

Helen Keller JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Regional Research Manager, Vitamin A Supplementation

(Nairobi, Kenya or 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 Regional Research Manager to join the central program management team for a large multi-country Vitamin A Supplementation program, currently active in 13 countries in Africa. The Regional Manager’s role will be to lead the definition and pursuit of research questions, and to organize and oversee that research and consolidate learning across the portfolio.

Background

Vitamin A supplementation (VAS) can contribute to a reduction of under-five mortality of up to 24% if it reaches at least 80% of children every six months in countries with high rates of vitamin A deficiency and mortality. Helen Keller Int’l supports governments to deliver VAS twice a year to children aged 6 to 59 months using multiple delivery platforms and models. The most common approach to VAS involves organizing mass bi-annual campaigns where thousands of distributors visit all households in the country to deliver VAS directly to eligible children. In these campaigns, VAS is usually combined with deworming and immunization. Where campaigns are not organized, VAS is often integrated into primary health care services or in community platforms and is distributed throughout the year. While campaigns commonly reach >80% coverage, the routine platforms suffer from much lower coverage. As delivery mechanisms shift towards routine platforms, research is needed to better understand the factors that can improve coverage and the cost-effectiveness of different approaches.

Measuring the coverage of VAS is essential to assess whether at least 80% of children received a vitamin A capsule in the previous six months. Helen Keller has developed a methodology called Post Event Coverage Surveys (PECS) and organizes these surveys in all its countries of operation to obtain a population-based estimate of VAS coverage. These representative studies offer an important opportunity to collect additional public health data of relevance to national health structures to answer research questions. Helen Keller also organizes multiple research projects to assess the cost-effectiveness of different VAS delivery strategies and to identify mechanisms to improve coverage of routine VAS delivery.

Functional Relationships

The Research Manager is a member of the multi-country Project Management Team (PMT) for VAS and will work collaboratively with the Regional VAS Advisors and the Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator. To ensure congruity and consistency of technical approaches and cross-organizational learning, as well as our goal of continuously building research capacity

institutionally, the position will report directly to the Regional Monitoring Evaluation & Research Advisor and will also have a dotted-line reporting relationship to the Regional Program Manager for VAS.

The Research Manager works closely with the Regional Program Manager and colleagues on the PMT, who in turn provide guidance to country office teams. Together, they liaise with members of Country Management Teams, including Country Directors, and Project Managers to facilitate the integration between all facets of the program work with the common goal of ensuring that project objectives are met. This position may liaise with donors, representing Helen Keller at donor and project partner meetings on an as needed basis.

Helen Keller has a matrixed reporting structure that respects both line management and authority within departments and country offices; and the accountability and oversight duties of subject matter experts, such as members of the VAS Program Management Team, outside of each department and location. Regular communication and a spirit of teamwork are essential to make this structure thrive.

Helen Keller's programs also require close relations with governments, partner NGOs, and donors, including UN agencies. The Research Manager will play a role in nurturing and overseeing some of these cooperative relationships, and representing Helen Keller to donors and the international community, as needed.

Specific responsibilities

Overall Management and Leadership

- As a member of the PMT, participate in strategic planning and direction setting and the development of a growth strategy for the multi-country portfolio of programs, lending your unique perspective and expertise to the process.
- Collaborate with the Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator to ensure high-quality research planning, management, execution and analysis, including oversight of country level activities.
- Provide regular updates on the research and learning to the PMT. Make recommendations to the PMT based on analysis of progress to date and challenges encountered.
- Participate in international work groups, as assigned, to develop global policies and/or optimize systems and procedures.
- Review and assess status of the portfolio research, tools, procedures and workflows, identify gaps or outdated approaches and prioritize improvements.
- Make proposals for best practices in research and learning.

