



HM Government



MEL Systems Practice Area Head



Project Background

The UK government funds over £1 billion in programming per year through the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF). Operating in over 70 countries, CSSF is central to the UK government's work overseas. CSSF has contracted Integrity Research and Consultancy, and our partner LTS-Niras, to support the development of a stronger, more agile and more sustainable 'ecosystem' for monitoring, evaluation, learning (MEL) and their application in decision-making. To achieve this we shall, among other things:

- Support CSSF in putting in place effective MEL frameworks, processes and tools, including evidence synthesis, at Fund and portfolio levels; and sharing promising practice at programme level.
- Support CSSF in developing and implementing a capability-building strategy for MEL;
- Strengthen CSSF organisational learning processes and incentives and support CSSF systems for the commissioning and use of applied research; and
- Enhance CSSF use of digital tools in MEL knowledge management.

Our theory of change envisages a stronger MEL ecosystem as one which enables CSSF to more effectively and consistently: demonstrate credible contributions to HMG priorities; use credible evidence for decision making; communicate insights transparently; and learn from its own practice.

GMEL applies an innovative approach whereby we work with the JFU and the network to co-create a responsive and utilisation-focused MEL architecture. We do this by co-designing ideas for implementation using an agile approach through stages of prototyping, testing, learning and adaptation.

This exciting programme is at the beginning of the implementation plans. We are scaling up the project team to meet the anticipated requirements. Our team is organised across different Practice Areas and Units. Practice Areas include (1) MEL Systems, (2) Collaboration, (3) Collective Capability. Our units include (1) Project Management and Coordination, (2) Data and Knowledge Management, and our Design Lab (dLab). Our team deliver a portfolio of short-term and longer-term interventions, which includes technical assistance, building CSSF network capabilities, and supporting the CSSF to demonstrate its strategic effect.

Scope of Work

We are seeking a **MEL specialist, to Head the MEL Systems Practice Area.**

As a member of the GMEL Leadership Team, you will engage regularly with the other Practice Area and Unit Heads. As the Head of the Practice Area, you will supervise and mentor MEL advisers, officers and short-term technical advisers who are delivering on a range of interventions across the GMEL portfolio. You will help coordinate and deliver a consistent approach across interventions and the team. You will also be leading or contributing to these interventions, as a technical MEL expert. Some examples of technical input delivered through the Practice Area may include:

- Supporting the evolution of portfolio level theories or change and theories of action.
- Developing and reviewing MEL frameworks and tools, enabling others to use existing or new tools.
- Supporting the development and delivery of methods appropriate to data analysis, synthesis and visualisation.
- Supporting the design, delivery and learning associated with adaptive MEL approaches and methods

- Devising useful synthesis and collations to enable analysis and responses to specific evaluative enquiry, including cross-programme questions.
- Working flexibly across a range of evaluation approaches, such as real-time, developmental, formative and summative evaluation.

You will report directly to the GMEL Team Lead, and work closely with members of the Leadership Team.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Engage with CSSF stakeholders to understand MEL systems requirements.
- Engage with the GMEL team to determine intervention and MEL priorities.
- Provide technical inputs to interventions (e.g. collaborative design and development of actor based Theories of Change, MEL frameworks, MEL plans, results frameworks, learning questions, etc.)
- Lead and support co-creation of specific interventions with CSSF stakeholders at fund and portfolio level.
- Work collaboratively with the GMEL team and CSSF stakeholders to design and deliver technical solutions to meet client needs within budget limitations.
- Oversee the delivery of bespoke and on-demand technical assistance to CSSF.
- Support the development of team structure, supporting the Team Lead to identify resourcing needs and solutions.
- Build up the practice area through strategic recruitments and engagement across the Practice Area.
- Contribute to client reporting, workplans, and risk management.
- Support the development and application of MEL capability initiatives, including training, coaching, and peer-to-peer learning.

Your Experience and Expertise

We are looking for an experienced MEL specialist with management and leadership experience to lead, manage and motivate the Practice Area team. We are particularly interested in individuals who have experience delivering innovative approaches to strengthening MEL systems – especially in highly fluid and complex contexts.

In particular:

- Minimum 10 years relevant experience, including in leadership and technical roles.
- Curiosity and drive to understand the diverse MEL needs and opportunities of different stakeholders, and the ability to develop effective MEL solutions for a geographically dispersed stakeholder community.
- Substantial experience of working collaboratively within a team and to support others relating to specific MEL technical inputs.
- Evidence of utilising quantitative, qualitative and/or mixed research and analysis methods
- Experience of working in fast-paced environments with the ability to adapt to new information, constantly reprioritise and work closely with senior government stakeholders.
- Confidence to make and take responsibility for appropriate decisions in a timely manner, and take forward with team.
- Confidence to engage with senior level stakeholders in UK and HMG country offices.

