



<https://jobs.eagmark.net/job/vice-president-center-for-technical-expertise/>

## Description

AGRA is an African-led institution that actively supports the drive towards inclusive agricultural transformation and sustainable food systems. We do this by empowering the continent's 33 million smallholder farming households to transform their agriculture from a struggle to survive to profitable businesses. The continent's farmers regularly face challenges, and we aspire to provide uniquely African solutions that respond to their agricultural and environmental challenges, leading to increased harvests for reduced hunger and more income.

Working in alignment with the development priorities of our focus countries, we enable farmers to access improved and high-yielding seeds, gain knowledge on sustainable farming, and linkages to profitable markets.

In our work, we aspire to build the alliances, partnerships, and networks required to drive an inclusive agricultural transformation. We work with our partners to create an equitable youth-friendly environment that harnesses the youth dividend on the continent to drive growth and facilitate open employment opportunities for young women and men. We achieve our key objectives through a focus on the following four areas of intervention:

- Policy and state capability – We support governments in creating an enabling environment for private sector involvement in agricultural transformation.
- Seed systems – We trigger higher productivity by increasing the availability and access to improved seeds by farmers allowing them to increase their harvests for food security and better incomes.
- Sustainable farming – We support farmers in building resilient farming systems for sustained high yields through interventions such as mechanization and irrigation.
- Inclusive markets and trade – We work to increase the linkages between farmers, and other market actors for a positive, sustained cycle of commercialization and reinvestment.

## AGRA's 2030 Strategy

The continent has, in recent years, taken steps towards inclusive agricultural transformation resulting in notable improvements in food security, with clear progress across all AGRA's focus countries. However, with over 20% of Africans still suffering from hunger, we need to accelerate our progress and mitigate against the growing external pressures of conflict and climate on our food systems.

AGRA 2022-2030 Strategic Framework (SF2030) demonstrates our long-term vision for how we intend to contribute to, and align with, global and continental priorities, applying a food systems lens towards the goals of zero hunger, improved nutrition, an end to poverty, and climate adaptation. We have split our Strategic Framework 2030 into two 5-year strategies so that we have a clear mid-way point to evaluate progress and re-route our strategic focus if necessary. Our 2023-2027 Strategic Plan sets out to catalyze the growth of sustainable food systems across Africa by influencing and leveraging partners to build a robust enabling environment where the private sector thrives, and smallholders are empowered to produce

## Vice President, Center for Technical Expertise

### Hiring organization

Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)

### Employment Type

Full-time

### Duration of employment

3 Years Fixed Term

### Industry

Agriculture

### Job Location

Nairobi, Kenya

### Valid through

09.08.2023

sufficient, healthy food.

### **AGRA's Vision**

To contribute to a food system-inspired inclusive agricultural transformation across Africa, to reduce hunger, improve nutrition, and adapt to climate.

### **AGRA's Mission**

To catalyze the growth of sustainable food systems across Africa by influencing and leveraging partners to build a robust enabling environment where private sector thrives, and smallholder farmers are empowered to produce sufficient, healthy food.

### **AGRA's Strategy**

- Empowering and building the resilience of small holder farmers
- Supporting the development of inclusive markets and finance to strengthen agricultural systems.
- Strengthening state capability to sustain agricultural transformation.

### **Implementing Our New Strategy Through People**

AGRA is at the threshold of a new chapter where we begin implementing our new strategy of catalyzing inclusive, resilient and sustainable agricultural transformation. At AGRA we believe Agriculture is the single greatest opportunity to deliver inclusive economic growth, jobs, and health to the African continent.

People are the heart of our organisation and remain the true drivers of our delivery and our impact.

We are excited about a new fit-for-purpose organizational structure that is largely driven by an ambition to enhance collaboration across teams and drive sustainable growth. We have therefore purposed more focus on delivery of country programs within the new strategy giving even greater attention to optimising existing talent in addition to upscaling technical and operational resources.

We work with incredible people and partners who have roots in farming communities across the continent combined with an inclusive and diverse workforce from over 24 nationalities. Our values of (I-RISE; Integrity, Respect, Innovation, Stewardship and Equity) espouse our commitment to a call to action to go beyond ourselves as we arise and transform Africa's Agriculture.

We are looking for people who are passionate about Africa, curious and collaborative to join our innovative, growing, and multidisciplinary team. Together, we can grow Africa's food systems improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. Want to join us?

### **The Opportunity**

The Vice President, Center of Technical Expertise

### **Role purpose**

The Vice President – Center of Technical Expertise is a member of the Executive Management Committee, who will drive the design and oversight of all aspects of AGRA's technical programming and strategic /thought leadership and analytical capability through AGRA's center of technical expertise. The role will be responsible

for developing and directing all AGRA's business lines and ensure appropriate support to all the 15 AGRA country offices to ensure alignment, and coherent and coordinated delivery.

