



Associate Program Officer – Policy & Partnerships

Location: Lilongwe, Malawi

Job Reference: APO-PP/PD/MW/01/2025

AGRA and its Work to Transform Agriculture

AGRA is an African-led institution that actively supports the drive towards inclusive agricultural transformation and sustainable food systems. We do this by empowering the continent's 33 million smallholder farming households to transform their agriculture from a struggle to survive to profitable businesses. The continent's farmers regularly face challenges, and we aspire to provide uniquely African solutions that respond to their agricultural and environmental challenges, leading to increased harvests for reduced hunger and more income.

Working in alignment with the development priorities of our focus countries, we enable farmers to access improved and high-yielding seeds, gain knowledge on sustainable farming, and linkages to profitable markets. In our work, we aspire to build the alliances, partnerships, and networks required to drive an inclusive agricultural transformation. We work with our partners to create an equitable youth-friendly environment that harnesses the youth dividend on the continent to drive growth and facilitate open employment opportunities for young women and men. We achieve our key objectives through a focus on the following four areas of intervention:

1. Policy and state capability - We support governments in creating an enabling environment for private sector involvement in agricultural transformation.
2. Seed systems – We trigger higher productivity by increasing the availability and access to improved seeds by farmers allowing them to increase their harvests for food security and better incomes.
3. Sustainable farming – We support farmers in building resilient farming systems for sustained high yields through interventions such as mechanization and irrigation.
4. Inclusive markets and trade – We work to increase the linkages between farmers, and other market actors for a positive, sustained cycle of commercialization and reinvestment.

Why Join Us?

People are the heartbeat of our organization and remain the true drivers of our delivery, impact, and success. We have cultivated a workplace that fuels Depth in Collaboration, Excellence in Execution, Constructive Engagements, and a spirit of being Increasingly Entrepreneurial; all underpinned by our cherished I-RISE Values (Integrity, Respect, Innovation, Stewardship and Equity)

We work with incredible people and partners who have roots in farming communities across the African continent combined with an inclusive, diverse, and talented workforce from over 25 nationalities. Our commitment to a call to action goes beyond ourselves as we arise to catalyze African Food Systems transformation and improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers.

We are looking for people who are passionate about being part of a mission-driven team that is making a real difference on the continent; love to work on cutting edge Ag technologies; and able to grow their skills, expertise, and experience career growth, while enjoying very competitive compensation and benefits.

Are you ready to embark on this exciting transformative journey with us?



The Position

Associate Program Officer – Policy & Partnerships Job Reference: APO-PP/PD/MW/01/2025

The Associate Program Officer – Policy & Partnerships will be responsible for policy and partnerships engagements resulting in cluster development and operations bringing together key stakeholders from the District Level up to the National level for effective coordination. The role will identify critical policy issues for unlocking and critical partnerships to strengthen which will lead to agricultural transformation in the region by promoting cluster participation, brokering relationships, facilitating advocacy and ongoing collaborations, learning, and monitoring and evaluation.

S/He will support Program Officers in executing country implementation plans through management of programmatic grant activities. The role will involve identifying policy bottlenecks affecting the private sector and liaising with government and relevant authorities to ensure policy challenges are brought to their attention for action and are unlocked. The officer will manage stakeholder engagements with relevant National and Local government, technical private sector partners, development partners and other institutional partners to fulfil programmatic development and management.

Key Duties and Responsibilities:

- Develop and nurture an extensive range of professional networks and policy dialogue with senior government and collaborate with other players to create synergies between AGRA funded programs and other agricultural initiatives.
- Represents AGRA at grantees fora and liaises with project focal staff for areas where special attention/alignment is needed.
- Supports the Country Office to assess and identify capacity needs and gaps in grantees ability to implement projects.
- Supports the Program Management Officer in implementing the specified MACI project activities in accordance with approved annual work plans jointly formulated with the beneficiaries.
- Documents and knowledge-sharing of the success stories, best practices and lessons learnt.
- Supports in assessing grant portfolio to ensure grantees are implementing project in accordance with the contractual agreement.
- Oversees capacity building of grantees in data capturing, management and reporting.
- Creates regular periodic reports as may be required by AGRA and the donor.
- Assists in assessing projects to help identify and resolve Project issues, thus ensuring the Project stays on schedule and within budget.
- Support the program management officer in managing MACI project, including its partners to ensure timely delivery of results.
- Select consultants to conduct a rapid landscape mapping for each priority value chain of market anchor companies and major stakeholders highlighting opportunities for expansion, innovation, increased purchases from smallholder farmers and job creation for youth.



- Work with the program management officer and partners to identify priority value chain opportunities and challenges that could be addressed either through industry or government collaboration, and improved linkages with other private actors.
- Support program officer in the supervision of implementing partners through developing and implementing market-driven action plans for agro-processing, including technical assistance, capacity building, technology transfer, quality improvement, product development, certification, branding, and marketing.
- Identify and prioritize policy bottlenecks affecting development of the clusters.
- Engage the government as required to support the strengthening of sector coordination in a way that it works for the job-creating and smallholder-farmer supporting private sector.
- Support the program officer in gathering evidence, lessons and learnings from different players/actors and disseminating these to wider stakeholders, develop feedback loop and tracking adjustments in approaches, policies, ways of working etc

Key Qualifications and Experience required:

- A first degree in Agriculture, Agricultural Economics, Economics, Food Technology, Public Finance, Public Administration, Business Administration, Law or related discipline,
- Experience in working on policy engagement with government and similar organizations e.g. development institutions, donor institutions is essential
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills with a team orientation and strong collaborative skills
- Problem-solving skills and a motivation to improve policies and procedures systematically.
- Excellent organizational skills, commitment to accuracy and to maintaining a timely and efficient work flow, and extremely detail-oriented with the ability to work under pressure.
- Experience in establishing effective partnerships and relationship within the unit and across boundaries in the organization.
- Ability to understand client needs and customize information to best suit those needs.
- Experience in policy engagement, managing partnerships, agri-business and development efforts in Africa

Behavioral Competencies

- Ability to drive collaboration through inclusive and agile teaming, breaking siloes, sharing information celebrating joint successes.
- Ability to execute excellently by delivering high-quality work at speed, committing to decisions and plans, and increasing accountability to deliver impact at scale.
- Ability to be sincerely constructive in interactions with others by demonstrating trust, sincerity, and care, in recognition of our joint purpose.
- Ability be increasingly entrepreneurial by breaking hierarchies, embracing learning and innovation to unlock the potential of diversity and ideas.

If you believe you are the right candidate for this position, kindly submit your application with a detailed CV (including your e-mail and telephone contacts) to recruit@agra.org. Please quote the job reference number in the subject line of the application e-mail.



Applications must be received on or before 11th February, 2025. Due to the large volumes of applications, we usually receive, we will only be able to contact those candidates who are shortlisted.