

Senior Manager, CASA Kenya Program

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Company: TechnoServe

Location: Nairobi

Category: computer-and-mathematical

About TechnoServe

Everyone deserves the opportunity to build a better future. This simple idea has been at the heart of work around the world for over 50 years. TechnoServe is a pioneer in leveraging the power of business and markets to create sustainable pathways out of poverty.

The low-income communities in which we work are full of enterprising people. Their small-scale farms and businesses are the keys to economic development. But they face many challenges: low literacy, lack of access to jobs and markets, unpredictable political dynamics and, increasingly, the effects of climate change. For many women and young people, the challenges are even more daunting. Working with TechnoServe staff, people around the world are lifting themselves out of poverty. The results are amazing...when incomes increase and living conditions for families get better, they are able to access health care and education previously out of reach. Communities and even whole countries are better off.

Programme and CASA background

The Commercial Agriculture for Smallholders and Agribusinesses (CASA) Technical Assistance Facility Programme is an £8M FCDO funded programme that forms part of FCDO's Inclusive Green Growth Centre of Expertise which aims to support a climate resilient and inclusive global agriculture sector (see additional context in the Appendix). Since 2021, CASA TAF has also been providing technical support to FCDO missions based around the world.

In late 2023, TechnoServe was asked to conduct a study by FCDO Kenya to investigate

the potential for a specific programme aligned with the CASA-TAF methodology but reaching a larger number of businesses and using this as a leverage to change the way business is done in Kenya at a broader scale. The team was able to find significant interest and availability of businesses that would fit such a scope. As a result, TechnoServe has submitted a proposal for a new agribusiness support programme in Kenya.

Programme Overview

TechnoServe anticipates a 2-year programme in Kenya starting April 2024 funded by the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) in to support agribusinesses with developing new inclusive, climate-smart business models. The ultimate objective is to reduce poverty and increase climate resilience of smallholder farmers.

TechnoServe has already conducted a study to "pre-select" a short-list of agribusinesses, which include aggregators, inputs and service providers operating across many different value chains and geographies. These businesses have high potential for (a) scale (b) increased investments and (c) increased impact on smallholder farmer incomes and climate resilience.

The programme will divide agribusiness support in two ways: (1) "Post-investment" support for agribusinesses that have already been backed by debt or equity from an impact investment fund; and (2) "Pre-investment" support for agribusinesses that could benefit from future impact investment, but have not secured financing yet. The technical assistance and support is tailored accordingly. Post-investment agribusinesses will receive support in developing inclusive business plans (IBPs) to identify challenges and opportunities for smallholder farmers in their supply chains to improve climate adaptation and livelihoods under a model of sustainable business support. Following the IBPs, the programme will provide direct project management and specific technical support in implementing such models. Pre-investment agribusinesses will receive support in packaging and marketing their business and growth plans to investors, with financial and impact business case development. They will also benefit from support on "core" business innovations (optimizing teams, processes and operations, feasibility testing and certification, route-to-market expansion etc).

The programme will also have a strong learning and influencing agenda. For pre-investment businesses, the programme will work closely with a select 3-5 impact investors to help understand their challenges and build their pipeline of investible agribusinesses. Across the broader portfolio, the programme will develop and package learnings on best practices for inclusive, climate-resilient business models and share nationally and even internationally. It

may also choose to support agribusinesses on select influencing agenda items with national-level stakeholders including the Government of Kenya. Lastly, the programme will promote direct sharing of experiences between the partner agribusinesses in its portfolio.

Job Summary

TechnoServe is seeking a Senior Manager that will oversee the delivery and quality execution of technical assistance projects to agribusinesses, support to impact investors to expand their pipelines and a learning and influencing agenda that promotes inclusive, climate-resilient business models in Kenya. The Senior Manager is responsible for the management of a broad range of stakeholders, including FCDO Kenya.

This position will be accountable for overall finance and operations management of the anticipated programme activities implemented in Kenya. The Senior Manager will ensure efficient and effective implementation of programme components, compliance with all donor and local legal requirements as well as TechnoServe policies and regulations. The position will be supported by a central resource (part-time) from the CASA Technical Assistance Facility Programme as well as the TechnoServe Kenya Country Director and country platform resources (HR, Finance, Operations).

Primary Functions & Responsibilities

Programme management:

Ensure that programme outcomes and deliverables are completed on time, within budget, and in compliance with donor and TechnoServe requirements; actively anticipate and communicate roadblocks to core team and stakeholders (where appropriate).

Provide strategic guidance, leadership, management, and general technical oversight of the programme, with an unwavering commitment to delivering results.

Closely track and manage programme work plan and finances; ensure timely submission of donor progress and financial reports to TechnoServe and FCDO.

Foster collaboration, learning, and adaptive management to inform decision-making and drive impact.

Effectively manage programme staff including long-term staff (e.g. 3 Inclusive Business Managers, TA Analyst) and short-term consultants required to deliver certain activities (e.g., technical support research, policy papers, public stakeholder engagement etc.); monitoring, evaluation and learning consultants; and other sub-partners contracted to delivery technical

assistance projects (see below).

