

Mothers' Union Director of Global Programmes



'The programme is life changing. . . it gives you a new (lease of) life. We have learnt to read and write so it has opened our eyes. We can read the Bible and give glory to God. We make money and can feed and clothe ourselves and our children. We have bought land and have built our own houses. We (women) have become the light of our families.'

An MU leader in the Diocese of Matana, Burundi, reflecting on our Literacy and Financial Education programme



Who we are

Mothers' Union is a global Christian movement working to transform lives, strengthen families and advocate for change. Through kindness, faith and compassionate action, our members work to create a better tomorrow, where everyone can thrive.

International development at Mothers' Union

Active for nearly 150 years and now with 4 million members in 84 countries we have extraordinary reach.

Our approach is in line with development best practice – our members serve in their local communities, have strong, established relationships, and are there for the long term. This combined with their Christian faith perspective enables transformation in the communities they serve.

Our membership is amazing. They put their faith into action by doing what is needed, where it is needed, as volunteers. They are supported by a small team of professionals.

We aim to capture at least a snapshot of the breadth and depth of the ongoing community activities each year. In addition, the central team supports and attracts funding for a portfolio of programmes which are aligned with the 3 key pillars of Mothers' Union (MU) work, as identified by members, of stopping violence, poverty and injustice.

These programmes are all designed on Asset Based Community Transformation (“ABC”) principles, with a participative approach – so facilitators are trained to enable groups to identify their own solutions to issues, as well as the problems themselves. This helps to ensure that solutions are implementable and sustainable, long after the funded programme work has ended and enables women to thrive in challenging circumstances. Increasingly, the programmes also aim to help to shift culture, to create more inclusive communities long-term.

Whilst MU does not proselytize, all programmes use bible study and stories to help people to discover their own capabilities and to inspire them to take action.

Currently, the programme work is particularly strong in the area of “stopping poverty”, through a participatory literacy and a savings programme. Core programmes are also in place in the areas of gender-based violence, and parenting. All programmes are contextualized by local teams to their specific circumstances, and learning is regularly shared, to enable the programmes to evolve and become stronger in the light of experience.



How we are changing

In 2019, leaders from around the world came together to formulate a vision for the future, and future ways of working, based on insights from over 200,000 members (a process called Mothers' Union Listens, Observes and Acts ("MULOA")). As well as identifying the 3 core pillars (described above), the decision was taken that the movement wanted to evolve into an interconnected network of equals, supported and enabled by a small central team. All work since then has been designed to work towards this, and a key next stage will be to develop leadership training and pathways which enable each provincial team to become increasingly autonomous.

Particular challenges for the role going forward

MU's development work has always been designed and developed with and through members, with delivery predominantly through a network of volunteers, supported by a core of paid workers. This bottom-up, member-led approach is part of our DNA and we now want to take this further, by helping to increase local capacity and capability.

Historically, our development work was enabled by donations from our UK membership - paying salaries for community workers to support and co-ordinate the army of MU volunteers, providing vehicles etc. The shared vision, however, is to enable each province to sustain its own core structure. Now all our programmatic work is funded by grant. To support this we have over the last two years developed a programme management cycle process. Effort will need to be sustained to build the pipeline with the membership and wider networks.

At the same time we have been working with international colleagues to build capacity and capability to enable local ownership and expertise to identify fundable work, develop the information necessary to secure funding, manage the delivery of the programmes and report on them appropriately. The post holder will need to lead in developing a model which involves the evolution of the local country teams with appropriate support from the central team.

Across all of the programmes, and indeed across all of our community work, there is a need to strengthen our MERL capacity, so we can more effectively communicate the impact of the work on multiple dimensions, consistently, to attract improved funding and partners.



CASE STUDY:

Burundi – Literacy and Financial Education Programme

Since 2000, to combat poverty, promote gender equality and women's empowerment, we have been running a literacy and financial education programme in Burundi. Over this time, 144,000 (89% of them women) have learnt to read and write to a nationally approved standard. Through this community-led programme, they have also enriched their lives and empowered their communities. In partnership with Five Talents, it was extended to encompass financial and business education with 6,200 savings and loan associations mobilised and 90% of the women involved starting a business and 88% of them having increased personal income.





