Introduction

The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) is an integrated set of activities funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) intended to provide timely, accurate, evidence-based, and transparent food security early warning information and analysis. Created in 1985 in response to famines in East and West Africa, FEWS NET provides global coverage through a mix of presence and remote monitoring. FEWS NET’s work is implemented across several pillars by a team of partners that includes NASA, NOAA, USGS, Kimetrica, and Chemonics International (Chemonics). Chemonics implements FEWS NET’s integrated emergency food insecurity analysis through a Washington-based technical office and more than 20 field offices.

Based on in-depth understanding of local livelihoods, FEWS NET analysts monitor information and data on factors that affect food security, such as weather conditions and climate, crops, pasture, markets and trade, and nutrition. FEWS NET produces regular reports, including Food Security Outlooks and Outlook Updates, emergency alerts, market and price updates, and global weather hazards. FEWS NET makes reports available at www.fews.net and distributes them globally to governments, relief agencies, and other organizations engaged in humanitarian response and development programs.

The seventh phase of FEWS NET (FEWS NET 7) began in 2019 and relies on close collaboration with international, regional, and national partners on food security analysis and reinforcement of food security networks. Major activities include joint monitoring and assessments, data exchanges, collaborative analysis and report writing, and technical capacity strengthening. FEWS NET supports local and regional food security networks to contribute to achieving the global objective of food security for all.

Background

FEWS NET food security analyses, early warning of threats to food security, and food assistance decision-support depend on an understanding of livelihoods and household economies. The Regional Food Security Specialist – Livelihoods (RFSS – LH) will liaise extensively with HEA working groups throughout the region and must be able to articulate the FEWS NET livelihood approach to partners.

Position Description

The RFSS-LH for East Africa will work with the East Africa Regional Representative (RR), the rest of the East Africa regional team, the country teams in the region, and partners to design, execute, and coordinate regional activities in livelihoods and HEA. These will include supporting the preparation of regional decision-support products, providing technical assistance and guidance to country teams, and strengthening capacity to conduct relevant livelihoods analysis both inside and outside FEWS NET. The RFSS-LH for East Africa will contribute to providing high-quality and effective early warning of threats to food security and support efforts to mitigate food insecurity and prevent food crises through the provision of actionable, evidence-based food security analysis.

Responsibilities

The main responsibilities of the RFSS-LH for East Africa will include, but are not limited to:
Monitoring, analysis, and reporting

- Maintaining relevant regional technical databases built from input from national offices and from regional partners
- Contributing to monitoring of countries in the region, including directly carrying out monitoring activities through field assessments in both presence and non-presence countries
- Providing high quality and effective early warning of threats to food security and supporting efforts to mitigate food insecurity and prevent food crises through the effective communication of actionable, evidence-based food security analysis
- Providing livelihoods-related inputs into monthly reporting requirements in a timely and quality manner, including leveraging outcome analyses and other livelihoods analyses to contribute to Food Security Outlooks (FSOs) and FSO Updates
- Contributing to other FEWS NET information products required regionally and by the Washington-based technical team
- Providing sector-specific briefings to the US Government and other partners in the region, as requested

Technical capacity development and guidance

- Supporting national offices in the region in maintaining a livelihoods knowledge base composed of, at a minimum, livelihood zone profiles, sub-national seasonal monitoring calendars, and technical databases relevant to maintain livelihoods profiles and/or baselines
- Providing guidance and ad hoc technical assistance to the region and to the project by supporting HEA and food security analysis
- Collaborating with regional and international partners in food security monitoring and analysis through the implementation of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) protocols, including providing technical support in the use of HEA within those protocols
- Supporting capacity building efforts in livelihoods-based analysis for FEWS NET and partner staff

Leadership, representation, and liaison

- Overseeing livelihoods activities in the region and participating in strategic planning
- Seeking collaboration with regional partners to enhance the quality and impact of livelihoods work
- Representing FEWS NET technical expertise at regional HEA meetings and analyses
- Assisting the RR in carrying out other technical, management, and representational functions of the regional office upon request

Qualifications

- Fluency in English is required, local language skills are desirable
- Advanced university degree (Master’s degree or higher) in a discipline that is directly relevant to household/food economy and food security, including economics, agricultural economics, social science, etc. is required; directly related professional experience can substitute for educational experience
- At least three years of relevant regional experience in an HEA-related field with direct applications in food security and early warning is required
- Significant experience working with food security information systems, food security analysis, pastoral livelihoods, food security in the context of conflict, or other related fields is desirable
- Demonstrated ability to effectively conduct rapid assessments, focus group discussions, key information interviews, and other rapid rural appraisal techniques is required
Demonstrated ability to work and coordinate effectively with regional partners and stakeholders is required

Experience leading capacity building activities is desirable

Excellent communication and interpersonal skills are required

Excellent analytical and report-writing skills are required

Strong computer skills are desirable

Location and Reporting

This position is based in Nairobi, Kenya. The RFSS-LH for East Africa will work under the technical direction and supervision of the East Africa Regional Representative (RR). S/He may be required to supervise technical assistants and short-term consultants and act as interim RR, as delegated by the RR. The RFSS-LH will assist the RR in providing technical oversight for FEWS NET’s country representatives in the region. The RFSS-LH will be required to travel frequently within East Africa, and other international travel may also be required, security permitting.

Selection Criteria

Candidates will be evaluated against the following core competencies and technical skills.

Core Competencies

- Relevancy of education to the work of FEWS NET
- English language ability (spoken and written)
- Presentation skills
- Computer skills
- Evidence of working with and coordinating partners, networking and collaboration
- Coordination and representational experience
- Evidence of working independently and in different context/countries in East Africa

Technical Skills (depth of understanding and experience on the following topics)

- Food security
- Livelihoods and the Household Economy Approach (HEA)
- Markets and trade
- Agro-climatology (agro-meteorology, remote sensing, GIS, etc.)
- Nutrition
- Agricultural sciences (crops, livestock, pasture, etc.)
- Field assessments (quantitative and/or qualitative)
- IPC analyses

Application Information

Chemonics International Inc. is looking for individuals who have a passion for making a difference in the lives of people around the world and demonstrate leadership, versatility, and integrity in their work. The full job description for the RFSS – LH position can be found at [www.fews.net/vacancies](http://www.fews.net/vacancies). Interested candidates should fill out the general information form and upload their CV and a cover letter here: [https://fewsnet.formstack.com/forms/ rfss_ea_fewsnet](https://fewsnet.formstack.com/forms/rfss_ea_fewsnet) by October 29, 2019.

All application materials, including responses to the general information form, CVs, and cover letters, should be provided in English. The position is based Nairobi, Kenya and is open to all qualified Kenyan candidates or work permit holders. No telephone inquiries. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.