



## Country Director

### Description

As Country Director, you will be in charge of the leadership and operations of ActionAid South Africa in its mission to work with poor and excluded people to eradicate poverty and injustice. An excellent communicator and inspiring change leader, you will provide strategic vision while enhancing team cohesion. Your passion for social justice transcends the activist-space to also include a sharp focus on movement-building by translating the Action for Global Justice Strategy 2028 into country-specific initiatives.

### About ActionAid South Africa

ActionAid South Africa (AASA) was established in May 2006 and is a part of ActionAid, a global justice federation that advances poverty eradication, gender equality and social justice by working with people living in poverty and exclusion, their communities, and people organisations and social movements in over 40 countries. In South Africa, the focus is women's and girls' rights; land and food rights; children and education; communities affected by mining; and policy advocacy and campaigns.

### About the Role

The Country Director will inspire vision, strategic leadership and financial sustainability as well as guidance to harness ActionAid's human and financial resources, partnerships, alliances and other resources in delivering the organisation's mandate in line with its values and established policies.

### Purpose of the Role

The position is central to the success of the country programme in South Africa, but also the Federation in general: working towards a world without poverty and injustice in which every person enjoys their right to a life of dignity. The Country Director has to translate the global strategy into the South African context, provide country support to peer countries and engage in regional and global initiatives. The Country Director will report to the Head of Country Support, Africa and will be the line manager for the Head of Policy and Programmes, Head of Fundraising, Head of Operations and an Executive Assistant.

### Key Responsibilities and Activities

#### Strategic Leadership

- Provide leadership for the organization's strategic direction, strategy development and reviews
- Lead and direct the activities of ActionAid South Africa ("AASA") in line with Action Aid's vision, mission, philosophy, and principles, ensuring that the Programme is responsive to the political, social and economic environment.
- Development and maintenance of a good organizational and country programme corporate identity
- Communicate with media and stakeholders to publicise the external impact of AASA's initiatives.
- Oversee the delivery of Country Programme obligations to the Federation
- Participate in working groups and international platforms and encourage a corporate perspective among staff.
- Encourage research with a view to improving the quality of Action Aid Programmes and Policy development.
- Establish, develop and maintain excellent working relationships with government, donors, partners, network alliances and civil society organizations.

#### Values Practice & Strategy Change Priorities

- Establish a culture of excellence that values experimentation and continuous improvement
- Champion feminist leadership principles and values including a commitment to diversity and inclusion (race, gender, power)
- Foster a personal and team culture that demonstrates all of AAI's Values including: Mutual Respect, Equity and Justice, Integrity, Solidarity with people Living in Poverty and Exclusion, Courage of Conviction, Independence and Humility

## Strategy Development and Implementation

- Lead the CSP development so that the strategy is relevant to national policies; constituencies; and civil society, as well as being in line with ActionAid International strategies and priorities
- Oversee the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the CSP

## Programme Management

- Ensure AASA has a well-balanced, well documented and cost-effective programme.
- Manage and encourage relationships established with specialist institutions
- Ensure all programme activities are sensitive to and responsive to changes in the political, social, and economic environments.
- Encourage the development of appropriate research with a view to improving the quality of field work and influencing change in policy to improve the quality of life for those living in poverty in the country.
- Develop and maintain appropriate contingency plans for emergencies.

## Expand the portfolio of support and secure additional funding for further business development

- Establish and maintain a strong relationship with donors, corporate sponsors and supporters.

## Operations & Finance

- Manage the financial resources allocated to or raised by the country in compliance with approved policies/ frameworks as well as the national law and donors' regulations;
- Ensure the financial integrity and accountability of South Africa in accordance with ActionAid Financial Management framework
- Provide progress and financial reports as required by the government, the governing Board/Assembly and ActionAid's accountability procedures and as required by other organisations.
- Make sure the organization has a risk identification and mitigation plan and SMT oversight

## People Management

- Appoint, develop and manage all senior staff. Ensure a high calibre of staff is recruited while promoting a gender balance in the organisation, and that optimum investments are made in their development.
- Encourage a corporate perspective amongst staff and actively promote staff exchange, secondment and development schemes, where these contribute to the meeting of ActionAid's programme objectives and priorities.

## Servicing the National Board

- Regularly communicate with the board chairperson to update the Board on strategic issues.
- Work with the global secretariat and governance for the board development and increased dual citizenship and oversight of the country programme.
- Facilitate with the existing board a membership development process for moving the country programme to associates and affiliates status
- Participate in board and committee meetings and contribute to organizational effectiveness and corporate accountability.

## Steering the Senior Management Team (SMT)

- Provide leadership to the management of the SMT
- Create an enabling environment for innovation and performance excellence for staff
- Set and ensure performance targets for Heads of departments and other relevant staff are achieved.

## Person Specification

**Experience**

- Experience at the senior management level in development work, social justice, poverty eradication and gender equality strategies with initiative, flexibility and enthusiasm in managing complex activities in a changing environment.
- Experience working as Country Director for similar organisation is an advantage.
- Experience in managing complex financial control and management systems.
- Demonstrated expertise in strategic and long-term planning and the ability to ensure that operational plans and activities meet targets and appropriately reflect longer-term perspectives.
- Proven experience of working and negotiating with Government officials and/or donors at all levels

**Essential knowledge and skills**

- Sound and up to date knowledge of development concepts, methodologies and techniques including demonstrated expertise in at least one specialist development field.
- Excellent negotiation and communication skills, including demonstrated ability to handle sensitive diplomatic and Government level negotiations on matters affecting ActionAid's South Africa country programmes.
- Sound awareness of the political, social, economic and historic environment in which ActionAid's poverty alleviation programmes are operating at both national and community levels.
- Sound grasp of feminism and feminist leadership approaches.
- Strong leadership and management skills
- Strong analytical/problem solving, and management of crisis, conflict and risk
- Fundraising skills.

**Meta Fields**