Actively monitor and report risks related to programme execution

Stakeholder management of agribusiness partners:

Serve as primary liaison/contact for the programme; foster collaboration and manage productive relationships with FCDO Kenya, agribusinesses and other key stakeholders

Drive shared vision and strategy among agribusinesses, farmers, TA providers and other key stakeholders

Build trusted relationships with impact investor partners, understand their challenges and support them in developing pipeline of investible businesses

Along with Inclusive Business Managers, proactively originate partnerships and manage relationships with agribusinesses whose objectives / operations are aligned with the programme's Theory of Change

Oversee the prioritisation of agribusiness partnerships and delivery of commercial and technical advice to agribusinesses, drawing on own and/or CASA TAF's experience and best practices

Management of technical assistance providers and projects:

Retain oversight of the end-to-end process, including business/project scoping, designing, proposing, obtaining approval for, tendering, and supervising a selection of the technical assistance projects for agribusinesses

Manage TA providers to ensure efficient and effective delivery, in line with planned objectives and budgets. This includes responsibility to kickstart new projects, introduce innovations and/or troubleshoot existing initiatives; ad-hoc and planned steering committee meetings; performance feedback and check in meetings etc.

Identify and facilitate connections with experts which can support specific projects and/or provide specialist technical advice and/or direct TA provision where needed. Leverage and call-on this pool to plug gaps identified.

Review project spend and progress against KPIs and planned activities regularly (at least monthly) to ensure planned activities are on track; raise key risks, challenges or highlights

with CASA TAF and company management and other relevant stakeholders, as needed

Facilitate monitoring and assessment of TA project delivery, quality and impact on SHFs and agribusiness operations; advising on areas for improvement and identifying need/opportunity for new interventions.

Provide technical guidance and support to implementing partners on increasing quality TA delivery and optimising SHF impact.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) and influence of other stakeholders:

Oversee learning and influencing agenda, including developing case studies, learning papers and planning and executing events to share broadly the learnings of the program to a broad range of stakeholders including internal CASA-TAF and TechnoServe staff, FCDO, industry representatives, Government of Kenya and others

Lead thinking on delivering against Theory of Change given technical context of the agribusinesses we work with, identification of KPIs of technical assistance projects, data collection from companies and TA providers

Manage relationships with MEL providers and review progress on tracking KPIs and outcomes. Share MEL results with core CASA TAF team and FCDO

Basic Qualifications:

Bachelor's Degree plus 10 years of experience or a Masters degree or equivalent in business, international development, economics, agricultural economics, or relevant field with seven year's experience in a senior management role in commercial agriculture, agribusiness development, or management consulting

Experience overseeing operational, financial and technical areas of complex programmes, including hiring, training and supervision of local personnel and partners, work plan and financial management including budgeting and procurement

Experience influencing senior management of corporate, finance or investment institutions to achieve results

Strong commercial and private sector experience and / or overall business acumen

Proven programme management experience, including management of donor funded

programmes

Agriculture sector experience, including driving shared value initiatives with private agribusinesses.

Experience designing and/or implementing regenerative agriculture initiatives, ideally with some experience in influencing behaviour change related to regenerative agriculture practices including associated with soil restoration

Sub-Saharan Africa country experience

Demonstrated capacity to produce high quality reports and proposals

Excellent communication skills in written and spoken English, including report writing and presentations.

Travel: This position will be based in Nairobi, Kenya and requires local travel only (20%)

Preferred Qualifications:

Knowledge and experience of working alongside impact investors

Demonstrated ability to work with government and donor organizations

Experience in Kenya

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Excellent interpersonal communication skills and demonstrated ability to influence others to adopt new approaches. Proven ability to create buy-in and build consensus among colleagues and stakeholders

Proactive and can work with limited direction

Results oriented, with a proven track record of working to achieve project targets

Proven ability to create buy-in and build consensus among colleagues and stakeholders

Skilled in using business software (Excel, PowerPoint etc.)

Ability to pivot, make quick and sound decisions when there are risks or change in priorities

Has a strong sense of ownership, accountability and can-do attitude

Demonstrated ability to manage executive teams and manage direct reports

Supervisory Responsibilities include: Inclusive Business Managers, Learning Manager and Technical Analyst.

This position is contingent on donor funding.

We encourage all qualified individuals who share TechnoServe's vision of improving the lives of others through proven business solutions to apply.

With our commitment to diversity, we are proud to be an equal opportunity employer and do not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, HIV/AIDS status, protected veteran status, disability and all other protected classes.

We are also proud of our commitment to protecting staff, partners, and beneficiaries from abuse and exploitation and thoroughly vet all final candidates through rigorous background and reference checks.

Appendix

CASA TAF description

TechnoServe was competitively selected by the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) to lead part of a five-year programme – Commercial Agriculture for Smallholders and Agribusinesses Technical Assistance Facility (CASA TAF).

The CASA Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) Programme is an £8M funded programme and forms part of FCDO's Inclusive Green Growth Centre of Expertise (COE) which aims to support a climate resilient and inclusive global agriculture sector through technical assistance to a variety of stakeholders including impact investors, agribusinesses and FCDO country missions.

Technical assistance ultimately aims to change how investors, donors, and governments view and invest in agribusinesses that build smallholder resilient supply chains.

CASA TAF operates across all FCDO priority countries across Africa and Asia. It is working with seven investor partners, and to date has supported 27 agri-business investees of these partners to design and implement new business models to improve the resilience of farmers.

By 2025, the programme will have supported the increased resilience and food security of ~90,000 smallholders and demonstrated the impact of these models to catalyse additional investment into agriculture.

Cross References and Citations:

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