

Senior Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, Results, and Learning (MEARL) Officer at PASGR

Background

The Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) is a Pan-African organization established in 2011 in Nairobi, Kenya. Currently engaged in more than 20 African countries, PASGR works to enhance research excellence in governance and public policy that contributes to the wellbeing of women and men. Working in partnership with individual academics and researchers; higher education; research thinks tanks; civil society organizations; and policy actors.

PASGR supports production and dissemination of policy relevant research; designs and delivers a suite of short professional development courses for researchers and policy actors; and facilitates the development of collaborative higher education programmes. PASGR's work is defined by excellence and quality at the highest international standards, innovative pedagogy and attention to gender equity and diversity.

PASGR has designed a Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEARL) strategy, its implementation plan, the results framework and dashboard based on OECD DAC criteria principles. The MEARL strategy, its implementation plan, the results framework and dashboard are critical for tracking, assessing and reporting progress as well as harnessing lessons from emerging intentional and unintentional results to enhance the expected impact of PASGR's Programmes. The Senior MEARL Officer will work closely with programme teams, and will be responsible for implementation of the MEARL Strategy, its implementation plan and the result framework for respective programme teams and the organization as a whole. S/he will report to the Executive Director at PASGR.

The Position

We are recruiting a Senior MEARL officer to help us gather, interpret, use, and communicate evidence on the impact of a growing portfolio of activities across our Programmes.

Informed by the OECD DAC criteria principles, the incumbent will oversee the collection and communication of meaningful, high-quality data about PASGR's interventions; ensuring the organisation's activities remain informed by evidence and aligned with its evolving strategic objectives; and generally maintaining and improving the organisation's MEARL processes.

The Senior MEARL Officer is also responsible for leading the development, optimisation and utility of the effectiveness PASGR's Results Management IT based systems (the Management Information System and the Results Framework Dashboard) as well playing a lead role in strengthening PASGR's documentation and dissemination of its results and learning. S/he will also support processes for the implementation of evaluation activities for PASGR ensuring strong linkages between results, communication and learning, and will be key in ensuring that PASGR develops and maintains a strong MEARL focus. Working with programme teams, s/he will assist them to clarify outputs, outcomes, develop and implement MEARL plans and develop their monitoring and evaluation capacity.

In collaboration with the heads of programmes, the Senior MEARL officer will also coach, motivate and guide the programme teams to enhance their performance and results delivery in line with the OECD DAC criteria principles. Capacity building of users of the Results Management IT based systems (e.g., the Management Information System and the Results Framework Dashboard) is an important part of this job and the Senior MEARL Officer will lead in coaching and troubleshooting support activities for the different, internal and external, user groups.

Within the MEARL team, the Senior MEARL Officer will be responsible for ensuring that the Results Management IT based systems facilitate and simplify the use of PASGR's Theory of Change, the related programme and project results chains and other programme and project information by the different user groups for more effective decision making.

The measure of success will be that the different user groups (programme teams, senior management team (SMT), the Board, donors, and strategic partners) get their specific and relevant results information in a timely manner, with ease and convenience, and are engaged in using the results for their work.

Roles and Responsibilities

Strategic Planning and Management

- Lead in evidence-based strategy development processes, including programme design, theory of change and programme logical framework, incorporated as relevant in fundraising proposals; updated as needed on the basis of emerging evidence.
- Facilitate the development and implementation of strategic planning, MEARL frameworks, approaches, and annual plans with programme leadership, staff and partners.
- Facilitate active engagement and ownership of PASGR's strategic planning and MEARL processes by programme staff and partners, providing support as needed.
- Contribute to the development of appropriate MEARL methodologies, tools and processes in collaboration with PASGR's staff and partners, and aligned with PASGR's strategic plan.
- Supervise and coach the MEARL officer and assistant to build their capacity to perform their responsibilities and eventually take up additional responsibilities.
- In conjunction with the policy engagement and communication outreach team, develop and maintain networks with organisations and programmes in relation to measuring the results PASGR's core work, share information from PASGR and bring lessons and solutions to share with PASGR colleagues.
- Manage, mentor and motivate a strong team of results professionals, ensuring adequate capacity is developed for succession planning across the different programme teams.
- Contribute to MEARL capacity building for PASGR's staff and partners, including support and coordination of a MEARL community of practice to enable shared exploration and strengthening of tools, practices and processes.

