

JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Youth Officer

Division: Economic, Youth and Sustainable Development

Grade: I

Reports To: Adviser, Youth

General Information

The Commonwealth Secretariat is the principal intergovernmental body of the Commonwealth, responsible for advancing and achieving the shared goals of the association's 54 member governments in promoting democracy, development and respect for diversity.

Young people (under 30) constitute more than 60% of the population of the Commonwealth, and the wellbeing and development of this 1.2 billion youth cohort are essential to the success of the Commonwealth and its 54 member states.

The objective and focus of the Youth team which forms part of the Social Policy Development Section, is to support member states through policy analysis and development, regulatory frameworks and systems for strengthening of policies, bridging the gaps between policy formulation and implementation. The work involves support to youth-led networks, including the Commonwealth Youth Council and other thematic policy networks. The work further involves deepening partnerships and collaboration with regional inter-governmental organisations and regional youth bodies. The overall work approach will be anchored on in-depth research, social policy analysis, documentation of Commonwealth good practices. The Social Policy Development section includes an inter-disciplinary focus on education, health, sport and youth policy.

The Commonwealth Youth Programme manages and coordinates youth engagement and empowerment of young people within an enabling environment for young people with a particular focus on young people from marginalised or vulnerable communities. A critical function of the section is to organise and support the quadrennial Conference of Youth Ministers (CYMM) including the coordination of the pre-events including the youth and stakeholders' forums and senior officials' meetings. CYMM enables Commonwealth ministers in-charge of youth to discuss key social development issues in the Commonwealth in relation to a specified theme, and to identify areas for implementation. The ministerial meeting also enables ministers to discuss pertinent issues and share knowledge and good practices in the youth development sector.

Job Summary

Under the supervision of the Adviser, Youth, the Youth Officer provides professional technical, research, operational and administrative assistance to the Youth team of the Social Policy Development Section. S/he will be responsible for supporting the policy and programming processes.

The Youth Officer will be required to develop effective working relationships with member countries and other key stakeholders specifically to support the delivery of the Secretariat's Youth development programme.

Task description

- Contribute to the Youth strategic direction and operational planning, especially with respect to youth programmes across the Commonwealth and thereby contributing to Commonwealth Secretariat 4-year Strategic Plan.
- Participate in the analysis of youth development issues with a focus on social protection, inequality and poverty reduction at regional and national levels; undertake empirical research and analysis of trends and developments and related policy under the section's purview.
- Research and report on development trends (economic, social, education etc.) and data for use in programme development, management, monitoring, evaluation and delivery of results. Analyse methodologies for review and evaluation of specific topics relating to social policy.
- Provide technical input to the design and delivery of programme activity such as events, meetings and workshops including collaboration and co-creation of projects and activities with other thematic divisions in the Secretariat including climate change, political etc.
- Liaise and partner with key stakeholders including policymakers, experts from research institutes and to discuss socio economic development issues, with particular focus on issues related to youth development.
- Coordinate partnerships with regional intergovernmental bodies and regional youth bodies providing thought leadership and collaboration on areas of synergy and alignment of thematic areas in the regions.
- Assist in the planning, organising and servicing of technical and expert group meetings; drafting reports and preparing summaries of meetings.
- Represent the work social policy team at international and other meetings; organise and participate in working groups, meetings, conferences, consultations with other agencies and partners on social and economic development related matters.
- Prepare/contribute to the preparation of various written reports, documents and communications, e.g. draft reports or sections of analytical reports, studies, background papers, ministerial documents, briefings, correspondence, etc.
- Provide support to intergovernmental processes dealing with youth and social development issues by: preparing inputs for reports to regional intergovernmental bodies; following intergovernmental regional meetings and preparing summary reports;
- Provide support to governments and other key stakeholders in the formulation of national policies and programmes related to youth development within the broader social policy framework.

