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Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme

Programme Policy Officer (Cash-Based Transfers)

Programme Unit

Bamako, Mali Country Office

TERMS OF REFERENCE

ABOUT WFP

The World Food Programme (WFP) is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide. We are currently seeking for a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) to fill the position of Programme Policy Officer (Cash-Based Transfers) with our Programme Unit based in Bamako, Mali.

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

In Mali, the combined effects of frequent drought and increased insecurity have contributed to a progressive deterioration of livelihoods. Beyond recurrent natural and human-caused shocks, other key challenges include high demographic growth, widespread poverty and underemployment and the degradation of the agro-ecological resource base. The Country Office (CO) Mali has embarked on a new five-year Country Strategic Plan (CSP) (2020-2024) built around three interconnected pillars to support building absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities of vulnerable communities and the national system. Under the CSP, WFP maintains the capacity to respond to emergency needs while it increases the focus on developing government emergency response and preparedness capacity and fostering increased resilience.

- (1) Pillar 1 focuses on assisting shock and crisis-affected vulnerable people through an integrated and conflict-sensitive food and nutrition assistance package.
- (2) Pillar 2 relates to building the resilience of individuals, households and communities. The shift towards recovery and development is addressed by working with decentralized authorities in planning, budgeting and implementation. In line with WFP's Sahel resilience scale-up strategy, WFP aims to support lifting the most vulnerable out of extreme vulnerability and encouraging their progressive integration into broader economic and social systems. This includes investments in human and social capital, through school feeding (strategic outcome 2) and nutrition interventions (strategic outcome 3). Livelihood and value chain support (strategic outcome 4) are a central component, strengthening financial, physical and natural capital. WFP will integrate its interventions with those of other partners, especially the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), to reinforce community resilience.

- (3) The enabling pillar 3 leverages WFP's expertise and operational capacity to help shape and institutionalize the emerging social protection system and reinforce national emergency response and preparedness systems (strategic outcome 5) and the broader articulation.

Based on experience and a series of analyses, WFP has progressively shifted towards an increase in the use of Cash-Based Transfers (CBTs). The transfer value has increased from almost 1 million USD in 2012 to over 30 million USD in 2019 making Mali one of WFP's biggest CBT operations globally and the second biggest one in the region. WFP reached almost 800,000 beneficiaries in Mali last year through CBTs. When the CO Mali first introduced CBTs, they were mainly used in emergency interventions. Since then WFP has implemented them progressively across various activities to contribute directly to the achievement of WFP's strategic objectives and strategic results. These activities include general food distribution, nutrition, school feeding and food assistance for assets. The choice of transfer modality (in-kind, CBTs or commodity vouchers) is always carefully made based on a contextual and feasibility analysis. Within the framework of its approach and its risk mitigation strategy, WFP uses different transfer mechanisms (a combination of transfer agents, account ownerships and payment instruments) and technological solutions and electronic systems, working through local partner networks and ensuring strong transparency during distributions. Discussions and analytical work is ongoing around multi-purpose cash approaches. As the CO Mali moves towards its new CSP and as the country is part of the corporate L3 Central Sahel emergency and facing the risk of an even larger scale and longer-term emergency, it is important to consolidate the systems and ensure WFP's position and knowledge management around CBT as a contribution to national capacity development and strengthened preparedness.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Title of Post:** Programme Policy Officer (Cash-Based Transfers)
- **Grade:** P2
- **Supervisor:** Head of Programme
- **Unit:** Programme
- **Division/Country Office:** CO Mali
- **Duty Station:** Bamako, Mali
- **Duration of assignment:** Two years

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the direct supervision of the Head of Programme and the indirect supervision of the Deputy Country Director, the JPO will provide technical and operational support as well as strategic direction for CBTs. Specifically, the JPO will perform the following responsibilities:

- (1) Coordinate the planning and implementation of the CBT programme management cycle on technical aspects and strategic orientation incl. the drafting or review of standard operating procedures, based on WFP's corporate CBT guidance (Business Process Model, RACI Matrix, Manual) at CO level and provide project management support to specific and defined programmes and projects of considerable size/complexity at Field Office (FO) level. Support the coordination of SCOPE activities to ensure smooth implementation of CBTs where corporate solutions are being utilised. This includes field missions to provide adequate support on the ground.
- (2) Coordinate the organisation of CBT multi-sectoral capacity and feasibility assessments to select the most suitable transfer modality/-ies and ensure the implementation of all the follow up actions and that they are always up to date.
- (3) Coordinate data gathering, analysis, monitoring and reporting systems ensuring that rigorous quality standards are maintained and that it feeds into the broader debate and reflexion on CBTs. This includes a) Research and analyse a range of CBT issues (including efficiency