Programmes Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability & Reporting

- Support development and implementation of monitoring, evaluation and accountability plans.
- Provide internal quality assurance for monitoring, evaluation and accountability standards with respect to evaluations commissioned by PASGR.
- Review and provide timely feedback on monitoring, evaluation and accountability outputs, such as inception report, draft report, and draft final report for individual evaluations.

- Liaise with the programme teams and policy engagement and communications outreach team to ensure lessons learnt and outcomes from evaluations are communicated internally and externally.
- Ensure storage and retrieval of all monitoring, evaluation and accountability reports within PASGR management information system.
- Ensure timely monitoring of the implementation of the programme activities in accordance with annual operating plans.
- Prepare monthly MEARL update reports, regular implementation reports and analyses as required, and produce different analytical tables corresponding to reporting and MEARL requirements.
- Ensure the timely collection of MEARL data (according to the tools and written reporting procedures).
- Administer all databases used for MEARL
- Assist in the regular collection of results for the project process indicators, with participation of management and relevant programme team staff.
- Document and track innovative strategies/best practices/new approaches.
- Lead development of quality assurance systems for the project to ensure data quality.
- Ensure appropriate data collection tools and systems are in place and are being used correctly by staff and partners to collect required and accurate data for performance and MEARL.
- Identify the MEARL technical assistance (TA) needs of programme teams and provide/organise TA through training and mentorship, with support from management.
- Design and coordinate annual (or as needed) data collection tools and processes with programme staff and partners to ensure timeliness, consistency and quality.
- Lead consolidation and write up for donor reporting, communications and other organisational needs, including IBP's organisational results framework.
- Lead in identifying priority evaluation questions and evaluation approach, including internal and external evaluations, as relevant; undertake internal assessment, and co-create and manage external evaluations, as required.

The Results Framework

- Development and maintenance of PASGR's organisational results framework, ensuring alignment with programme results frameworks and monitoring processes; develop annual results reports and/or other related products. The created results frameworks must be relevant, robust, and serve the informational needs of the programme (internal learning and external communications and donor reporting).
- Lead in developing systems for tracking and reporting the progress of attaining the results of the PASGR Results Framework and link these with reporting by the Results Dashboard.
- Lead the process of updating the PASGR Results Framework when necessary.

The Management Information System (MIS) & IT Development

- Provide guidance to the system developers so that the MIS is adapted to the technical requirements and user needs of PASGR. To succeed, user needs will be identified, user groups designated and then the system adapted accordingly with elegance, ease of use and practicality as the objective.
- Lead in the process of developing and implementing strategies for getting all the data necessary and ensuring that it is uploaded into the system and kept up to date. Specifically, the officer will be required to produce quarterly periodic reports to be used for strategic decision making within PASGR by senior management teams.

- In close collaboration with other programme team members, provide support to staff and partners in enhancing the quality of the data in the system.
- Lead in the development and implementation of capacity building and coaching activities for all users so that their capacity in using the system is maximised.
- Collaborate with the IT team in the development and adoption of IT systems and infrastructure that is harmonized and mutually compatible for reporting results.
- Identify and bring into the MEARL team innovative and emergent IT tools and systems that make Results Management more effective (e.g. mobile data collection technology and web-based survey tools).
- Provide technical input into PASGR IT project activities.

The Results Reporting Dashboard

- Provide guidance to the system developer so that the Results Dashboard is developed and adapted to the technical requirements and user needs of PASGR. To succeed, the system will be complimentary and well linked to the MIS, the data required will be easy to collect and the user interface will be practical, elegant and easy to use.
- In close collaboration with programme teams, develop and implement strategies for getting relevant and appropriate data for the dashboard to be accurate, effective and up to date.
- Develop and present quarterly reports on PASGR targets and results derived from the results meter on a quarterly basis. Also, develop specific strategic reports for the Board and donors.
- In close collaboration with programme teams, provide support to staff and partners in enhancing the quality of the data collected and put in the system.
- Lead in the development and implementation of capacity building and coaching activities for all users so that their capacity in using the system is maximised.
- Work with programme teams and partners to develop project level results chains, develop and implement MEARL plans.
- Work with programme teams to analyse progress across the PASGR portfolio and prepare information to contribute to management processes.
- Lead/facilitate evaluative activities such as the development and review of theories of change; collection, analysis and presentation of qualitative and quantitative data; and learning activities such as after-action reviews, development and maintenance of critical incident maps, development of case studies, annual reviews and evaluations.

