mercy Corps

Employment Type
Full Time

Salary Grade
O2

Job Location
Surkhet with frequent travel to program districts, Nepal

Date posted
September 17, 2020

Valid through
25.09.2020

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About Mercy Corps

Mercy Corps is a leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible. In 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, girl's education, 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

Mercy Corps is expected to begin a new program to enhance food and nutrition security, reduce future humanitarian caseload and improve the resilience of communities to recurrent shocks in the Karnali Province in Nepal, on or around October 1, 2020. The program will be a Multi-Year Emergency Food Security Activity funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Affairs, and implemented in 6 districts (Mugu, Jumla, Kalikot, Surkhet, Achham, and Dailekh, with cluster hubs in Surkhet and Jumla) in the Karnali River Basin area. The new program, called "Building Hope Along the Karnali River Basin (Bhakari)", is somewhat built upon many of the successes of the Nepal team's previous Food for Peace program which ended in January 2020, the PAHAL program, but with some new districts and a much heavier emphasis on emergency response. It includes program components of agriculture and market systems, disaster risk reduction, water for productive use, natural resources management, and a large emphasis on a gender and social inclusion approach, all with a highly integrated multi-sectoral approach.

General Position Summary

The Senior Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Officer is responsible for managing all MEL related activities at the cluster/district level. They will work directly under the Bhakari MEL Manager and work in close coordination with the cluster and district coordinators, thematic experts and the local implementing partner staffs. The Senior MEL Officer will execute the program monitoring, evaluating and learning agenda at the cluster level and support Bhakari center MEL team to monitor/ track progress, evaluate, document and disseminate the results. They will be also responsible for monitoring environmental safeguarding in Bhakari program activities.

Essential Job Responsibilities

Under the supervision of MEL Manager, the Senior MEL Officer will work very closely with the MIS Officer and the CARM Officer to execute monitoring, evaluation, and learning functions at the cluster and district levels. They will be responsible for supervising cluster MEL Officers and building capacity of cluster/district program and MEL team on the aspects of MEL. The specific duties and responsibilities of the Senior MEL Officer include, but are not limited to, the following:

Strategic Leadership

- Recognize opportunities for innovative action and create an environment where alternative viewpoints are welcomed.
- Provide support to cluster and district offices in aspects of MEL.

MEL Support to Central Team

- Participate in and contribute to Bhakari MEL strategy and work plan including development and update of MEL documents such as indicator performance tracking table (IPTT), Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS), training manuals/guidelines, surveys and assessments etc.
- Document field procedures in English and Nepali for internal records, sharing with a broader audience, and as instructional guides for district-level implementers
- Provide feedback and updates to the Central MEL team about the district and regional perspective on MEL Communicate MEL field plans, activities completed, and challenges to the Central MEL team
- Support in organizing review and reflect sessions at both center and field level.

MEL Support to Cluster Team

- Review capacity building plans and materials of cluster/district MEL Officers on MEL systems and assist with capacity building activities.
- Provide final review and approval of monitoring data from the partner NGOs.
- Support Cluster MEL Officers and the cluster team to access information, interpret monitoring results, and use information to manage activities.
- Support CARM Officer to ensure smooth operation of CARM activities and reporting.
- Support MIS officer in design and implementation of Bhakari database.

MEL Support to partner NGO Team

- Support cluster and district MEL team to effectively monitor, evaluate, learn, and report.
- Support cluster and district MEL Officers to conduct capacity building of implementing partners and local NGO partner staff on MEL concepts and activities through designing and delivering formal trainings including data quality assurance, Bhakari's management information system, and environment safeguarding.
- Ensure that the data validation processes are followed and data are clean before sending to Central MEL team for inclusion in the Bhakari database.

Managing the Bhakari MEL System

- Lead the documentation of Bhakari MEL processes, forms and formats.
- Provide feedback to the Bhakari central team on the Bhakari MEL systems to enhance functionality and efficiency.
- Ensure global standards for quality program monitoring and evaluation are followed and adopted by cluster teams and local NGO teams.
- Ensure environmental safeguarding is followed in Bhakari activities.
- Conduct regular quality checks and field visits to program activities, providing feedback and recommendations to relevant parties.
- Support the process of monitoring data collection in cluster/district level, including guiding data collection teams, overseeing data entry and assisting with data analysis and report writing

- Ensure district level reporting is occurring as planned and requested.
- Lead field-based support for the baseline, mid-term and final evaluations, along with other key assessments and research activities including post distribution monitoring.
- Work closely with Knowledge Management and Learning Specialist to identify and document key learnings including the development of case studies and success stories.
- Support Data Quality Assessment (DQA) team to carry out regular DQAs in the field and ensure follow up on the recommendations.

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 program participants and to international standards guiding international relief and development work, while actively engaging targeted 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 safeguarding and GESI aspects into MEL 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 responsibilities.
- 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 Supervisor and or Country Director.

Supervisory Responsibility

Directly responsible for managing cluster MEL Officers

Accountability

Reports Directly to: Bhakari MEL Manager

Works Directly with: Bhakari MEL team, Technical Managers at cluster and district level, Partner NGOs staff and Mercy Corps Country Office MEL team

Knowledge and Experience

- At least Bachelor degree in Statistics, Social Science, Development Studies/Management, Agriculture, Livelihood, DRR or any related discipline.

Master's degree preferred.

- At least 3-5 years of experience in monitoring, evaluation and learning in I/NGOs, and/or private sector organizations focused on food security, disaster risk management, agriculture & livelihood and humanitarian assistance. Experience working in USAID-funded programs is highly preferred
- Sound knowledge and experience on environmental safeguarding.
- Proven experience working and managing large database management systems.
- Experience in designing and implementing MEL systems, as well as analyzing and promoting the use of the data collected. Demonstrated experience in digital data collection technologies using web based platforms.
- Ability to work in complex environments under tight deadlines & changing donor requirements.
- Sound technical knowledge on program design and monitoring using various logical modules including; ToC, log-frames, result framework, Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT) etc.
- Knowledge, experience and conceptual understanding on accountability, especially to communities and Program Participants.
- Previous experience of managing team and building M&E capacity (developing training tools, training, coaching and mentoring)
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively in a multi-cultural setting with a wide variety of partners and stakeholders.
- Effective writing skills to prepare reports, complete analyses and make presentations.

Success Factors

The successful Senior MEL Officer will be conscientious, with good judgment. They will combine strong technical and communication skills, initiative, and tactful decisiveness to assist in the development and implementation of Bhakari MEL strategy and MIS platforms and tools. They will have an ability to think creatively about operationalizing and improving the MEL system on food security, community development and resilience. Prioritizing, multi-tasking, problem solving and simultaneous attention to detail are essential. The most successful 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.

Ongoing Learning

In support of our belief that learning organizations are more effective, efficient and relevant to the communities we serve, we empower all team members to dedicate 5% of their time to learning activities that further their personal and/or professional growth and development

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.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Mercy Corps is an equal opportunity employer that does not tolerate discrimination on any basis. We actively seek out diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and skills so that we can be collectively stronger and have sustained global impact. 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

Mercy Corps is committed to ensuring that all individuals we come into contact with through our work, whether team members, community members, program participants or others, are treated with respect and dignity. We are committed to the core principles regarding prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse laid out by the UN Secretary General and IASC. We will not tolerate child abuse, sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment by or of our team members. As part of our commitment to a safe and inclusive work environment, team members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner, respect local laws and customs, and to adhere to Mercy Corps Code of Conduct Policies and values at all times. Team members are required to complete mandatory Code of Conduct e-learning courses upon hire and on an annual basis.