

Helen Keller JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Global Food Systems Advisor

(Dakar, Senegal preferred; other Helen Keller locations will be considered)

Helen Keller International is a global health organization dedicated to eliminating preventable vision loss, malnutrition and diseases of poverty. Cofounded by Helen Keller – and guided by her fierce optimism and belief in human potential – the organization delivers life-changing health solutions to vulnerable families where the need is great but access to care is limited. In the US, Africa, and Asia, Helen Keller’s proven, science-based programs empower people to create opportunities in their own lives and build lasting change.

We are seeking a Global Food Systems Advisor to provide thought leadership to all country offices on the design of program strategies and activities through which Helen Keller can make the most significant and sustainable positive impact on nutrition and food security, as well as on-the-ground support to program implementation. We define the food system as encompassing the many stages that lead from production to consumption of food, including storage, processing, distribution, exchange, demand, and preparation. Avoiding food loss and waste must also be a component. This system is influenced by environmental, technological, political, economic, sociocultural and demographic drivers. The outcomes should be nutritious and culturally responsive diverse diets that contribute to population health while protecting environmental resources. (A relevant framework is appended to the end of this announcement.)

Background

Our new strategic plan seeks to build on decades of experience to define the following priorities to make food systems work better for people: 1) improving the nutritional value of the food that people consume; 2) decreasing economic, social and other obstacles to the consumption of healthy food; 3) enhancing the positive environmental impact of the food system; and 4) shaping national policy environments that are more conducive to the previous four objectives. The pathways to achieve these objectives will vary by context, given how variable food systems are across and within countries. We aim to measure the effect of our work consistently in all contexts to compare programs, increase learning across countries and assess the impact of our food system work globally. The Global Food Systems Advisor will draw on his/her own expertise and that of colleagues across the organization to help achieve these objectives.

Functional Relationships

Reporting to the Vice-President for Nutrition, the Global Food Systems Advisor will collaborate with other Global Advisors and with Country Directors and their designated program teams to design tailored food systems strategies that both respond to and create funding opportunities to achieve the objectives cited above.

Helen Keller is structured in such a way that the work of each department supports and reinforces the work of every other department. Regular communication and a spirit of teamwork among colleagues are essential to make this structure thrive.

Helen Keller’s programs also require close relations with governments, partner NGOs, food industries, and donors, including UN agencies. The Global Food Systems Advisor will play a key

role in nurturing and overseeing some of these cooperative relationships, and representing Helen Keller to donors and the international community, as needed.

Scope of the Position

The Global Food Systems Advisor will provide collaborative leadership to help mature Helen Keller's food systems interventions and grow our work around four priorities.

1. Expanding our role in the processing and distribution phases of food supply chains, including **transforming foods** into shelf-stable, nutritious products using **minimal processing** and appropriate technologies that **preserve or enhance micronutrient availability**, and protecting consumers from ultra-processed food products that are stripped of nutritional value and high in unhealthy additives.
2. Expanding the application of locally appropriate climate-smart and climate-resilient practices. This will involve increasing the biodiversity of crops produced and working with host country and international **agricultural and biodiversity research institutions** to make nutritionally improved and climate-adapted varieties available to producers, especially underutilized and locally adapted indigenous species, biofortified, and as appropriate, genetically engineered crops.
3. Integrating **gender transformative and socially inclusive** strategies to food system interventions to increase leadership, income generating opportunities, and access to/utilization of nutrient-rich foods by women, other disadvantaged groups, and youth.
4. Developing a set of **metrics** to assess program and organizational progress in contributing to equitable, nutritious and environmentally responsible food systems and assuring these are monitored across country programs.

The geographical location for this position is flexible but will require travel to country offices and to visit project activities, as well as to represent Helen Keller at international conferences. It will also require maintaining a flexible work schedule to communicate with offices across time zones from New York to Dakar, Dar es Salaam, Kathmandu, and Manila.