### **Role Summary**

S/He is responsible for delivering technical capabilities for AGRA and implementing initiatives that catalyse widespread change across the ecosystem. S/He will lead a team that is composed of experts in the fields of seed systems; climate adaption, sustainable farming and resilience; inclusive markets and trade; policy and state capability; inclusive finance; and digital; youth, gender and nutrition who work in the central office and support the regional and country program officers to help catalyze food system transformation.

### **Key Measures of Performance**

The performance of this role holder will be assessed on the basis of the achievements made as follows:

- Optimize AGRA's range of technical interventions to meet AGRA's strategic objectives across all the AGRA operational countries.
- Use all AGRA's technical assets to design a strong and transformation service support to countries and other partners that is anchored in strong data and analytical capability in CoTE.
- Demonstrated impact on the continental agendas that impact food systems, agriculture, and related areas.
- Foster strategic partnerships with other institutions to fast track demonstratable delivery of tangible assets including technologies, traits, models, policies and other relevant areas.
- Build strategic partnerships that provide opportunities and solutions for new learning that allow AGRA to adopt best practices from other institutions and partners.
- Leadership engagement and stakeholder convening with donors, governments, and partners.
- Lead the design of AGRA business plans across all countries that result in tangible benefits to smallholder farmers, and successful formulation and implementation of a pan-African strategy.
- Strong people management and ability to build a strong team and institution as part of AGRA's Executive Leadership team.
- In collaboration with Directors and Unit heads, develop and maintain up to date, cutting edge strategies on current business lines and critical AIT systems including but not limited to the development of seed systems, fertilizer systems, input supply systems, extension delivery, markets, innovative finance, and digital solutions.

### **Responsibilities**

- Key member of the Executive Management team who directs technical leadership and direction to the organization through leading experts and directing the development of strong analytical and advisory capabilities to governments and private sector.
- Develops and maintains up-to-date, cutting-edge strategies for the development of seed systems; climate adaption, sustainable farming, and resilience; inclusive markets and trade; policy and state capability; inclusive finance; and digital; youth, gender, and nutrition.
- Extends as a thought leader on all AGRA components through publications, speeches, membership of relevant networks, participation in learning

events, and training of grantees.

- Leads strategic thinking by establishing key issues, objectives, strategies, and tactics, as well as developing multi-year growth strategies and innovation vision for AGRA.
- Develops and oversees an African Advisory function of Technical Expertise that will support the government on business development, fundraising, policy, strategy, and impact.
- Oversee investments that drive continental and regional level impact, including strategic support of specialized institutions and agencies working together with countries and regions to deliver and measure impact.
- Lead and link impact thinking with country-level strategies ensuring that technical teams define the character of strategic delivery at the country level.
- Work to ensure AGRA's reputation is aligned with strong delivery and analytical capability underpinned by strong collaboration internally and externally.
- Advance a strong culture of collaboration, team support, and growth across the institution.
- Brings African and global best practices to inform technical system-level efforts and remains at the forefront of techniques and approaches.
- Identifies and targets new stakeholders to influence and finds opportunities for impact at the regional and international levels.
- Use the advisory capacity under CtE to advance country-led implementation, execution capacity, and delivery of food systems.
- Leverages strong knowledge of programs to educate cross-functional team members so they can develop and execute strategies that create innovative solutions.
- Collaborates with global and country programs to identify, track, and assess technical approaches. Galvanizes and energizes AGRA's engagement with regional bodies, governments and donors for the design and implementation of appropriate programs with the aim of creating an enabling environment to drive agricultural transformation in Africa.
- Supervises and manages direct reports to ensure execution and delivery of specific objectives.
- Provides strategic technical leadership and directs and provides coaching to relevant technical teams.
- Builds the Alliance by engaging with senior stakeholders and high-ranking government officials.
- Influences stakeholders to adopt or contribute to AGRA's theory of change.
- Advises country teams on the Green Revolution relevant innovations, digital-enabled solutions, relevant services providers, and trends in their countries and across the continent.
- Grows best practices across different the AGRA strategic focus areas, facilitates exchange and learnings.
- Represent AGRA at key external events across topics of policy and state capability, sustainable farming, seed systems and inclusive markets and trade.
- Enables talent management and development of existing staff, acquiring of new staff as necessary and manages team dynamics to ensure high-performance and positive employee experience.
- Communicates results through presentations, written and verbal communication.
- Able to direct teams to document and publish reports and articles that can influence action.
- Plans, organizes, and conducts regular capacity-building activities on critical thinking, innovation and design for AGRA staff, partners, and grantees.

- Directs implementation of new and innovative approaches, including reporting and maintaining relationships with funding agencies.
- Verify 5-year country and region strategy and annual country plans and provide technical expertise and best-practices to improve the plan. Trains grantees on technical matters, ensuring best practices are applied across all components.
- Coordinates among different organizational divisions, break down silos between groups, ensuring systems work together and support each other. Captures and communicates the right and relevant indicators of success for each system.
- Assesses the automated M&E system to ensure that it captures consistent quality data (quality assurance on data provided).
- Plans and utilizes the operating budget for the division.
- Sets project standards and goals, directs execution of projects, and innovations, and evaluates progress through regular performance reviews.
- Responsible for continental and regional programming in AGRA and will work with regional and country teams to ensure execution across RECs, Regional Institutions, and countries.

