Introduction

The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is a leading global provider of objective, evidence-based food security information and analysis. Created in 1985 in response to famines in East and West Africa, the project provides global coverage with a mix of presence and remote monitoring countries. The FEWS NET implementing team includes NASA, NOAA, USGS, USDA, Kimetrica, and Chemonics International, which manages the 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 the Food Security Outlook and Outlook Updates, emergency alerts, market and price updates, and global weather hazards. The project also produces specialized research products on food security drivers and crosscutting issues such as climate change and resilience. FEWS NET makes all 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 ongoing third phase of FEWS NET (2012-2018) 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 training. FEWS NET supports local and regional food security networks to contribute to achieving the global objective of food security for all.

Context

The goal of the FEWS NET Decision and Planning Support Group (DPSG) is to provide decision makers with timely and high-quality early warning and food security analysis to mitigate food insecurity and prevent famine. The Deputy Decision Support Advisor has two main areas of responsibility related to achievement of this goal. These are:

1. Serve as a food security analyst for a small portfolio of countries (~60% of LOE).
2. Support the Decision Support Advisor to manage the Decision Support Group (~40% of LOE).

Specific duties

1. Serve as a food security analyst for a small portfolio of countries (~60% of LOE). Specific duties include:
   a. Synthesizing market and trade, nutrition, livelihoods, and other food security analysis for the development of regular, high-quality early warning information products. Illustrative tasks include the review of field-authored food security reporting (primarily for presence countries), contribution to the monthly Food Assistance Outlook Brief for senior Food for Peace staff, development and presentation of technical briefings to USG staff and other partners, and field visits to support assessments and technical analysis.
   b. Responding to ad hoc requests for food security and response planning analysis and other support for response and contingency planning processes. When potential or ongoing food security crises are identified, the Food Security Analyst will play a lead role in developing
analytical and decision-support strategies to effectively develop and communicate pertinent information on the crises, their causes, and potential response options to decision makers.

c. Provide technical assistance to strengthen data collection, analysis, and information dissemination capacity among host-country, NGO, and donor partners and field staff. The Food Security Analyst will provide relevant technical and geographic guidance in their areas of expertise (e.g. agricultural economics, livelihoods, nutrition, pastoralism/ livestock, etc.) and lead/contribute to the development of guidance materials in the areas of early warning, decision support, and reporting. S/he will also support activities to enhance field representatives’ and partners’ understanding of food security early warning and decision support processes.

2. Support the Decision Support Advisor to manage the Decision Support Group (~40% of LOE). Key areas of support include:

   a. Support the production and delivery of high-quality, targeted, regular and ad hoc decision support, including written reports and briefings.
   b. Contribute, as necessary, to response and contingency planning processes.
   c. Assist with the development of guidance and capacity building efforts related to decision support.
   d. Assist with management of DSG staff and Group administration.

Location and reporting

The Deputy Decision Support Advisor is based in the FEWS NET Home Office in Washington, D.C., and will travel to the field as required to provide periodic in-country support. The Deputy Advisor reports directly to the FEWS NET Decision Support Advisor.

Qualifications

The Deputy Decision Support Advisor must meet, at a minimum, the following qualifications:

- Graduate degree in food security or disaster management-related area or equivalent experience.
- 5 years of relevant experience in food security, humanitarian and/or development assistance, contingency and response planning, and decision support.
- Minimum five years of experience working in developing countries.
- Significant experience with early warning analysis.
- Detailed knowledge of, and experience with, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC).
- Strong household-level food security analysis skills.
- Excellent writing and presentation skills.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to work well with field-based, local staff via telephone and e-mail.
- Excellent computer skills, including GIS.
- Authorization to work in the United States.
- Fluency in written and spoken French or Spanish highly desired.
- Staff management experience highly desired.
- Experience with USAID Washington and field operations, programs, policies, and procedures preferred.