

Helen Keller Intl JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Country Director, Sierra Leone *(Freetown, Sierra Leone)*

Helen Keller Intl 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 U.S., 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 currently seeking a Country Director (CD) in Sierra Leone to represent Helen Keller, develop new programs, expand our funding and lead the country office and its programs in a manner that reflects our mission and values and ensures technical excellence in the delivery of all activities.

Country Program Overview

Helen Keller’s Sierra Leone country program has a health and nutrition focus, with strong programs aimed at combatting neglected tropical diseases, improving the health of mothers and young children and promoting improved nutrition through nutrition-sensitive agriculture. We advocate for gender-transformative approaches and aim to make health services more responsive to their clients, particularly women, young children, and adolescents. To improve long-term resilience and sustainability, we focus on strengthening local capacity and preventive care strategies and on motivating positive behavior change.

Helen Keller works closely with the Government of Sierra Leone in trying to ensure that we have a favorable enabling environment and local buy-in for our various programs. Our current programs and focus areas include combating Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD), promoting food security, child nutrition and preventing blindness through the Orange Sweet Sheet Potato (OFSP), and holistic health and nutrition through the community-level “6-monthly contact point” (6MlyCP).

Our OFSP program aims at improving livelihoods, nutrition, and food security of vulnerable people in communities through promotion of production and value addition of nutritious crops, and increasing their availability, affordability, and accessibility. The 6MlyCP is an integrated reproductive and child health program aimed at mothers of children under age 5 to provide on a 6 monthly basis: (i) routine vitamin A supplementation; (ii) routine family planning services including modern contraceptives; and (iii) demonstrations on preparation and feeding of infants using appropriate diverse complementary food made from locally available commodities. Our NTD program supports Sierra Leone’s Ministry of Health to work toward elimination of lymphatic filariasis (LF) and onchocerciasis and to control schistosomiasis and soil transmitted helminths through annual mass drug administration.

Helen Keller Intl is proud of being a leader in public health policy and research in Sierra Leone. Currently our research portfolio includes among others, monitoring the efficacy of various protocols on the coverage of Vitamin A supplementation delivered by routine six-monthly services in Sierra Leone, 2020-2023 and evaluating the impact of albendazole coverage, complementary feeding (CF) practices, and the uptake of modern contraceptives.

Functional Relationships

The CD reports directly to the Regional Director, West Africa, and leads the Country Management Team (CMT). The position directly supervises a team of professional level staff, works closely with colleagues at all levels of Helen Keller's global management structure and may be called upon to participate in global working groups or steering committees. Helen Keller has a matrixed reporting structure. Regular communication and a spirit of teamwork among colleagues, both hierarchically and laterally are essential to make this structure thrive.

Helen Keller's programs require close relations with governments, partner universities and NGOs, private industry, donors, and UN agencies. The CD will represent Helen Keller at relevant external meetings.

Scope of the Position

The Country Director provides strategic leadership and develops action plans that further the mission of Helen Keller and meet the evolving conditions in Sierra Leone. S/he has overall responsibility for ensuring technical and operational excellence in the delivery of all activities to achieve the objectives established in grants and strategic plans and representing Helen Keller to disseminate findings and secure and expand funding for project activities in Sierra Leone. This position is based in Freetown with regular travel to project sites required.

Specific Responsibilities

Overall Management and Leadership

- Provide strategic vision and direction for overall program design, implementation, and proposal development; Work closely with the country team to accomplish the strategic goals.
- Lead and oversee the implementation of country programs and the management of the office.
- Represent Helen Keller in formal and informal meetings with government officials, international donor agencies, and national technical advisory groups pertinent to our project activities.
- Identify opportunities and generate funding from international and bilateral agencies and donor agencies.
- Develop and nurture in-country donor relationships and identify potential partners to participate in joint proposals.
- Lead and prepare concept papers and proposals and provide other information as needed for submission to donors and others for fundraising and marketing purposes.
- Model collaboration for your matrixed team: effectively consult and inform colleagues to maximize efficiency and knowledge sharing and integrate guidance and direction from subject matter experts in your office and elsewhere in the global organization to maximize performance.
- Build a highly effective Country Management Team, recruiting, supervising, mentoring, and evaluating staff, and engaging in frequent performance conversations with team members.
- Delegate authority, consult with, and guide staff to achieve goals and contribute to an atmosphere conducive to professional growth and development.
- Ensure accountability to beneficiaries, partners, colleagues, and donors by providing ongoing feedback in a context of mutual respect.
- Participate in the recruitment process of global colleagues as requested by management.

Programmatic

- Oversee and coordinate the program portfolio to ensure the highest level of project quality and accountability, while fostering continuity through building local capacity.
- Provide technical input to the government, international donors, and technical advisory groups pertinent to project activities.

- Ensure implementation of strong program monitoring, evaluation, and learning functions.
- Oversee research design, methodology, and dissemination of information needed to monitor and evaluate project activities and/or advance programmatic and policy changes.
- Disseminate findings from Helen Keller projects that are of importance to decision-makers in a position to fund or implement projects in Sierra Leone and internationally.
- Keep the national partners and others informed about progress of the projects, plans for the development of new programs/projects/activities and donor involvement in the overall program.

Financial and Administrative

- Provide oversight to finance and administrative services including procurement, property management, human resources management, vehicle and facilities management, and staff safety and security.
- Work with global colleagues to manage the development and implementation of annual country budgets.
- Authorize expenditures for grant or contract allocations and ensure compliance with procedures required by grant or contract agreements.
- Ensure the accurate and timely submission of financial and narrative reports that comply with grant or contract agreements and ensure compliance with all aspects of donor funding and Helen Keller policies.

Qualifications

- Minimum seven years of field experience in international public health, especially Neglected Tropical Disease or nutrition programs, including demonstrated experience in program development, implementation, and evaluation, plus a minimum master's degree in public health, nutrition, international development or a related field, or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Experience in designing and implementing workshops, seminars, surveys, monitoring systems, and evaluations plus research design, data analysis, and interpretation.
- Proven experience ensuring the sustainability of program activities is essential.
- Familiarity with and experience promoting health systems strengthening in developing contexts is strongly desired.
- Technical knowledge in an area related to Helen Keller's mission and programs.
- Demonstrated ability to undertake high-level representation and advocacy.
- Experience working in Sierra Leone and/or elsewhere in West Africa, with Ministries, international and local NGOs, and donors based locally, is a substantial asset.
- Demonstrated experience and skills in leadership, staff management, program development and management, strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation and public speaking.
- Demonstrated ability to develop and create budgets and monitor financial status.
- Demonstrated capacity to mobilize program funding including donor cultivation and grants writing.
- Knowledge and experience managing compliance to diverse donors (USAID, DFID, GAC, EU, etc.,).
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including an ability to effectively lead a team, communicate a vision, make timely and transparent decisions, and manage conflict.
- Very good oral and written English language skills, including the ability to quickly synthesize complex technical and programmatic issues into concise communications.
- Well established and practiced organizational and planning skills.
- Computer literate in use of word-processing, spreadsheet and statistical software; experience in data analysis and interpretation is highly desirable.
- Experience with staff security and safety issues is desirable.
- Ability and willingness to travel at least 15-20% within Sierra Leone and, periodically, internationally.

To Apply

Qualified candidates should submit a cover letter and resume to HKL.Recruitment@hki.org noting the job title in the subject line. Qualified Sierra Leonian professionals are encouraged to apply.

Helen Keller is dedicated to building an inclusive workforce where diversity is fully valued.

Helen Keller is an Equal Opportunity Employer. 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.