



Early Childhood Development (ECD) Advisor

JOB DESCRIPTION

Department: Programs

Program/Project: Stepping Up BRAC International's Remote Learning through Play Response

Duty Station: Freetown, Sierra Leone with frequent travel (30%) to other districts

Supervisor: Country Director, Sierra Leone

Supervisee: ECD Specialist

BRAC International

Founded in Bangladesh in 1972 as a small relief effort, BRAC is now one of the largest development organizations in the world, reaching over 100 million people living in poverty every year. In 2009, BRAC International was set up as a nonprofit foundation in the Netherlands to govern and manage BRAC's programs outside of Bangladesh. BRAC International currently operates in six countries in Africa (Liberia, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, South Sudan, and Uganda) and three countries in Asia (Afghanistan, Myanmar, and the Philippines). Our interventions aim to achieve large scale, positive changes through economic and social programmes that enable men and women to realise their potential.

About BRAC Sierra Leone

BRAC Sierra Leone is a legally registered branch of BRAC International. Since its inception in 2008, BRAC Sierra Leone has implemented various programs in youth empowerment, agriculture, health, emergency response and microfinance. In 2017, BRAC Sierra Leone was awarded the 'Best NGO for Women's Empowerment' by the Council of Chief Executives, a leading association of business leaders in Sierra Leone that is committed to sustainable economic growth and human development. Currently BRAC Sierra Leone is following an integrated approach to development across 12 districts of Sierra Leone.

About BRAC's Early Childhood Development Technical Assistance in Sierra Leone

BRAC has championed the importance of early childhood development for decades. Since the 1990s, BRAC's pre-primary programs have reached millions of children in Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Liberia, the Philippines, Tanzania, and Uganda. Building on this experience, BRAC developed the Play Lab model for quality, playful early childhood development in 2015 in partnership with the LEGO Foundation. Through the Play Lab project, BRAC has worked closely with governments in Bangladesh, Uganda, and Tanzania to strengthen national approaches to play-based learning in early childhood development.

Through this project, BRAC will work in collaboration with Right To Play, a Canadian International NGO that works with partners to integrate play-based learning into policy, curriculum and pedagogy. This project will use a technical assistance model to support Sierra Leone's Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) as it begins to implement its newly-approved Integrated ECD policy and build the education system back better in light of COVID-19. Together, BRAC and Right To Play will support the MBSSE in providing

high-quality, play-based early childhood development and primary education to children aged 3 -12. BRAC will support the MBSSE in developing quality, playful early childhood development services, while Right To Play will work at the primary level in order to provide a strong foundation in play-based learning starting in early childhood and extending throughout their early school experience.

Job Summary

The ECD Advisor(s) will provide technical leadership for the early childhood development technical assistance pilot in Sierra Leone throughout 2022 and into early 2023, with the possibility of supporting a longer-term partnership pending success of the technical assistance pilot and further fundraising efforts.

BRAC, Right To Play, and the MBSSE will co-create a detailed plan for the collaboration; the first phase will occur between January-December 2022, with the possibility of technical assistance continuing beyond this time frame. Pending agreement with the MBSSE during the project's inception phase, BRAC's activities will likely include piloting, testing, and iterating on targeted support in areas like material development, spatial design, and pre-service and in-service teacher training to strengthen play-based learning in the government's early childhood development approaches. The ECD Advisor(s) will be responsible for leading BRAC's support in these areas.

The ECD Advisor(s) will also be responsible for engaging stakeholders such as the Teaching Service Commission (TSC), Ministry of Technical and Higher Education, Global Partnership for Education, UNICEF, Education Outcomes Fund, and others to ensure that BRAC's support to play-based early childhood development builds on the existing education projects and ecosystem in Sierra Leone, and to encourage them to support the effort.

The ECD Advisor(s) will also play a key role in coordinating between BRAC and Right To Play, a core partner on the project. Right To Play will be responsible for providing support to the MBSSE on play-based learning in primary schools. The ECD Advisor(s) will ensure that BRAC and Right To Play's support to the government is aligned and facilitate an easy, child-friendly transition between early childhood and primary education.