### **Model the IRISE Values & Be a Culture Carrier**

- **Integrity:** Uphold moral convictions and always doing the right thing.
- **Respect:** Value differences and embrace diversity and inclusion.
- **Innovation:** Strive for excellence and embracing continuous improvement, bold creativity, and change.
- **Stewardship:** Be responsible for actions undertaken and resources entrusted.
- **Equity:** Be governed by fairness in all undertakings.

### **Qualifications**

- Ph.D./M.Sc. or equivalent qualification in a field relevant to agricultural development.
- Any additional professional qualification that enhances proficiency in program design, analytical research, communication, leadership, and strategic planning or execution.
- Minimum of 10 years' experience with 10 years' experience in implementing and managing technical projects and business plans in agriculture or economic development space, in an international organization and/or capacity.
- At least 5 years of experience in a senior leadership role.
- Experience in a government delivery role or effectively leading a government agency or in a private sector equivalent role would be a strong plus.
- Demonstrated knowledge of agricultural development principles and procedures.
- Experience writing proposals, grants, and reports, and excellent oral and written communications.
- Outstanding interpersonal/relationship skills – active listening, relationship and team building, team player.
- Experience with, knowledge of, and/or enthusiasm for environmental program themes of environment, renewable energy, and climate change.
- Evidence of vision, leadership, and ability to secure strategic partnerships and grants. Experience managing programs and leading major fundraising initiatives.
- Experience managing a 'center of excellence' tasked to support with expertise business lines or project implementation units.
- Very strong and demonstrated ability to make choices, focus, and delivery

change and strategic thinking in a crowded landscape of ideas and partnerships.

- Good understanding of climate issues and ability to lead teams to support countries in finding local regional and continental solutions.
- A working knowledge of French will be an advantage.

## Key Competencies

- **Strategic Orientation:** focus on the big picture and overall Strategic Framework. Ability to identify and pursue strategic initiatives which provide the greatest value and sustainable impact; balances long and short-term trade-offs; communicates clearly and precisely the strategic goals and the strategies for achieving them.
- **Leadership:** Demonstrates ability to mobilize, focus, align, and build effective groups to enable them to conceptualize and achieve collective objectives. Inspires trust and passion in the AGRA Mission: Ability to show great drive and commitment to AGRA mission; help others understand how their daily work contributes to the AGRA's mission and inspires others to proactively meet the AGRA's strategic objectives in partnership with key partners, grantees, and Country Governments. Maintains high standards of personal integrity and provides support for professional development efforts linked to business objectives.
- **Customer and market Orientation:** Demonstrates knowledge of the customers they serve, competitors, suppliers, and the regulatory environment. Provides a balanced a responsive and proactive approach to meeting client needs; encourages staff to understand client needs and concerns; ensures the provision of customized services and products as appropriate; Responds promptly and effectively to client and market needs. Adds business value based on own understanding and service of the customers and the market in which they work.
- **Driving Results:** Demonstrates drive for improvement of business results, based on a wellrounded understanding of general business principles and own activities' commercial and financial implications.
- **Planning and Organizing:** Devises plans of action with explicit paths and measures of accomplishment for self and/or others and allocates suitable resources so that objectives are achieved. Strong administration skills.
- **Technical Competencies for the position:** Demonstrates knowledge of all own work rolespecific issues. This encompasses the technical skills or knowledge required to perform the essential duties as described in this Job Description. Specific technical competencies: quantitative analytical skills including the use of appropriate software, results-based management systems, designing tools and strategies for data collection, analysis, and production of reports; In-depth knowledge of MIS, MEL, and development issues.
- **Accuracy and attention to detail:** High level of accuracy, attention to detail, and thoroughness. Ability to maintain a timely and efficient workflow.
- **Managing Resources:** Demonstrates the ability to plan and use resources (people and/or finance and/or physical assets) in accordance with AGRA guidelines and delegated accountability so that objectives are achieved in the most effective manner possible.
- **Coaching and Developing Staff:** A demonstrated capacity for working effectively within multi-disciplinary teams for collective success and providing effective coaching and encouraging appropriate development activities in order to support staff in identifying and meeting their training and development needs.
- **Communication and Interpersonal relations:** Exceptional communication skills and ability to represent AGRA externally at high levels.

Demonstrates ability to maintain lasting, healthy, and effective one-to-one working relationships with colleagues, suppliers, customers, professional peers, etc

- **Intercultural Sensitivity and Effectiveness:** Demonstrates ability to cross and bridge different racial, cultural, gender or business cultures. This requires and is exhibited by personal experience of international or cross-cultural business with improved achievements.
- **Teamwork:** Demonstrates productive drive in working with peers, partners, consultants, and others to achieve pre-targeted and measurable business results.

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