Specific Responsibilities

- Collaborate with countries (guidance will be provided on priorities) to identify opportunities for developing food systems strategies and funding opportunities in line with the priorities above.
- Assess and improve indicators used organization-wide to track performance in the food systems sector, then revise and finalize in consultation with relevant global colleagues (with the understanding that the set of indicators may need to evolve over time). Collaborate with project teams to develop more specific and detailed monitoring frameworks and tools to track progress at the project level.
- Provide technical expertise and support to food systems projects implemented by country offices to ensure they align with global best practices and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Contribute to the recruitment of high-performing staff to manage and implement food systems projects at country level, and/or for multi-country support.
- Act as a dotted line co-manager for relevant country office staff and participate in the ongoing performance management cycle of those staff.
- Provide technical guidance and support to implementation teams to enable them to achieve timely, high-quality project deliverables and meet project objectives and donor requirements, in a manner conducive to professional growth and development for everyone.
- Ensure accountability to project participants, partners, colleagues and donors by providing ongoing feedback in a context of mutual respect.

- Model collaboration within the Helen Keller team: effectively consult with and inform colleagues to maximize efficiency and knowledge sharing and integrate guidance and direction from other subject matter experts and technical advisors in the global organization to optimize project designs and outcomes.

Qualifications

- Degree in agriculture, agribusiness, food systems or a related field and a minimum of 8 years work experience or equivalent combination of skills and experience.
- Knowledge of agricultural and/or market systems and relevant off-farm product development, with experience enhancing the diversity, productivity and sustainability of agricultural production and/or leading the development of nutrition-sensitive food systems enterprises. The following areas of experience would be particularly helpful:
 - Experience in supporting producers and small and medium enterprises in product marketing.
 - Expertise in developing nutritious food value chains in low-income countries.
 - Knowledge of gender and youth issues affecting their unequal or constrained access to food, financial and productive resources, and market participation.
 - Knowledge of processing and value-addition process of nutritious foods in low resource settings.
- Knowledge of appropriate storage, post-harvest practices, and food preservation in low resource settings. Demonstrated experience in designing inclusive strategies, activities, and learning and adapting throughout the program cycle, with specific experience in gender and/or youth inclusion.
- Ability to analyze market and supply chain opportunities, including knowledge of relevant survey tools.
- Experience identifying and successfully securing funding for projects in the food systems sector, including those that strengthen the linkages between agriculture production, nutrition, and health outcomes.
- Knowledge of current international agriculture development trends, tools and approaches related to climate-smart agriculture, nutrition and food security, market systems strengthening and/or value chain development, including economic empowerment within the food system on- and off-farm.
- Excellent capacity building, team building/management, and coordination skills. An ability to delegate responsibilities effectively, coach and mentor other colleagues, while also learning from them.
- An ability to work in challenging and changing environments, to find solutions to emerging challenges, and maintain balance when under stress.
- Demonstrable respect for all persons regardless of religion, ethnicity, caste, class, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity, with a high comfort level working in a diverse environment with a demonstrated commitment to high professional ethical standards.
- Communication and language skills:
 - Excellent interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence, including the ability to exercise diplomacy and tact as demonstrated through previous roles that required communication with a broad and diverse set of partners, such as government, civil society, international organizations, the local community and political leaders.
 - Excellent oral and written English skills required. Ability to read, analyze and interpret complex documents and to summarize the information succinctly – both verbally and in writing—using an engaging style.
 - Ability to make effective and persuasive speeches and presentations on controversial or complex topics to top management and the public.
 - Functional knowledge of French is required, and fluency in other working languages of country offices is advantageous.

- Demonstrated knowledge of the application of information technology to Helen Keller program areas. Knowledge of software used to prepare presentations and other work documents (e.g., Microsoft Office Suite).
- Ability and willingness to undertake field travel (approx. 30%).

To Apply

Qualified candidates should submit a cover letter and resume to hki.recruitment@hki.org
Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

**In the spirit of our founder and namesake, Helen Keller Intl
is dedicated to building an inclusive workforce where diversity is fully valued.**

We are an Equal Opportunity Employer where all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, disability, or protected veteran status.

We are committed to providing reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities. If you are a qualified individual with a disability and need to request an accommodation during the application or interview process, please contact us at the email above or call: +1 646-356-1789.