

UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office, Nairobi Senior Operations Manager, P-5

The fundamental and primary mission of UNICEF is to promote the rights of every child, everywhere, in everything the organization does — in programs, in advocacy and in operations. The equity strategy, emphasizing the most disadvantaged and excluded children and families, translates this commitment to children’s rights into action. For UNICEF, equity means that all children have an opportunity to survive, develop and reach their full potential, without discrimination, bias or favoritism. To the degree that any child has an unequal chance in life — in its social, political, economic, civic and cultural dimensions — her or his rights are violated. There is growing evidence that investing in child survival, education and protection of a society’s most disadvantaged citizens — addressing inequity — not only will give all children the opportunity to fulfill their potential but also will lead to sustained growth and stability of countries. This is why the focus on equity is so vital. It accelerates progress towards realizing the human rights of all children, which is the universal mandate of UNICEF, as outlined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, while also supporting the equitable development of nations.

The Operations function is a strategic Business Partner role within the senior Management team, assuring the best use of UNICEF assets in alignment with sound management practices, office priorities and goals to deliver results for children.

The Senior Operations Manager, at the P-5 level, is reporting to the Deputy Regional Director, D-1 in the Regional Office.

Purpose of the Job

The Senior Operations Manager supports the Deputy Regional Director in the management of resources and organizational assets ensuring effective planning and control as well as efficiency and economy of implementation and utilization of such resources and assets as well as the adequate management of risks.

As a Strategic Business Partner and regional advisor, the incumbent will be responsible to lead for results, drive change, provide risk informed, solution-focused analysis, advice and services and contribute to programme and management decisions for delivering results for children in all operational contexts within the Regional office and provide technical leadership and guidance for Operations in all countries and field offices within the region.

The incumbent is responsible for supporting initiatives of change and avoidance of duplications in all areas of collaboration between Programmes and Operations including liaison with key stakeholders in the Country and Regional Offices in order to contribute to the improvement and effectiveness of implementation of UNICEF mandate.

Key functions, accountabilities, and related duties and tasks

Valuing People: Lead, manage and develop people resources to promote technical competence and foster career progression and retention of a “fit for purpose”/ agile workforce for the Operations function:

- Champion an environment of management excellence and staff well-being through implementation of HR strategy, policies, regulations and rules.
- Provide proactive solutions and regional expert advice to the RMT on operations staff management and office culture.
- Define and foster operations behaviors that focus on delivering results for children, whilst balancing risk informed decisions, policy compliance and flexibility through which partners’ needs are reliably addressed, to create an avenue for the greatest results.
- Implement training strategies and requisite plans to bring about changes in knowledge, skills, abilities and mind sets for Operations staff across functions and offices.
- Keep abreast of industry standards in management and finance. Institutionalize and share best practices and knowledge learned with global colleagues to contribute to organizational development initiatives to strengthen management and operations.
- Promote and support Excellence in Operations by refining the evolving profession in UNICEF derived from the five strategic pillars.

Valuing Money: Champion strategic resources to achieve organizational goals and ensure Value for Money (VfM)

- Execute regional strategies to optimize use of resources across Value for Money (VfM) areas, including eco-efficiency and inclusivity, common premises, costing, results-based budgeting financial monitoring, etc.
- Advise and enhance knowledge of Business Units and senior leadership on their role in generating VfM with the goal of strategically expanding its use to major UNICEF functions.
- Lead the financial oversight, monitoring and reporting of regional programme budgets - and where applicable private sector fundraising budgets; make analysis and recommendations for Regional Director and Deputy Regional Director to take risk informed decisions.
- Advise and lead in the valuing of resources through programme financing modalities such as budgeting and pre-financing modalities for supplies, cash-based transfer, etc. along with key government counterparts.

Valuing Risk Management: Enhance Risk Management to increase organizational performance and strengthen internal control

- Act as change agent in promoting and supporting the new ways of properly addressing financial and programmatic risks, and the transformation of operational model.
- Promotes structured cross-regional exchanges and enhances organizational efficiency, effectiveness, learning and to ensure effective enterprise-wide risk implementation.

- Ensure the region is equipped with the right skills and up-to-date information to make operational and programme risk informed decisions and improve performance, with the support of the enterprise Governance, Risk and Compliance (eGRC) platform.
- Maintain and protect UNICEF organizational resilience and enhance staff safety and security by ensuring operational disaster risks address threats through well-formulated and tested business continuity plans and Emergency Preparedness and Response to humanitarian situations.
- Provide feedback on new policy, procedures and internal controls to Policy owners in HQ Divisions as appropriate.
- Review internal controls and policies/guidance included in the Regulatory Framework, provide oversight of appropriate implementation of policies and procedures and work with DFAM to formulate policy and internal controls change propositions as appropriate.
- Identify and implement mandatory anti-fraud systems, processes and actions, and share anti-fraud achievements within the regional and country offices.
- Advise on mitigation of risks of engagement with external partners via appropriate, risk-informed due diligence (where appropriate).

