

<b>Department:</b>	Programmes
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Country Director
<b>Location:</b>	Blantyre
<b>Contract length:</b>	2 Year FTC

## Job purpose

Reporting to the Country Director, the Head of Programme Development will provide strategic leadership for the country's programme development portfolio. The role will ensure that the programme pipeline, design and learning agenda are forward-looking, evidence-driven and aligned with both national priorities and the organisation's global strategy.

This position will lead innovation, design of new programme initiatives, institutional donor, government and stakeholder engagement, research, impact assessment and learning while ensuring cross-sector collaboration. The role will also steward responsible programme transitions ensuring that handovers to government or partners are deliberate, evidence-based and geared toward long-term national ownership.

The role is accountable for building a high-performing programme development team, strengthening partnerships and positioning the organisation as a thought leader in school feeding.

## Key Responsibilities

### 1. Strategic Leadership and Programme Positioning

- Provide strategic direction for the country's programme development agenda, ensuring alignment with organisational vision and global priorities.
- Analyse emerging trends, policy shifts and external opportunities to keep the programme portfolio relevant, scalable and future-focused.
- Strengthen the organisation's thought leadership by generating high-quality insights, evidence and policy contributions.

### 2. Programme Innovation and Design

- Identify and assess opportunities for new or refined programme initiatives based on evidence and contextual needs.

- Lead the development of innovative, cost-effective, scalable programme concepts that align with government priorities.
- Oversee strategic assessments, feasibility studies and co-creation processes with internal teams, government and partners.

### **3. Stakeholder, Donor and Government Engagement**

- Conduct stakeholder and donor mapping to guide targeted engagement and resource mobilisation.
- Lead donor engagement and acquisition strategies, cultivating diverse, long-term funding partnerships.
- Provide high-level leadership in government relations, supporting national and sub-national policy dialogue and systems strengthening.
- Oversee high-quality proposal development aligned with donor requirements and organisational strategy.
- Collaborate with communications teams to position the organisation and communicate programme impact effectively.

### **4. Programme Management, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning**

- Ensure robust MEAL systems that demonstrate impact, inform decision-making and improve programme quality.
- Lead the design of baselines, impact assessments, post-expansion studies and strategic learning initiatives.
- Ensure programme development processes consistently meet organisational and donor standards.
- Promote a strong learning culture across the programme function and ensure insights are shared across the organisation and with stakeholders.
- Keep internal stakeholders informed of key developments in school feeding, nutrition, and education policy.
- Maintain effective systems to capture and disseminate knowledge generated through programme implementation and research.

### **5. Responsible Programme Transitions**

- Lead the development and delivery of a responsible transition framework to support sustainable handovers to government or partners.
- Coordinate capacity-strengthening, co-implementation and readiness assessments to facilitate long-term ownership.
- Ensure transition processes are risk-assessed, well-documented and aligned with national systems.
- Act as the technical lead for transition strategy engagements with government and donors.

### **Other**

- Contribute to organisation-wide planning, budgeting, and strategic decision-making.
- Represent the organisation in national, regional and international fora as required.

## Key Requirements

### Qualifications

- Master's degree in international development, Public Policy, Education, Nutrition, Social Sciences, or a related field.
- Training in monitoring and evaluation or project management is an added advantage.

### Experience

- 5+ years of experience in programme development, research, or strategy preferably in education, nutrition, or social protection sectors.
- Proven leadership in designing large-scale, multi-year programmes funded by institutional donors (e.g., FCDO, USAID, EU, UN, foundations).
- Demonstrated experience working with government at senior levels, including policy engagement and systems strengthening.
- Experience managing teams and building organisational capability.
- Track record of developing and leading successful proposal and resource mobilisation processes.
- Experience leading programme transitions or sustainability processes is highly desirable.

### Personal Attributes

- Strong interpersonal skills, forward-thinking, collaborative and adaptable.

## Mary's Meals International team member competencies

All Mary's Meals International employees approach their role in line with the 7S competency model.

<b>Self</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I demonstrate resilience</li><li>• I lead by example</li><li>• I am authentic and true to Mary's Meals values</li><li>• I develop myself and set stretching goals</li></ul>
<b>Service</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I have a vocational attitude to my work</li><li>• I inspire hope in others</li><li>• I build belief that even difficult challenges can be solved</li><li>• I am committed to serving and enabling all who want to be part of the global movement</li><li>• I work to ensure our future will be even better than our past</li></ul>
<b>Simplicity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I communicate effectively</li><li>• I follow clear decision making criteria</li><li>• I create plans that are easy to follow and contribute to organisational goals</li><li>• I embrace inclusivity and diversity</li><li>• I focus on delivering results</li></ul>

<b>Stewardship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I pay attention to the things that matter – (a) our physical resources; (b) our people</li> <li>• I nurture, develop and respect our relationships with external stakeholders</li> <li>• I deliver on my promises</li> <li>• I am happy to be held accountable and to hold others to account</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have a point of view about the future</li> <li>• I know our stakeholders and see our priorities clearly</li> <li>• I help others to work in ways that have the greatest impact</li> <li>• I work to deliver my objectives</li> </ul>
<b>Strengthen</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I contribute to a positive work environment</li> <li>• I help and support those around me</li> </ul>
<b>Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I maintain my technical competence</li> <li>• I contribute to the success of my team</li> <li>• I am accountable</li> <li>• I embrace change</li> </ul>

### Changes to the job description

As the organisation evolves, job descriptions may need to be reviewed and if appropriate, changed. Such changes may be initiated as necessary by the manager of this position in consultation with the employee. This job description may also be reviewed as part of preparations for the annual Personal Development Review.

### Declaration of acceptance

I have read this job description and accept it.

Employee name.....

Signed ..... Date.....