



Chief Executive

Description

About ActionAid International

ActionAid is an international anti-poverty agency that takes sides with poor people to end poverty and injustice together. Formed in 1972, it has grown and expanded for over 35 years and today works with more than 15 million of the world's poorest and most disadvantaged people in over 45 countries worldwide to help them fight for and gain their rights to food, shelter, work, education, healthcare and a voice in the decisions that affect their lives.

ActionAid works with over 2,000 local partners and social movements across its country programmes, making the most of their knowledge and experience to achieve lasting change to end poverty. Its partners range from small community support groups to national alliances and international networks seeking education for all, trade justice and action against HIV/AIDS. Its work with these national and international campaign networks highlights the issues that affect poor people and influences the way governments and international institutions think.

ActionAid has a unique vision and direction. It doesn't impose solutions, but works with communities over many years to strengthen their own efforts to free themselves from poverty and injustice. ActionAid constantly seeks new solutions and asks itself how it can make the greatest impact with its resources. It makes the most of its skills and abilities by working at many levels – local, national, regional and international.

In December 2003, ActionAid established a new International Secretariat based in Johannesburg, South Africa, and began the process of making its country programmes equal partners with an equal say on how they operate. The new structure breaks the mould of traditional development NGOs where donor countries took the decisions and receiving countries were expected to be largely passive. The new structure is a far-reaching transformation that helps to further strengthen AAI's accountability to the people, communities and countries we work with and make us more effective in fighting and eradicating poverty. Today ActionAid employs just over 2,400 members of staff, with around 200 members of staff working in the six main International Secretariat offices worldwide (Johannesburg, London, Brussels, Rio de Janeiro, Bangkok, Nairobi) as well as in various country programme and country regional offices.

ActionAid's values

Mutual respect – requiring us to recognise the innate worth of all people and the value of diversity.

Equity and justice – requiring us to work to ensure equal opportunity to everyone, irrespective of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, HIV status, colour, class, ethnicity, disability, location and religion.

Honesty and transparency – being accountable at all levels for the effectiveness of our actions and open in our judgements and communications with others.

Solidarity with the poor – powerless and excluded will be the only bias in our commitment to the fight against poverty.

Courage of conviction – requiring us to be creative and radical, bold and innovative, without fear of failure, in pursuit of making the greatest possible impact on the causes of poverty.

Independence from any religious or party-political affiliation.

Humility in our presentation and behaviour, recognising that we are part of a wider alliance against poverty.

Role Overview

The Chief Executive is responsible for leading the ActionAid International (AAI) Federation and managing the International Secretariat (IS). S/he has five primary areas of responsibility:

- **Building a strong, cohesive and democratic AAI Federation** of members and country programmes through the operationalization of the International Strategy and internationalisation processes and creating a strong relationship with the Chair and the International Board and between the International

Board, Management and the Assembly

- **Leading, directing and managing** the IS, ensuring that activities have a sustainable impact on communities living in poverty with whom we work with and for
- **Protecting the financial health** of the AAI Federation
- **Building a strong human resource capability** that enhances the knowledge and ability of all those working in the AAI Federation and builds a pipeline for management succession
- **Representing AAI** and increasing its profile by engaging with external stakeholders at both the international and national levels and the media

The Chief Executive is accountable to the International Board. S/he leads the Senior Leadership team (SLT) of the Secretariat while working in collaboration with members across the Federation to fulfil AAI's overall mission.

Main Responsibilities

Building a Strong Federation

- Leads the implementation of ActionAid International Strategy People's Action to End Poverty with particular emphasis on internationalisation/member development processes, programme quality through AAI's human rights-based approach and organisational effectiveness
- Manages the development, implementation and compliance with the Federation's values, vision, mission, strategies, policies, standards and systems
- Works closely with the International Board, Country Directors and SLT to implement and monitor the International Strategy and Operational Plans – ensuring coherence and integration across Strategic Objectives and functions
- Ensures adequate support to Members and Country Programs for strengthening core capacity
- Strengthens a shared and coherent approach and identity across the Federation – inspiring, motivating and engaging members and CPs
- Provides geo-political and economic analysis to anticipate shifts in the external environment that will provide both opportunity and risk for the mission of AAI including responsiveness to shifts in fundraising opportunities and the impact of changes in economic circumstances
- Demonstrates impact through transparency and accountability
- Provides support, advice and guidance to the International Board and Assembly

Leading the International Secretariat (IS)

- Ensures the IS is compliant with its constitutionally – defined mandate to build and maintain a strong AAI Federation, working closely with the International Board, SLT, Head of Internal Audit, and the Senior Leadership Advisor to achieve this
- Creates an inspirational organisational culture, and related processes, that values women's leadership and encourages all staff to contribute fully together
- Leads in the selection, structuring and management of the Senior Leadership Team to provide coherence at an international and national level
- Ensures implementation of robust systems and accountability mechanisms for organisational effectiveness that support AAI's internationalisation processes governance model and commitment to federation principles
- Leads planning processes to ensure the IS has adequate financial and human resources to deliver the IS mandate
- Ensures a streamlined capability and responsive approach to the needs of emergencies
- Ensures the appropriate allocation of IS financial and human resources to strategies and programmes that will build a strong AAI Federation

External Representation and Profile Raising

- Promotes ActionAid International's mission among external audiences
- Raises and ensures growth of ActionAid International's profile in the south and north based on the quality and strength of its work
- Positively influences external profile and brand reputation in global platforms
- Develops and maintains high level external relations, including decision makers and major donors
- Ensures that AAI is represented in significant government and institutional bodies
- Builds strategic alliances and partnerships with organisations, networks, movements and individuals seeking to achieve justice and an end to poverty

Skills and Experience

Strategic and Organisational Leadership

- At least 7 years of experience in a senior leadership position with a proven ability to lead an organisation of significant scale and complexity, and experience of managing organisational development and change
- Ability to motivate and inspire staff, volunteers and partners while demonstrating tangible results to end poverty and injustice
- A highly developed capacity to achieve organisational alignment through enabling systems and communication, prioritisation and problem solving
- Outstanding inter-personal and mediation skills in building collective commitment to a clear vision and strategy, balancing consultation and decisiveness
- Vision, flexibility and the capacity for innovation to respond to rapid change in the global environment
- Personal integrity and management experience to create a leadership culture of trust, openness and accountability for performance
- Financial management and fundraising capacities
- Proven ability to build high performing and multi-located teams through a commitment to delegation and empowerment, clarity of individual responsibilities and their related areas of personal or collective accountability

Representational Skills

- Ability and presence to represent the organisation to national, regional and international stakeholders
- Outstanding communication (speaking, writing, listening) and advocacy skills to influence at the highest political levels and engage with diverse audiences and media while able to explain specialised concepts in simple terms

International Development/Human Rights

- Good understanding of the structural causes of poverty and injustice with an experience of rights-based programming, solidarity work and campaigning, and emergency response
- Experience within social movements and grass roots activism in the South
- A good understanding of international institutions concerned with global social and economic equity and related international political developments

Personal Qualities

- Authentic and principled leadership that is both inspiring and transformational
- A commitment to ActionAid's core values – humility, courage, equality, mutual respect, human rights, solidarity and justice
- A commitment to collective leadership
- Demonstrated commitment to human and women's rights
- Sensitivity towards gender, ethnic and cultural identities and related dynamics and a commitment to transform power to the South
- Outward looking and responsive to opportunities
- Physical and emotional stamina to work under pressure
- Ability to travel up to 30 weeks annually, sometimes at short notice
- Fluent in English and capable of operating in at least 2 other languages

Meta Fields