- and effectiveness) to inform the decision making; b) Contribute to the preparation of accurate and timely reporting on CBT programmes and activities that enable informed decision making and consistency of information presented to stakeholders; c) Coordinate lessons learned processes and identification of best practice and ensure relevant analyses; d) Establish dashboards and support outcome managers on decision making on transfer modalities and mechanisms.
- (4) Liaise with internal and external counterparts to ensure effective collaboration and coordination, monitor ongoing CBT projects and highlight potential collaboration. This includes a) Participation in the different coordination platforms (Cash Working Group, National Safety Net Working Group, etc.); b) Foster exchange with CBT Coordinators in neighbouring countries in the region (particularly Niger and Burkina Faso) and replicate best practices and innovations; c) Support the implementation of a coordinated/harmonized approach to CBTs with UN agencies and other partners, including the adoption of joint analysis tools and transfer values and modalities (Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB), Essential Needs Approach (ENA), etc.); d) Support the work on joint operational tools, including WFP's service provision.
 - (5) Support the set up and delivery of the most cost-efficient and effective partnerships to implement the CBT programme. This involves a) Support Procurement to build and maintain relationships with financial service providers, local authorities, and implementing partners; negotiate and advice on local agreements; and review CBT contracts and standard operating procedures in close collaboration with HQ Legal Unit and CO staff; b) Support the identification, development and management of potential partnerships with financial service providers to sustain delivery capacity and define entry points for financial inclusion; c) Set up partnerships with key actors of CBTs (UNICEF, HCR, NGOs, etc.) to move towards more integrated multi-purpose cash models.
 - (6) Support the capacity building of WFP staff, partners and national government to prepare for and respond to food assistance needs with CBTs, e.g. through designing training materials, simulation scenarios for emergencies, organisation of training workshops and engagement in various programmatic initiatives etc.
 - (7) Support the set up and development of innovative tools and approaches, including technological solutions to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of CBT programmes, nutrition sensitive CBTs, etc.
 - (8) Provide policy advice and technical assistance to government on CBTs and national safety nets within the framework of the definition of norms and standards and other harmonization and integration of shock response and social protection systems and tools, in a view of supporting the building of an adaptive social protection system.
 - (9) Ensure documentation of all CBT-related key activities and learning points and produce knowledge products in order to facilitate replication of best practices. Provide access to knowledge to all relevant staff.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Annual work plan in place for the design, set-up, and implementation of the CBT programme management cycle;
- The CBT design including multi-sectoral capacity assessments and follow up actions are carried out and are regularly reviewed;
- Data gathering, analysis, monitoring and reporting systems are in place with monthly reports produced, a research and knowledge management agenda identified, and all necessary reports produced;

- Cost efficient and effective partnerships are in place to implement the CBT operation, and monitoring and performance review mechanisms are set up;
- Trainings are organized for staff at CO and FO level and partners and tools are in place;
- Linkage between the government's work on the definition of norms and standards of safety nets and WFP's work on CBT and the humanitarian community (including on ENA/MEB) is ensured and capitalisation taken into account, in support of the Programme Policy Officers;
- The internal and external cash working groups are effectively coordinated.

ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Advanced University degree in International Affairs, Economics, Nutrition/Health, Agriculture, Environmental Science, Social Sciences or other field relevant to international development assistance, or First University Degree with additional years of related work experience and/or trainings/courses;
- Two to three years post graduate, progressively responsible work experience in humanitarian and/or development settings; experience in emergency preparedness would be an advantage;
- Experience and expertise with CBTs, knowledge of corporate CBT guidance of WFP would be an advantage;
- Good understanding of food security programmes and use of CBT and its contribution to the programme objectives;
- Good knowledge of the overall discussions on safety nets and positions of other partners (World Bank, bilateral donors, etc.) and good partnership skills;
- Proficiency in English and French in both oral and written communication (level C) is essential;
- Proficiency in Windows MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook).

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS

To perform the wide range of tasks and excel in this position, the ideal candidate would also possess:

- Exposure to the international arena either by direct work for an international institution/organization; or, if working for a national entity, by way of interacting with international stakeholders;
- Intermediate level of one, or more, of the following official languages: French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Portuguese;
- WFP's international professionals are required to serve in different locations around the world during the course of their career (including in hardship duty stations); willingness to be mobile would maximise opportunities for long-term retention into the organization.

SUPERVISION

The JPO will be working under the direct supervision of the Head of Programme. The supervisor will provide guidance on the CO's and Programme Unit's priorities and share existing experience and documentation which will serve as basis for the revision and development of new products. The JPO will collaborate with other colleagues from thematic units in the Programme Unit and other functional units (Finance, Supply Chain, VAM, M&E, Security and IT) sharing responsibilities and receiving inputs from institutional experience/memory as required.

TRAINING COMPONENTS

Besides regular on-the-job training and coaching, the JPO will benefit from WFP's revised CBT corporate guidance and cross-functional e-learning training courses. The JPO will gain hands-on operational experience in planning, implementing and reporting on CBT implementation in humanitarian and emergency settings. The supervisor will also be able to make recommendations

for external learning and training sources, which the JPO could attend with the support of the annual JPO training budget (e.g. in the area of social protection or financial inclusion).

LEARNING ELEMENTS

At the end of the two-year assignment, the JPO should have obtained:

- Very good ability to design, implement, monitor and provide oversight over effective and efficient programmes deploying different transfer modalities (in-kind, CBT, commodity voucher). While the position will focus mainly on CBTs, exposure to in-kind transfers is important for a better understanding of all WFP's transfer modalities.
- Very good knowledge of CBT concepts, technical aspects and current policy debates.
- Very good knowledge of WFP's CBT policy, approach and implementation tools, as well as knowledge of approaches and available CBT tools of other UN agencies and NGOs.
- Ability to adapt existing guidelines and materials to capacity building needs of a variety of target groups.
- Capacity to coordinate across different actors to reach a common objective.
- Understanding of opportunities for linkages between WFP's approach to CBT and national government priorities.
- Understanding of key CBT emergency preparedness, readiness and response activities.
- General understanding of WFP overall operations and activities in the area of CBT programme design and preliminary operational capacity in COs.
- Practical experience in carrying out assessments required to set-up a quality CBT transfer/and related programme design.
- Practical experience in setting up a CBT operation and exposure to field locations.
- Understanding of typical difficulties and bottlenecks that are encountered in a WFP CBT operation and how to overcome them.
- Experience in monitoring CBT and adapting programmes accordingly.
- Good general understanding of WFP's overall operations and activities in the region of assignment.

Saving Lives
Changing Lives