Learning, Engagements and Communication

- Priority learning questions and learning approach, including annual (or as needed) review and reflection spaces, and agreed upon learning products; support programme staff to create a participatory learning culture actively involving partners and other relevant stakeholders.
- Coordinate with programmes and communications teams to ensure alignment between external communications, donor proposals/reporting, and strategic planning and MEARL processes and products.
- Contribute to effective knowledge management practices and systems, ensuring alignment and compatibility with all programs, as well as fundraising and communications priorities.
- Lead or support (as relevant) organisational assessments, evidence reviews, learning syntheses or other evidence generating processes or products.
- Support and facilitate organisational strategy and learning processes and spaces, ensuring inclusivity and participation while ensuring engagement with evidence and insights from PASGR's and external sources.

- Facilitate and support evidence gathering and learning processes that address programme priorities and enable strategic and adaptive management, as well as documentation and sharing of progress and lessons with PASGR's and external audiences, including funders.
- Ensure that robust, practical, relevant, and participatory strategic planning and MEARL methodologies, tools, practices, and processes generate meaningful evidence and insights that inform programme strategic adaptation and other relevant decision making; develop and implement uptake and engagement plans for all assessments, evaluations, case studies, learning products, and other MEARL processes and products.

Other Responsibilities

- Participate in and facilitate meetings and spaces for staff to coordinate and co-create tools, practices, processes, and evidence.
- Participate in team and organisational planning and retreats, annual personnel reviews.
- Support an organisational culture that aligns with PASGR's principles.
- As assigned by the Executive Director.

Academic and Professional Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in social, economic, political sciences, public policy, strategic management and planning, data science and statistics or development studies.
- Master's in public policy strategic management and planning, data science and statistics, economics with a bias on planning and development.
- Formal training and certification in monitoring and evaluation systems, approaches (quantitative and qualitative) and methodologies.

Work Experience

- Minimum 8 years of experience in developing, implementing and managing MEARL frameworks and systems for governance, advocacy, or development organisations and multi-country programmes is required.
- Experience in project management and in managing monitoring and evaluation systems and teams on large development programmes, including sound knowledge of different monitoring and evaluation approaches and methods, their strengths and weaknesses.
- Experience in developing clear outcomes, indicators and measurement plans and in developing and using evaluation tools such as questionnaires, interview guides and assessment rubrics, and demonstrated experience in designing and delivering training based on adult learning methods are essential.
- Field experience with data collection and implementing programme MEARL strongly preferred.
- Demonstrated experience with MEARL (including appropriate tools and methodologies) for complex, politically informed and adaptive programming is required.
- Familiarity with data (quantitative and qualitative) analytics (e.g., STATA, R, Atlas, Nvivo, etc), survey tools (Kobo, Survey CTO, CSO Pro etc), database software (e.g., Power BI, Ms Access) and data visualization software is required.

Additional Skills

- Strong ability to find innovative and practical solutions to complex problems.
- Proven ability to work as a change agent within a programme, identify and implement innovative solutions to overcome resistance to MEARL approaches.
- Excellent conceptual and analytical skills, including ability to do aggregate analysis, develop accurate interpretations and draw conclusions from information.

- Excellent oral and written communication skills in English and Swahili with proficiency in conveying complex and technical processes and ideas to diverse audiences.
- Demonstrable capability to communicate technical information to non-experts is essential.
- Good networking, interpersonal and relationship building skills and demonstrated ability to work constructively with people from different professional disciplines and personal backgrounds. Ability to work independently and to seek assistance with projects as required.
- Strong team management and team working skills, including patience and listening skills. Ability to supervise staff and delegate work effectively. Staff/consultant, project and financial management skills.
- Attention to detail and strong organisational, and critical thinking skills.
- Commitment to the PASGR's mission and values.

How to apply:

Applicants who meet the requirements stated above should send their completed application form and detailed CV's with a daytime telephone number to email address: recruitment@pasgr.org with **SENIOR MEARL OFFICER** on the subject line by **22nd August 2022**.

NB: Only candidates shortlisted for interview will be contacted.