- Organise expert group meetings, seminars and other meetings on youth policy related social issues, including activities to build national capacity at regional and national level.
- Organise and support training seminars for governments officials, national experts on social development issues, with particular reference to youth development;
- Monitor and assess the implementation of technical country programmes and projects on youth policy. Provide support to the project management of youth programmes to meet identified needs of member countries as well as capacity development requirements of national and regional institutions.
- Carry out programmatic/administrative tasks, including preparation of budgets, reporting on programme performance and preparation of input for results-based budgeting.
- Provide project management support to the work of the youth team in preparing, managing and updating project budgets, contracts/funding agreements and arrangements with partner institutions.
- Provide technical and administrative support throughout all stages of programming processes by executing and administering a variety of technical programme transactions, preparing materials and documentations, and complying with organizational processes and management systems, to support programme planning, results based planning (RBM), monitoring and evaluation of results and risk management.
- Adhere to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy.
- Perform any other duties as may be required from time to time

Education

- Post graduate degree in Youth Development, Social Policy, Public Policy, Development Studies, Business Administration or a related Social Science discipline.

Essential Experience:

- At least five years' relevant work experience in/with international development organisations, particularly in the areas of youth, public policy development or social development.
- Experience and work specifically in policy development within other intergovernmental organisations.
- Knowledge of cutting edge youth development research and/or projects/policy work.

- A sound understanding of project design, including project budgeting and forecasting, the use of tools such as Project Cycle Management (including the Logical Framework) and Results-Based Management (RBM).
- Strong communication and inter-personal skills, public relations, institutional relationships building experience
- Strong IT skills, particularly in the area of budgeting, forecasting, financial analysis and reporting.
- A sound understanding of government operations within developing country settings.
- Excellent written and oral communications skills.
- Full familiarity with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Desirable:

- Experience within a government agency in a developing country or a development organisation with responsibility for policy development, project development, design and management.

Competencies:

Working with Others
<p>Regularly shares information of value with colleagues.</p> <p>Shows commitment to delivering on key agreements made to colleagues.</p> <p>Makes an effort to view a situation from the other party's perspective as well.</p> <p>Demonstrates awareness and sensitivity to colleagues' pressures.</p> <p>Utilises networks to ensure similar goals are achieved collaboratively.</p> <p>Develops long term relationships across cultures and/or geographical boundaries.</p> <p>Uses relationships to identify the best people to help in the completion of tasks.</p> <p>Tactfully deals with difficult people to gain buy-in and manage their expectations.</p>
Communication
<p>Interacts and communicates effectively with internal/external contacts.</p> <p>Ensures information is communicated to all the appropriate people.</p> <p>Provides feedback to more senior colleagues effectively, providing justification where necessary.</p> <p>Uses the correct method of communication, depending on the message and the audience.</p> <p>Anticipates objections in dialogues and prepares convincing responses.</p> <p>Delivers difficult messages with tact and sensitivity.</p>
Planning and Analysis

Schedules activities according to deadlines and importance.

Liaises with various parties in diverse locations to organise activities.

Agrees new timescales when faced with competing activities.

Balances a focus on detail with a broader perspective.

Effectively interprets inquiries and quickly identifies elements that do and do not fall within their remit, dealing with them appropriately.

Developing & Applying Expertise

Takes advantage of opportunities to develop an area of expertise.

Takes learning from previous experience and applies them appropriately.

Demonstrates willingness to learn new skills and/or approaches.

Respect for Diversity

Works effectively with people from all backgrounds and treats all people equally with dignity and respect.

Shows respect and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates understanding in daily work and decision making.

Examine own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses and does not discriminate against any individual or group.

Identifies biases in systems & processes.

Accountability

Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines.

Ensures timely delivery of outputs within defined cost and quality standard parameters.

Adapting and Innovating

Recognises opportunities for improvement and proposes change with impact and effect.

Helps others evaluate and strengthen ideas.

Quickly grasps new concepts and how to apply them.

Demonstrates flexibility e.g. by working beyond own remit in order to achieve an objective inter alia.

Will effectively reorganise activities when faced with changing contexts and demands.

Welcomes and adapts to new ideas and/or approaches.

Adapts personal style to meet the needs of others.

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