

## COUNTRY DIRECTOR - KENYA

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Company: Mercy Corps

Location: Nairobi

Category: other-general

### Description

**Location** Nairobi, Kenya **Position Status** Full-time, Exempt, Regular **Salary Level** 7

### About Mercy Corps

Mercy Corps is powered by the belief that a better world is possible. To do this, we know our teams do their best work when they are diverse, and every team member feels that they belong. We welcome diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and skills so that we can be stronger and have long term impact.

### The Program / Department / Team

Mercy Corps began working in Kenya in 2009 to address the societal wounds following the 2007 post-election violence. Since that time, Mercy Corps has built a robust and diverse portfolio in Kenya that is working to address structural causes of poverty and injustice and to strengthen systems that enable men, women and children to access opportunities, participate in and contribute to peaceful democratic processes, and thrive in the face of ecological and social change. To do this, we deliver integrated programming to strengthen market and governance systems, address the root causes of conflict, and equip vulnerable populations- in particular youth, women, adolescents and marginalized social groups- with the skills, opportunities and resources they need to be healthy, productive and to drive the development of their communities. Mercy Corps Kenya also collaborates with neighboring country offices to implement several multi-country and cross-border programs. Working with a diverse base of donors that includes the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO),

European Commission (EC), United States Department of State, Swiss Development Cooperation, Netherlands, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Google.org, Cisco, and other donors, Mercy Corps empowers people to recover from crisis, build better lives and transform their communities for good. We work closely with the private sector, civil society and governance structures at local and national levels to drive positive change and ensure that opportunities are inclusive of all Kenyans. Mercy Corps Kenya is a country where there is considerable strategic interest for the agency and high growth potential, including an existing portfolio of large and highly strategic programs. Moreover, with most donors and international agencies having regional hubs in Nairobi, there is significant potential to drive regional influence, advocacy and representation objectives from the Nairobi office. Mercy Corps Kenya is recognized as a leader in resilience programming, market systems development, conflict mitigation and youth employment, bridging humanitarian, development and peacebuilding interventions to drive resilient outcomes for communities across Northern Kenya. We champion and lead innovative solutions, guided by our comprehensive resilience framework, and are strongly positioned to influence donors, development actors, private sector and government to foster collaboration and strengthen the systems that communities depend on to cope, adapt and thrive in the face of external shocks and changing environments, centering climate adaptation and conflict mitigation at the heart of our work.

### **The Position**

The Mercy Corps Kenya Country Director (CD) is an innovative and visionary leader responsible for resourcefully developing and managing all programming and operations in Kenya to deliver impact, harness innovative solutions and influence lasting and systemic change. Building on a strong foundation of programming that has improved the lives of more than 2.9 million Kenyans, the Country Director will continue to oversee the delivery of high-impact, multi-sector programming that is accountable to both program participants and donors, while prioritizing strategies for thoughtful growth, external influence and partnership building. Placing a high value on innovative solutions to development issues and creative partnerships, the Country Director will position Mercy Corps to drive forward strategic programming, both within Kenya and sub-regionally (with a focus on the Horn of Africa), strategically connecting programs into a cohesive country portfolio, guided by a long-term Country strategy that aligns to the regional and Agency's global vision. With a total annual budget of approximately \$199 million, the Country Director has full supervisory responsibility

for the portfolio and is responsible for building a cohesive team that works together to deliver high-impact programming across the country.

## **Essential Responsibilities**

### **STRATEGY & VISION**

Refine and articulate a clear and compelling vision of Mercy Corps' strategy in Kenya, and contribute to the regional strategic vision, drawing on Mercy Corps' key agency distinctives and experience in Kenya and the region to inspire team members, donors, government stakeholders and partners to support the country objectives and develop impactful and relevant programming within our partner communities.

Build strategic partnerships and relationships to achieve the vision outlined in the country and regional strategy.

Set direction for the country team by prioritizing and organizing actions and resources to achieve the objectives outlined in the country strategy.

Lead country strategy development and annual country planning using a collaborative process.

Leverage headquarters and regional technical support teams to support program design and delivery in line with Mercy Corps' best practices.

Recognize opportunities for innovative action and create an environment where alternative viewpoints are welcome. Remain current with development thinking, including resilience approaches, systems thinking, nexus approaches, social impact, value for money, etc.

Lead engagement with donors, partners, and communities to design and secure resources for high-impact programs that are aligned to community priorities.

Partner with the regional team and other country programs in East Africa to elevate Mercy Corps' expertise and profile within the broader subregion, leading to strategic regional programming that works across borders and delivers impact across the subregion.

