

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Country Lead

Position Objective

To lead strategic change as a country focal point for AFAO's partnerships to prevent HIV and reduce its impacts in Asia and the Pacific.

Location and Reporting Structure

This position is based in Bangkok, Thailand. It reports directly to the Manager, International Programs. No subordinates report directly to this position. This position manages external contractors from time to time.

AFAO has four Country Leads, with each Country Lead being the focal point for two countries with which AFAO is partnering to scale-up HIV programs for key populations.

Organisational Context

In Australia, AFAO leads the national effort to end HIV on behalf of its member organisations who represent the diverse communities most affected by HIV – lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex communities, sex workers, people who inject drugs, people with HIV and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Internationally, AFAO contributes to the development of effective HIV policy and programs in Asia and the Pacific, fosters the development of regional and country-level community responses to HIV, and represents Australia's community response to HIV in global forums.

From January 2019, AFAO has been implementing the *Sustainability of HIV Services for Key Populations in Asia* (SKPA) Program, funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Program Context

The SKPA Program aims to promote sustainable services for key populations at scale to stop HIV transmissions and AIDS related deaths by 2030. The program will be implemented in Bhutan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste.

Economic growth and the consequent shift to middle income status requires that grant countries within this program increase domestic investment and be more self-sufficient in the delivery of national HIV/AIDS programs. Even where staged, the challenges of transition from donor to domestic funding are acute. With diminishing donor funding, countries must be highly efficient in targeting their investments in accordance with epidemiology and mechanisms for funding community-led responses by those most affected by HIV – key populations – must be established or strengthened.

The SKPA Program recognises the considerable existing efforts of grant countries toward national and global HIV/AIDS goals, funded through domestic, private and donor sources. It also recognises

that, as in all countries, each of the grant countries of this program experiences barriers that prevent the provision of services and programs for key populations at necessary scale. The SKPA Program seeks to identify barriers to scale-up and implement targeted actions to address those barriers.

The objectives of the SKPA Program are to:

- **Increase Financial Sustainability:** Secure the long-term sustainability of increased service delivery at national levels through securing domestic investment and spending, exploring innovative approaches and identifying alternative sources of funding for key programs
- **Strengthen Strategic Information:** Secure up-to-date strategic information, particularly on key epidemiological and response information including population size estimates and program coverage, community needs assessment of key populations to inform program design
- **Mitigate Service Delivery Gaps:** Scale-up outreach to key populations and improve their access to prevention, testing and treatment and retention in the service cascade
- **Strengthen Community Systems:** Strengthen community responses and systems to support increased scale-up of services for key populations including sustainability of community-led services through community-based research, effective use of data and other strategic information and through community mobilisation
- **Contribute to Enabling Environment:** Address barriers to access including addressing stigma and discrimination and other human rights- and gender-related barriers to services, where relevant.

Principal Duties

This position leads strategic change to achieve the goal of AFAO's *Sustainability of HIV Services for Key Populations in Asia* (SKPA) Program – to scale-up HIV programs for key populations in grant countries – through advocacy, partnerships and effective program planning and implementation.

The primary duties of the position are to:

- Lead on strategic change to achieve the program goal, program integration and sustainability in-country through liaison, brokering of partnerships and engagement with government officials, Country Coordinating Mechanisms, Advisory Groups, civil society and key population partners and regional and other country partners.
- Advocate, negotiate and exercise influence to achieve the program goal by leading strategic change processes in-country that promote the achievement of the program goal.
- Critically analyse and identify effective responses to barriers to the scale-up of HIV programs and exercise political judgement in implementing of these responses.
- Represent AFAO with a diverse range of stakeholders, including senior government stakeholders, as the focal point for the program in designated countries.

The position will also:

- Contribute to activities to ensure the effectiveness, quality and timeliness of program implementation and the achievement of program objectives.
- Support and provide technical input as a focal point in developing and monitoring advocacy, capacity building, communications and strategic information planning.
- Lead on programmatic communications and coordination between regional technical partners, Sub-Recipients and other stakeholders.

- Contribute to program coordination activities at regional level including annual review planning.
- Identify capacity gaps and needs among Sub-Recipients, proactively respond to gaps and recommend further technical assistance as required.
- Contribute to knowledge sharing and exchange of programmatic and advocacy lessons learned across the program and between program partners.
- Promote AFAO's knowledge, skills, experience and successes.
- Adopt continuous learning and improvement processes in all aspects of the position.
- Remain abreast of developments in HIV internationally to ensure AFAO remains at the cutting edge of current knowledge and practice.
- Understand, implement, participate and promote AFAO's business processes, policies and procedures, and WHS objectives, processes and procedures.
- Perform other duties and responsibilities as assigned.

Challenges and Problem Solving

Challenges faced by the position that the position-holder will be expected to be able to manage include:

- Ensuring successful implementation of the program by leading strategic change at country-level to achieve the program goal.
- Building effective working relationships with program partners, including representatives from government, Country Coordinating Mechanisms, country advisory committees, regional technical partners and Sub-Recipients.
- Effectively negotiating, brokering and advocating for positive change while maintaining relationships.
- Managing program implementation issues and problems and anticipating and developing responses to program delays and bottlenecks.
- Managing program priorities to ensure effective implementation and meet deadlines.
- Recognising important issues and engaging stakeholders and program partners around those issues and planning effective responses.

Decision Making

The role of Country Lead is critical to AFAO's success.

The Country Lead exercises considerable day to day discretionary and decision-making responsibility within the framework set by an annual work plan, which is approved by the Manager, Multicountry Grant.

The Country Lead is required to exercise considerable judgement in liaising with stakeholders and formulating and responding to issues that may impact AFAO's reputation. The Country Lead discusses issues of potential sensitivity with the Manager, Multicountry Grant.

In exercising their responsibilities and making decisions the Country Lead is bound by AFAO's Code of Conduct and policies and procedures.

Performance Review

The Country Lead will participate in an annual work planning and performance appraisal process for this role with the Manager, Multi-country Grant.

Key Performance Indicators for the role will include:

- Leading strategic change and demonstrating effective influence at country-level to promote scale-up of HIV programs for key populations.
- Establishing effective relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders, including at a senior level, to negotiate, broker and advocate for strategic change.
- Ensuring successful implementation of the program according to workplans and workplan tracking measures and milestones.
- Provision of remote mentoring, guidance and advice that supports effective program implementation by regional technical partners and Sub-Recipients.
- Contributions towards knowledge sharing and learning.
- Completion of duties in an efficient and effective manner.
- Important deadlines are met.

Skills and Experience

- Demonstrated negotiation and influencing skills with a proven track record of leading and contributing to strategic change to achieve program and organisational goals.
- Strong ability to critically analyse information and proactively identify requirements and offer recommendations and solutions.
- Excellent judgement to manage and advise on sensitive issues that may involve reputational risk.
- Strong understanding and demonstrated experience in the provision of HIV programmatic and technical support, including with civil society and community partners.
- Demonstrated experience in coordinating and monitoring large-scale grants with complex implementation arrangements, preferably with experience with international donors such as the Global Fund.
- Demonstrated understanding of and commitment to the ethos of community-led action of health and issues affecting key populations.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including in the areas of presentation and report writing, networking and representation of AFAO in relevant forums.
- Excellent organisational and time management skills, including the capacity to manage concurrent priorities and meet deadlines.
- A minimum of five years relevant professional experience and tertiary qualifications or equivalent experience in international development, public health or a similar field.

Strongly Desirable

- Experience in international program delivery in any of the countries participating in this program highly desirable.