BRAC anticipates hiring two ECD Advisors. We anticipate that one Advisor will be based out of BRAC Sierra Leone's office in Freetown and one Advisor will be embedded in the MBSSE. Both ECD Advisors will report to BRAC Sierra Leone's Country Director with additional oversight from BRAC International's Head of Early Childhood Development.

Main Responsibility of the role

The ECD Advisor(s) will lead the adaptation of BRAC's Play Lab approach in Sierra Leone by:

- Work closely with BRAC International, BRAC Institute of Educational Development, and BRAC USA's ECD experts
- Contextualize the Play Lab approaches in areas including material development and teacher training for Sierra Leone
- Actively contribute to a global repository of best practices on play based learning
- Coordinate with ECD stakeholders and technical working groups in-country to develop and maintain proactive and collaborative partnerships

- Ensure existing ECD centers receive teaching and learning materials produced by the project, as determined by the inception phase
- Conduct monitoring and training visits based on needs and activities identified in the inception phase in coordination with BRAC's monitoring department
- Collect data as necessary, maintaining a high level of confidentiality
- Promote and facilitate child rights and gender inclusion in the project
- Represent the project and BRAC Sierra Leone in relevant country-level coordination groups that focus on ECD (e.g. ECD working groups)
- Advocate effectively for Early Childhood Development and play based learning with various groups of high level stakeholders, providing evidence based knowledge
- Contribute to project reporting processes and document success stories, case studies, best practices and lessons learned
- Supervise a ECD Program Coordinator
- Other activities as determined by the inception phase may be required

Required Qualifications/Person Specifications (Experience, Knowledge and skills)

- Bachelor's degree required. Master's Degree in Early Childhood Care and Development, Education Management, Development Studies, or similar areas is strongly preferred
- At least 10 years' experience working for I/NGOs or with Governments in early childhood development, education, child protection or related programs, with experience in West Africa and Sierra Leone strongly preferred
- Strong leadership experience in at least two of the following areas related to ECD: policy development, advocacy, teacher training and/or curriculum and material development
- Experience in a supervisory role of at least 5 years, preferred
- Experience teaching early childhood education, preferred
- Experience developing training for project staff and teachers, preferred
- Excellent writing and editing skills with the ability to work under tight deadlines
- Strong communication, interpersonal, presentation and networking skills
- Proven project management skills, including coordination and facilitation
- Excellent written and oral English language
- Experience working with government ministries of education
- Knowledge of the education system in Sierra Leone strongly preferred
- Understanding of and commitment to learning through play methodologies

Skills and Competencies

- Strong strategic and creative thinking
- Demonstrated ability to take a strategic view across a large complex program
- Excellent communication and negotiation skills
- Demonstrated skills in writing, editing and reporting
- Good knowledge of financial and administrative management
- Personal commitment, drive for results, efficiency and flexibility
- Proficiency in the use of MS Office
- Ability to mobilize and influence different audiences and communities
- Able to capacity build and develop others
- Demonstrated passion for Early Childhood Development

- Commitment to the organizational vision, mission and values.

Additional notes

- The responsibilities provided in this job description are not exhaustive and may be reviewed/revised from time to time by BRAC Management to enhance achievement of the organization mission.
- In execution of these job responsibilities, the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Advisor will work very closely with the Country Director (almost daily), Head of Area Offices (almost daily), Program Coordinator (almost daily), Head of Finance, Logistics Manager, HR Officer and the program staff. The ECD Advisor will also engage consistently and share relevant reports and information with technical education/ECD experts and program leaders across BRAC entities.
- The job holder may take-on any other tasks as mutually agreed by the supervisor

Application Instructions:

If you feel you are the right match for the above-mentioned position, please follow the application instructions accordingly:

External candidates Email your CV with a letter of interest mentioning educational grades, years of experience, current and expected salary to recruitmentAfrica.bi@brac.net

BRAC is committed to safeguarding children, young people and adults, and expects all employees and volunteers to share the same commitment. We believe every stakeholder and every member of the communities we work with has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, harassment, and exploitation - regardless of age, race, religion, and gender, status as an individual with a disability or ethnic origin. Therefore, our recruitment policy and procedure include extensive background checks and disclosure of criminal records in order to ensure safeguarding to the fullest extent.

BRAC is an equal opportunities employer