Support program and operations team members to pivot and adapt programming to be responsive to contextual changes, such as environmental and climate change impacts, conflict, or emerging opportunities to deepen impact.

## **LEADERSHIP & CULTURE**

Commit to preserving an organizational culture of trust, transparency, diversity, equity, and inclusion across the team and global organization.

Uphold a culture of integrity through ethical decision-making, safeguarding and compliance with the Code of Conduct.

Lead by role modeling self-awareness to foster an environment of mutual respect, diversity and inclusion so that all team members are included, supported and can thrive.

Create a culture of accountability for highly effective communication systems and relationships to ensure every voice matters.

## **TEAM MANAGEMENT**

Recruit, manage, motivate, and onboard an informed, skilled and efficient team with an emphasis on high quality impact, inclusion and achievement.

Encourage a team culture of growth, learning, creativity and innovation by incorporating a culture of continuous feedback, development and performance management.

Establish credibility within the team by demonstrating personal accountability, flexibility, resilience and dedication to quality programming by creating positive relationships and having composure in complex situations.

Ensure people-focused human resource systems are in place and consistent with Mercy Corps' global policies, including position descriptions, team member onboarding, performance management, professional development plans and reporting mechanisms.

Contribute to country team-building efforts, help team members identify problem-solving options and ensure the integration of all team members into relevant decision-making processes.

## **PROGRAM IMPACT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND LEARNING**

Oversee program quality and impact by ensuring programs are based on sound design principles and utilize Mercy Corps and donor required M&E systems.

Identify and drive opportunities for deep dive research on Mercy Corps' Kenya and cross-border programs to deepen program learning and thought leadership in resilience, climate change, peace and governance, and market systems development.

Gather evidence of program impact through robust agency standard procedures for data gathering, reporting, and evaluating program outputs and outcomes.

Lead country team to strive for impact at country and regional level leading to sustained change based on solid systems and incorporation of learnings into programs.

Ensure all interventions adhere to Mercy Corps' Gender Policy, Do No Harm principles, and program participant accountability standards, including an effective Community Accountability Reporting Mechanism and safeguarding mechanisms across all programs.

## **INFLUENCE & REPRESENTATION**

Lead Mercy Corps' outreach and engagement with key donors, partners, think tanks, government, UN bodies and private sector representing Kenya and the wider sub-region/Horn of Africa in order to influence development and funding priorities, drawing on Mercy Corps' key distinctives, research and policy & advocacy initiatives to shape the agenda and align with community needs and opportunities.

Build partnerships with leading organizations, private sector, government, foundations, community representatives, and other critical partners to enhance collective impact, voice, and shape relevant policy agendas.

In partnership with the regional team, represent Mercy Corps' Kenya and cross-border programs in regional coordination mechanisms, such as USAID's learning platforms (i.e. PREG, RLA) and IGAD events, among others.

Set up systems to stay abreast of contextual changes, anticipate needs, and contribute to shaping donors' views on humanitarian and development priorities in ways that are responsive to changes in the context.

Ensure that Mercy Corps programs proactively engage with national and international media and other advocacy platforms in order to shape messaging and priorities and ensure that priority issues are highlighted.

## **PROGRAM OPERATIONS & COMPLIANCE**

Coordinate overall country budget; manage budget within approved spending levels and establish an annual cash flow plan to ensure a steady and adequate supply of funds for program activities.

Build and maintain operational structures that ensure proper segregation of duties between finance, administration and logistics and enable the timely, compliant and effective delivery of field programs.

Build and maintain an environment of collaboration among program, finance, operations and human resource team members resulting in optimal support for program activities.

Ensure program implementation is on time, target and budget, using effective M&E systems to reach desired impacts.

Create and maintain systems ensuring effective and transparent use of financial resources for timely and informative reporting in line with donor and Mercy Corps policies and procedures.

Ensure compliance with donor and Mercy Corps regulations, policies and procedures, and the implementation of appropriate risk mitigation measures to reduce Mercy Corps' exposure to potential risk.

## **SECURITY**

Manage security and safety of the entire country team and Mercy Corps' assets according to best practices, Mercy Corps operating standards and field realities.

Ensure the safety and security of staff members through regular review and adaptation of security protocols and procedures including the country security plan. Proactively ensure that team members operate in a secure environment and are aware of policies.

Liaise with the Regional Director and Africa Regional Security Advisor on crucial events, high risk periods, incident reporting or security policy changes.

## **Supervisory Responsibility**

Director of Programs, Finance Director, Operations Director, Ethics and Compliance Manager, Director of People and Culture, Chiefs of Party (COPs).

