

Country Director

Position Summary

IPA seeks a Country Director to oversee its Francophone West Africa operations in Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast and Mali. The Country Director will be based in either Abidjan or Ouagadougou with travels to the other Country Offices periodically based on project requirements (representing a 20% expectation for travel). The Country Director will work with IPA Global and key stakeholders to set the strategic direction for IPA in these countries and oversee multiple simultaneous impact evaluations in a variety of sectors, including governance, gender empowerment, financial inclusion, education and public health. The position provides the opportunity to guide the research program in three countries, spend time in the field, direct in-country operations and to interact closely with academic researchers, local government agencies, donors, and other NGOs.

The Country Director, assisted by his/her management team and more broadly a team of permanent staff and hundreds of short term field staff at any given time, will provide overarching oversight to all project and office operations in the three countries, lead strategic planning for the country program, oversee finance and operations teams, build and strengthen systems for high quality data collection, provide capacity building of local staff and partners, and lead the dissemination of results to local practitioners and policy makers. The Country Director will also contribute to IPA's continued expansion by initiating new partnerships and projects in the countries and be a key player in the growth of the three country offices.

The position requires close interaction with academic researchers, donors, local government agencies, and other Implementing Partners. The Country Director will be assisted by a Management Team comprising an Associate Policy Director, 3 (Senior) Research Managers, 2 Policy and RFE Managers, an Operations Manager, and the FWA Security Advisor. The larger team is composed of local and international permanent staff, and up to hundreds of short-term field staff at any given time.

Responsibilities

Oversee high-quality research 30%

- Oversee and manage a team composed of Research Managers/Coordinators, (Senior) Research Associates, and Field Managers, whose responsibilities include project design,

management of data collection, data management and analysis, and writing of research reports, all in close collaboration with the Principal Investigators;

- Build systems and structures to ensure that the implementation of research activities follows IPA's research quality standards and processes and Principal Investigator's directions;
- Spearhead skills training and resource/information sharing for staff; and
- Work to incorporate best practices and lessons learned in research and operations by other IPA offices and research affiliates.

Policy impact and external relations 30%

- Oversee and manage a team composed of Associate Policy Director, Policy Managers/Coordinator, and (Senior) Policy Associates;
- Represent IPA to national and local government agencies and partner organizations. Manage relationships with current and potential IPA partner organizations and donors;
- Develop and maintain relationships with implementing partners, the government and academia for the country office to maximize its impact;
- Engage government partners and other stakeholders to identify research questions of interest and cultivate potential research projects in those areas;
- Oversee capacity building of local development partners in evidence-based policy making and rigorous impact evaluations;
- Manage relationships with academic institutions and researchers;
- Develop and expand collaborations with local researchers; and
- Oversee targeted dissemination, encourage scale up of successful interventions.

Ensure sound operations and finances 25%

- Provide supervision and support to administrative staff, overseeing human resources, IT, procurement, operations, and finance.
- With support from the Global Finance and Grants team, ensure compliance with financial procedures, approve expenditures, and make accurate spending projections
- Oversee the management of project budgets and donor reporting, with support from the Research Manager, Research Coordinator, and administrative staff, and in coordination with IPA's global grants team.
- Ensure that country office structures are supported by incoming revenue through country office budget planning and management.

New project development 10%

- In dialogue with potential partners and Principal Investigators, identify and develop potential projects with meaningful research and policy implications;
- Participate in project design and lead budgeting during the proposal stage to ensure evaluations meet IPA standards and follow- IPA's policies and procedures and coordinate fundraising for project proposals

Mitigate and manage risks 5%

- Set security standards and parameters for work to ensure staff safety and security;
- Monitor security concerns for IPA operations in country, review project-specific security plans before the start of field work, and act as primary contact in crisis management;
- Oversee and guide the work of the FWA security advisor;
- Take steps to mitigate risks and to safeguard the organization's reputation;
- Oversee procurement, safety, billing and security and ensure organizational legal compliance; and ensure overall compliance with IPA policies, donor requirements, and the law.

Qualifications

Required

- A minimum of 5-7 years of relevant work experience, including 3 years in a management position; preferably experience in research and policy engagement
- Experience in developing research projects, experience with budgeting and project planning
- Experience living and working in Africa
- Master's degree in development economics, international affairs, international public policy, or field related to international economic development

Preferred

- Demonstrated ability to lead large teams and multiple projects
- Strong quantitative skills and familiarity with randomized controlled trials is an added

advantage

- Passion for connecting rigorous research to policy makers and practitioners and communicating what works in development
- Commitment to leading a diverse team in a multicultural environment and building staff capacity
- Ability to communicate effectively across cultures with multiple stakeholders including international and local academic researchers, government officials, NGO partners, enumeration teams, and study participants
- Significant exposure to human resources and financial management
- Experience in grants and contracts management, preferably in a research setting
- Excellent management and organizational skills and ability to work independently
- Flexible, self-motivating, able to manage multiple tasks efficiently, and a team player
- Experience in managing social unrest or volatile countries
- Strong oral and written communication skills

Reports to

Regional Director, West Africa

Deadline to Apply

May 17th, 2024

Location

Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire

Application Instructions

[Click here](#) to apply now.

About IPA

Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) is a research and policy nonprofit that discovers and promotes effective solutions to global poverty problems. IPA brings together researchers and decision-makers to design, rigorously evaluate, and refine these solutions and their applications, ensuring that the evidence created is used to improve the lives of the world's poor. In recent decades, trillions of dollars have been spent on programs designed to reduce global poverty, but clear evidence of which programs succeed is rare, and when evidence does exist, decision-makers often do not know about it. IPA exists to bring together leading researchers and these decision-makers to ensure that the evidence we create leads to a tangible impact on the world. Since its founding in 2002, IPA has worked with over 600 leading academics to conduct over 900 evaluations in 52 countries. This research has informed hundreds of successful programs that now impact millions of individuals worldwide.

IPA's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI)

As an organization, IPA is dedicated to improving the lives of the world's most vulnerable populations through evidence and policy. We also recognize how important it is for our staff to reflect the diversity of the places where we work and the communities we work with. As such, IPA is committed to hiring from a diverse pool of candidates, from a range of backgrounds, beliefs, experiences, and perspectives. We know that this makes our work stronger and more responsive to the challenges faced by those we work with and for and we encourage people from historically underrepresented groups to apply. Click [here](#) to learn more about IPA's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Innovations for Poverty Action is an affirmative action-equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, protected veteran status, or any other protected class. IPA will endeavor to make a reasonable accommodation to a qualified applicant with a disability unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of our business. If you believe you require such assistance to complete this form or to participate in an interview, please contact us at jobs@poverty-action.org or via phone at 1-202-386-6200. The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of the work to be performed by the specified position. The statements are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all possible duties, tasks, and responsibilities. Management reserves the right to amend and change responsibilities to meet organizational needs as necessary. Please note that IPA will never request any form of payment from an applicant. Applicants are encouraged to confirm the information listed above with IPA prior to releasing any extensive personal information to the organization. Please direct questions to jobs@poverty-action.org. Please note that only qualified applicants will be contacted by the hiring manager.