- Experience leading the design and delivery of data analysis and synthesis.
- Experience leading reviews and evaluations.
- Experience of programme cycle strengthening from design through delivery and to evaluation.
- Experience of working with government stakeholders.
- Experience leading and delivering MEL training and capacity building initiatives.
- Curiosity to use innovative methods to training and capacity building.

It is also desirable that the MEL Systems Head also has:

- Familiarity with the CSSF network
- Familiarity with actor-based models, outcome harvesting and outcome mapping.
- Experience of linking theory of change work to the development of MEL tools for complex programmatic environments, including result frameworks, progress markers, and outcome harvesting approaches
- Experience operating in Fragile and Conflict Affected States and familiarity with the CSSF network desirable.
- Experience in agile work methodologies and influencing the work of both colleagues and external stakeholders

Languages:

- Written and oral fluency in English, with the ability to write clear, distilled and compelling narrative.

Competencies

Competency	Definition
Curious	The impulse to seek new information and experiences and explore novel possibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrates genuine inquisitiveness ▪ Has a bias toward asking and learning ▪ Demonstrates an interest in others and what they might have to share
Adaptable and flexible	The ability to adjust or change to best meet the needs of the situation or environment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engages in continuous learning, adjusting the application of knowledge, skills and abilities while addressing new challenges
Creative	The impulse to understand problems and discover new opportunities and solutions for problems by looking beyond current practices and using innovative thinking. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knows when a new approach is required ▪ Introduces new ways of working ▪ Draws on the expertise of a team with a diverse range of experience and skillset
Collaborative	The ability to work co-operatively with a range of stakeholders, to be part of a team, to work together as opposed to working separately or competitively. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acts to promote a friendly climate, good morale and co-operation ▪ Works to address and resolve conflicts within the team ▪ Creates and supports opportunities for cross functional team working ▪ Relationship building

Organised	<p>The ability to plan and monitor one's own work and the work of others to ensure achievement of desired results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinates ideas and resources to achieve goals. ▪ Identifies the sequence of tasks and the resources needed to achieve a goal, and prioritises key action steps. Anticipates the impacts and risks of decisions and actions ▪ Creates realistic schedules and follows them. Evaluates progress against schedule and goal. Evaluates proposed actions and timelines against the project's theory of change
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Additional leadership and management competencies

Competency	Definition
Leadership and management	<p>The ability to lead, manage and motivate the project team and mediate any issues (including interpersonal ones) that may arise during the project. Inspires and motivates team members while keeping the project on track.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assembles the necessary resources to meet what has to be done ▪ Monitors and addresses gaps in performance ▪ Reviews work in the light of setting future objectives and leading change to meet projects needs ▪ Provides clear directions to individuals about performance expectations and checks to ensure understanding ▪ Works closely enough with team to know when issues are 'brewing' ▪ Makes sure team and others have all the necessary information to remain motivated and work effectively ▪ Clarifies issues when needed and gives explicit instructions to the team when new or different priorities emerge ▪ Prioritises team effectiveness when matching individuals to projects and tasks and gets involved in the work of the team when required ▪ Talks to the project team about team standards and goals ▪ Invites input from team members into decisions that affect them ▪ Addresses performance issues promptly and takes action to get performance back on track
Confident	<p>The ability to believe in one's own capability to accomplish a task and select an effective approach to a task or problem. Appears confident in relation to the tasks of the job and ability to complete them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Willing to ask questions and make suggestions for better ways of achieving a task ▪ Works without needing close supervision ▪ Remains calm and tactful when challenged ▪ Is confident working with others ▪ Maintains a business-like approach when unduly annoyed, disturbed or disrupted by others

Our offer/Further details

Ideally, this position will be full-time. However, we are also interested in receiving applications from candidates available at 80% or more. Ideally the candidate will have easy access to London. The successful candidate will be contracted either as a consultant, or as a two year fixed term full time appointment.



Application Process

Exercise to share along with your tailored CV: In no more than 200 words, please outline your experience in designing or delivering an adaptive and other innovative approaches to strengthening a MEL system. Please email your CV and exercise to Chris Morgan chris@intdevcv.com. CVs will be reviewed and strong candidates will be offered interviews on a rolling basis so we encourage you to apply early. Our recruitment process will close early September 2020.