## **Accountability**

**Reports Directly To:** Regional Director, East and Southern Africa  
**Works Directly With:** HQ-based Program, Operations, Finance, Regional Program Team, Compliance, Fundraising and Technical Support Unit

## **Accountability to Participants and Stakeholders**

Mercy Corps team members are expected to support all efforts toward accountability, specifically to our program participants, community partners, other stakeholders, and to international standards guiding international relief and development work. We are committed to actively engaging communities as equal partners in the design, monitoring and evaluation of our field projects.

### **Minimum Qualification & Transferable Skills**

BA/S or equivalent in the relevant field required; MA/S preferred.

10+ years of field experience in international relief and development programs, including demonstrable success in managing large, complex, transitional development programs. 7 years of senior-level leadership, capacity building and field management experience.

Demonstrated success managing and bringing together a multi-cultural team with team members in multiple offices.

Successful and proven representation, negotiation, communication and organization skills.

Demonstrated success representing complex programmatic objectives to diverse stakeholders in order to position Mercy Corps as a strong implementer and thought leader with donors, development partners, government and other stakeholders.

Demonstrated success in securing funding from a broad spectrum of donors.

Demonstrated success working effectively and respectfully with host country government, private sector, INGO, NGO partners and other stakeholders in complex environments.

Proven skills in financial and grants management, including experience managing grants from USAID, FCDO, Foundation partners and other strategic donors.

Internationally recognized qualification in project or program management or a commitment to obtain the qualification in the early months of work.

Excellent oral and written English skills required.

Ability to work effectively with a diverse team in a sensitive environment.

Previous work experience in countries where travel to insecure areas is required, and

management of programs in insecure locations.

Capacity to respond to emergency and disaster situations as appropriate.

### **Success Factors**

The successful Kenya Country Director will skillfully represent Mercy Corps' programmatic priorities and agency distinctives to donors and regional partners while providing effective leadership to the Mercy Corps program team to ensure high-impact programming. The Country Director will have high emotional intelligence, constructive mentoring skills and proven experience with capacity building and will be committed to long-term program sustainability and the delivery of high-impact activities at the community level. The role is a hands-on position and success will be determined by the level of direct engagement in program development, oversight of program delivery, fundraising for new projects and representing the agency to a diverse range of stakeholders. The successful Country Director should welcome multi-tasking and taking an active role in program design and overarching strategy, as well as external representation and partnership building. Successful Mercy Corps team members have a strong commitment to teamwork and accountability, thrive in evolving and challenging environments, and make effective written and verbal communication a priority.

### **Living Conditions / Environmental Conditions**

The Country Director position is based in the capital city - Nairobi. The location is accompanied and secure. Housing is in family accommodation with unlimited freedom of movement beyond the house/office. There are many international schools in Kenya of high quality. Staff have a high degree of access to services (medical, electricity, water, etc). This position requires 35% travel by road and air to field offices in often insecure environments.

### **Ongoing Learning**

In support of our belief that learning organizations are more effective, efficient and relevant to the communities we serve, we empower all team members to dedicate 5% of their time to learning activities that further their personal and/or professional growth and development.

### **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**

Achieving our mission begins with how we build our team and work together. Through our commitment to enriching our organization with people of different origins, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of thinking, we are better able to leverage the collective power of our teams and solve the world's most complex challenges. We strive for a culture of trust and respect,



where everyone contributes their perspectives and authentic selves, reaches their potential as individuals and teams, and collaborates to do the best work of their lives. We recognize that diversity and inclusion is a journey, and we are committed to learning, listening and evolving to become more diverse, equitable and inclusive than we are today.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

Mercy Corps is an equal opportunity employer that does not tolerate discrimination on any basis. We actively seek out diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and skills so that we can be collectively stronger and have sustained global impact. We are committed to providing an environment of respect and psychological safety where equal employment opportunities are available to all. We do not engage in or tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender identity, gender expression, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability (including HIV/AIDS status), marital status, military veteran status or any other protected group in the locations where we work.

### **Safeguarding & Ethics**

Mercy Corps is committed to ensuring that all individuals we come into contact with through our work, whether team members, community members, program participants or others, are treated with respect and dignity. We are committed to the core principles regarding prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse laid out by the UN Secretary General and IASC **and have signed on to the** We will not tolerate child abuse, sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment by or of our team members. As part of our commitment to a safe and inclusive work environment, team members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner, respect local laws and customs, and to adhere to and values at all times. Team members are required to complete mandatory Code of Conduct elearning courses upon hire and on an annual basis.

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