Valuing Systems and Structures: Ensure further operational centralization and optimization for maximized efficiency gains

- Support the Simplification and modernization of management related processes in collaboration with respective stakeholders and the senior management.
- Identify strategic issues and key bottlenecks within programmes and operations area of collaboration that impacts results for children and engage in identification of solutions and innovations that support efficiency and effectiveness of UNICEF programmes.
- Provide technical advice and support in contributing to making decisions on budgets and operational issues during the deliberations at corporate committees (PBR, RMTs, etc) and ensure timely submission of all required consolidated budget documentation.
- Analyze and review key business processes to minimize cost, simplify and reduce duplication of work and maximize efficiencies while creating an environment of smart controls, to render the organization agile, resilient and ready to respond to programme needs.
- Connect the Operations community and identify/implement ways to develop staff with the skills to optimize systems, explore new ways of working - including in the context of SG Reform – and continuously improve IT-enabled business processes to increase productivity and collaboration, better knowledge management, and ensure effective use of UNICEF assets.

Valuing Partners: Strengthening internal and external-facing partnerships and leveraging UNICEF's oversight and understanding of programmatic financial management.

- Advise on establishment and maintenance of effective government counterpart relations. Coordinates and advises to resolve issues pertaining to conditions of service,

operational facilities and privileges within the context of the Basic Cooperation Agreement.

- Promote capacity building of government counterparts to ensure adherence to financial regulations and rules pertaining to Cash Assistance.
- Support the engagement with stakeholders across UNICEF to address programmes vis-a-vis operations repositioning, while addressing the identified bottlenecks.
- Communicate with key stakeholders to proactively ensure organizational understanding of the intended outcomes of change initiatives.
- Contribute to development of action plans and follow up on stakeholders' engagement to address the bottlenecks, document best practices and ensure efficient and timely implementation of such actions.
- Build trusted relationships with stakeholders, gathering feedback and timely addressing issues and concerns from implementation.
- Connect with teams working on Global Change initiatives and identify/implement a systematic way of cross learning and knowledge sharing of best practices to improve current and future change initiatives.
- Support the analysis of programmes and operational practices across offices, and map synergies and/or duplications in processes, strategies and approaches.
- Support the UNICEF Community regionally on issues related to Business Operations Strategies (BOS), Common Back Office (CBO), Common Premises and Mutual Recognition

Impact of Results

The ability of the Senior Operations Manager to effectively lead, and oversee the operations functions across a region for the efficient delivery of related services, directly impact on program performance resource mobilization and delivery of results for children. This in turn contributes to maintaining/enhancing the credibility of UNICEF as an effective and responsible manager of funds entrusted to the organization and to furthering UNICEF's image as a competent organization for delivering cost effective and sustainable program results in regular and emergency settings.

The ability of the Senior Operations Manager to comprehensively and timely identify, assess, mitigate, monitor, review and report on the most significant risks that could potentially harm the organization, is a critical element of UNICEF's risk and internal control performance management framework. Risk management skills are necessary to safeguard UNICEF's resources, continuity of operations and reputation to fulfill our primary mission to save and protect children, globally.

UNICEF Values and Competencies Required

Core Values

- Care
- Respect
- Integrity
- Trust
- Accountability
- Sustainability

Core Competencies

- Nurtures, Leads and Manages People (2)
- Demonstrates Self Awareness and Ethical Awareness (2)
- Works Collaboratively with others (2)
- Builds and Maintains Partnerships (2)
- Innovates and Embraces Change (2)
- Thinks and Acts Strategically (2)
- Drive to achieve impactful results (2)
- Manages ambiguity and complexity (2)

Recruitment Qualifications

Education: An Advanced University Degree (Master's and above) in one of the following areas is required: Business Administration; Financial management; Accounting; Public Finance; and Operations related function

Experience: A minimum of 10 years of professional experience, at the national and international level, is required, specifically in advocating and implementing strategic organizational initiatives in one or more operations management area including budget; financial management and reporting; facilities management; administration; supply and logistics management; information and communication technology; human resources.

Additional experience in one or more of the following areas, would be desired:

- Audit and investigations
 - Safety and security
 - Grant Management
 - Enterprise Risk Management
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- Experience in a UN system agency, large private or public company, or experience working in a developing country and/or humanitarian/ emergency context is an asset.
 - Experience in working with corporate ERPs (Enterprise Resource Planning) and IPSAS (International Public Sector Accounting Standards) is highly desirable.
 - Experience in Results Based Management is a requirement.
 - Experience in managing successful client-oriented work units is an asset.
 - Experience in co-creating policy is desirable.

- Prior experience working with diverse and executive level stakeholder groups or multi-stakeholder partnerships is highly desirable.
- Previous hands on experience in strategic and managerial leadership, preferably in a multi-office context, is required.
- Familiarity with Microsoft Office applications is required.

Language: Fluency in English is required. Knowledge of French or Portuguese is an asset.