Manage Research on Vitamin A Supplementation

- Collaborate and coordinate with relevant colleagues such as Regional MER Advisor, Regional VAS Coordinators, and the Regional VAS Program Manager, and the Monitoring & Evaluation Coordinator to:
 - Define a learning agenda for VAS and the prioritization of the topics by order of importance and urgency; and
 - Identify priority countries for conduction of the research (single or multiple country research)
- Draft research protocols for identified research questions which include: study justification, objectives, methods (study population, sample size, study procedures, data collection, entry and management, ethical approval), analysis and reporting plan, and budgeting.

- Coordinate the implementation of research and studies: develop protocols and tools, develop and roll-out training of field teams, coordinate activities including data collection and reporting, data analysis, reporting, production of peer reviewed publications.
- Provide training on research for all relevant country and regional team members.

Post-Event Coverage Surveys

- Ensure PECS and VAS monitoring systems are structured to collect relevant data to build evidence on innovative and cost-effective delivery approaches to VAS delivery.
- Develop decision-making mechanisms and processes to inform the organization of PECS: geographic coverage (national vs. sub-national), frequency, and content.
- Lead in the development of modules for PECS on additional relevant topics (health, nutrition, health system, etc.) and support the M&E Coordinator to ensure their roll out
- Provide technical support and oversight to the M&E coordinator to ensure timeliness of all steps of PECS management and high quality of design, implementation, analysis, and reporting of PECS.

Documentation of VAS learnings

- Review and contribute to the writing of all VAS reports, internal and external, their quality and timeliness, including all donor reports.
- Conduct regular analyses of the performance of the VAS portfolio: evolution of coverage, performance vs. 80% threshold, processes for preparation of campaigns and routine delivery approaches, administrative performance.
- Lead the development lessons learned reports on VAS.
- Prepare minimum program standards for VAS monitoring, evaluation and research in coordination with relevant colleagues.

Build institutional research and learning capacity

- Provide training on research concepts and methods to country teams.
- Assist in the development of a global learning agenda for the organization.
- Contribute to the development of program minimum standards in research.

Human Resources Management

- 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 highly effective research teams to carry out studies, recruiting, supervising, mentoring, and evaluating staff.
- Ensure accountability to beneficiaries, partners, colleagues and donors by providing ongoing feedback in a context of mutual respect.
- Participate in the recruitment process of other staff as requested by management.

Required Qualifications/Competencies

- At least a Masters degree in public health with a concentration in epidemiology, statistics or other relevant domains; plus
- Minimum of five years' experience in research design and management, or an equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Demonstrated field experience implementing surveys and research protocols, training and supervising survey and/or research teams.
- Experience conducting operational research including both qualitative and quantitative methods.

- Track record in publishing in peer-reviewed journals.
- Proficient in statistical analysis using STATA
- Ability to communicate in French and English
- Highly computer literate including knowledge of Microsoft office suite (Word; PowerPoint; Outlook), and strong Excel skills, including pivot tables.
- Prior experience developing and delivering trainings to field staff strongly preferred, along with demonstrated knowledge of effective adult learning techniques.
- Ability and willingness to travel 25-35% (depending on travel restrictions due to COVID-19) to support roll out of data collection and training.
- Ability to:
 - perform duties that require a close attention to detail;
 - prioritize workload, assume responsibility for work, and follow through to completion.
 - maintain balance when under stress.
 - work in a decentralized organizational structure with a highly collaborative approach
 - work in a team and communicate effectively to produce knowledge with colleagues who do not have a formal reporting line to you.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including an ability to effectively lead a team in a cross-cultural environment, communicate a vision, make timely and transparent decisions, and manage conflict.
- Collaborative, flexible and solution-oriented.
- Demonstrable respect for all persons regardless of religion, ethnicity, class or gender, with a high comfort level working in a diverse environment with a demonstrated commitment to high professional ethical standards.
- Commitment to Helen Keller Intl's work and mission.

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 namesake, Helen Keller is dedicated
to building an inclusive workforce where diversity of all types 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.