Job Description

The role reports to the CEO and is a member of the Senior Leadership Team (CEO, Director of Fundraising, Marketing and Communications, Director of Membership, Director of Finance and this role). Responsibilities include:

- To directly line manage the Global Programmes team, currently 4, based in London, supplemented at present by 3 fixed term contractors.
- To oversee the annual budget setting process and management of the development budget (circa £600,000 per year).
- To provide leadership to the network of Provincial Community Development Coordinators (PCDCs), currently numbering 10 staff, some partially or fully funded by the centre.
- To oversee the programme management cycle process, ensuring an ongoing pipeline of programmes ready for fundraising; monitoring, evaluation and reporting of all established programs to time, quality and budget.
- To direct the ongoing evolution of MU programme development pathways and sharing of learning across programmes and countries, reflecting the priorities of the membership.
- To plan and deliver a programme of leadership development for volunteer and remunerated leaders in key countries, which enables and empowers them to increase their autonomy and build local capacity.
- To lead on the development of new strategic partnerships from a technical perspective, liaising closely as required with the Director of Fundraising, Communications and Retail.
- To represent Mothers' Union as required in the International Development and Anglican Communion spaces.
- To ensure that contextualised safeguarding policies and procedures are in place in all countries where MU is active, including clear processes for reporting as required to the central charity.
- To ensure that affiliation agreements are in place with all provinces with whom the central charity has an active relationship; that these are up-to-date, and make clear the services which affiliated provinces receive; the standards which are expected; and a commitment to an agreed, specified annual contribution towards the funding of the overall movement through the central charity.
- To participate actively in the evolution of the central charity as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Essential Experience

- Substantial international development experience, including knowledge of using ABC transformation/participatory approaches.
- Commitment to, or experience of, building local capacity in a contextually appropriate way.
- Experience of putting in place a clearly structured approach to programmes, to ensure they are appropriately managed, structured, and professionalized while maintaining a relational approach.
- Experience of growing existing successful programmes and developing new ones.



Desirable Experience

- Expertise in one or more of the MU programmatic areas – stopping violence (specifically gender based violence), poverty and injustice.
- Expertise in developing and delivering appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems.
- Experience of working in a highly networked organization and through volunteers.
- An understanding of the dynamics within the Anglican Communion.
- Personal experience of successful fundraising.



Personal attributes

- High level of cultural sensitivity, able to adapt to very different cultural contexts.
- Empathetic, with an ability to read and adapt to different interpersonal dynamics and facilitate groups.
- Credible to engage with members and stakeholders at a range of levels, from local community to Archbishops and Board members.
- A strong focus on delivery, but also able to think strategically.
- Expertise and creativity to ensure that programme design and delivery is rigorous, but allows for the “messiness” inherent in truly community owned programmes that lead to sustainability.
- Flexibility and creativity to make the most effective use of team resources, and to prioritise to ensure that delivery to quality and time is feasible.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills.
- Ability to travel circa 4 weeks of the year.
- Practising Christian, comfortable with the use of bible stories in programme facilitation.

There is an Occupational Requirement for the post-holder to be a practising Christian as per exemptions in The Equality Act 2010 (Schedule 9).





Terms & Conditions

LOCATION: Mothers Union will carefully consider flexible working patterns where possible, though regular physical presence at our head office in Tufton Street, London SW1P 3RP will be necessary. Current practice is for an average of 2 days per week in the office, with Tuesday being an “anchor” day when all come in.

HOURS: Full-time - 35 hours a week. Some availability at other locations and outside of normal working hours will be required.

SALARY: Circa £65K

HOLIDAY: 25 days plus all Bank Holidays.

How to Apply

Mothers' Union is working with Macaulay Search to make this appointment.

Applications should be sent by email to sam.stephens@macaulaysearch.com

The closing date for applications is 5 pm on 8th November 2024. Your application should comprise:

- A full CV including a full employment history showing responsibilities held and relevant achievements.
- A covering note of not more than one and a half pages summarising your motivation, the career and personal experiences that prepare you for the role and describing how your Christian faith has shaped your life and leadership.

The Process

A selection of candidates will be invited to a first interview online on the afternoons of 28th or 29th November. A second round of interviews, which will be in person, is scheduled for the 9 December. Those invited for second interview will also be asked to lead a participatory exercise online in the week before. You can expect to hear from Macaulay Search if you have been invited for interview by 18th November.

Thank you for prayerfully considering this role.