

TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Senior) Programme Manager, Think Tanks (TTs) Support Programme

LOCATION: Remote, anywhere in the Sahel region or West Africa

POSITION TYPE: Full-time, 12-month renewable

About GDN

The [Global Development Network \(GDN\)](#) is a public international organisation that supports high quality, policy-oriented, social science research in Low- and Middle-Income Countries, to promote better lives. We help connect researchers and research institutions to financial resources, global networking, research management support, access to information, training, peer review and mentoring. Founded in 1999, GDN is currently headquartered in New Delhi, with an office in Clermont-Ferrand, France.

Position Summary

The role of Think Tanks Support Programme Manager at GDN is crucial in supporting the institutional development and growth of think tanks in the Sahel region, with a focus on their regional integration into the broader West Africa region and beyond. The programme aims to strengthen the public role of think tanks by fostering evidence-based debates to drive policy change and improvement within the Sahel.

The Programme Manager will report to the Director of GDN's Research and Programmes and will collaborate closely with colleagues dedicated to understanding and strengthening research capacities in Francophone Africa. They will be responsible for designing and overseeing calls for institutional capacity-building grants, as well as organising regional events and networking activities. This role involves facilitating open communication among participating think tanks, mobilising experts and mentors, monitoring the implementation of grants, and supporting the sustainability of the programme through donor outreach and engagement.

Additionally, the Programme Manager will lead the strategic and logistical planning of the regional ['Evidence Fairs'](#).

Fluency in French and English is a must. The position is remote and based in the Sahel/West Africa region. International travel up to 25 days a year may be required.

Core Responsibilities

The key areas where the (Senior) Programme Manager can have a significant impact on the success of GDN, based on their current responsibilities and areas of expertise, are as follows:

- **Think Tank Selection:** Streamlining the selection process to efficiently identify eligible and impactful think tanks.
- **Collaboration Promotion:** Facilitating communication and creating a collaborative environment among think tanks for cross-learning and networking.
- **Expert and Mentor Engagement:** Mobilising top-tier experts, mentors, and advisors to offer valuable support and guidance.
- **Grant Management:** Coordinating grants and monitoring project progress for successful implementation.
- **Impact Evaluation:** Contributing to the development of a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to measure think tank impact across various dimensions.
- **Event Organisation:** Leading the organisation of 'Evidence Fairs' to facilitate knowledge exchange among think tanks, policymakers, and civil society.
- **Success Story Collection:** Gathering and presenting compelling narratives that demonstrate the programme's positive impact on think tanks and policy outcomes.
- **Donor engagement:** Collaborating with the Francophone Africa team and GDN's senior management to build a network of donors and partners to advance the sustainability of international think tank support programmes, as part of a continental initiative to enhance research capacity for better development debates and policies.

By focusing on these core responsibilities, the (Senior) Programme Manager will drive innovation and contribute to GDN's mission of empowering think tanks and promoting evidence-based policy making.

Achievable Goals: Based on the core responsibilities, the following achievable goals have been defined:

- **Foster Network Growth:** Establish a strong network among participating think tanks, encouraging collaboration, knowledge exchange, and peer learning opportunities.
- **Strengthen Impact:** Implement effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the progress and impact of supported think tanks, enabling data-driven decision-making.
- **Expand Outreach:** Increase the visibility and reach of the programme by exploring new partnerships, collaborations, and dissemination channels.
- **Improve Reporting:** Develop comprehensive and visually appealing program reports, showcasing the achievements, lessons learned, and stories of change.
- **Strengthen Donor Coordination:** Create opportunities to catalyse donors interested in think tanks as agents of positive change in the region, and build partnership with like-minded organisations to maximise the impact of international support flowing to the region.

Exploring New Opportunities: Considering the achievable goals, the (Senior) Programme Manager will explore the following professional and personal opportunities:

- **Programme Design Innovation:** Identify opportunities to introduce innovative approaches and methodologies in supporting think tanks, such as incorporating technology or leveraging new data sources.
- **Thought Leadership Development:** Explore opportunities to contribute to the discourse on think tank effectiveness, capacity building, and policy influence through research papers, publications, or participation in relevant conferences and events.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Seek avenues to engage policymakers, civil society organisations, and academia to foster dialogue, collaboration, and evidence-based decision-making.

- **Leveraging Partnerships:** Explore potential collaborations with other organisations, donor agencies, and regional networks to amplify the program's impact and sustainability.
- **Building Expertise:** Continuously enhance knowledge and understanding of think tank dynamics, policy research methodologies, and emerging trends in the field.

By aligning the core responsibilities, achievable goals, and exploration of new opportunities, the (Senior) Programme Manager will significantly contribute to the success of GDN and advance their professional growth within the organisation.

Desired Profile

Experience and Education

- A Master's degree in a relevant field, such as international development, social sciences, or a related discipline.
- At least 5 years (or 7 for senior level hire) of experience managing complex international research support programmes, combining grantmaking, event management and donor relations.
- Deep knowledge of the Sahel and West Africa region, demonstrable through publication, previous successful on-the-ground professional experience and a track record of partnerships building and networks.
- Previous experience leading regional events, including fundraising and coordinating all aspects of event implementation.
- Experience working in the field of international development, with a strong understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by developing countries.
- Experience working with diverse stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, and researchers.

Skills

- Fluency in both French and English. Fluency in Portuguese and Arabic is an asset.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to build strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders.

- Strong organisation and time management skills, with the ability to prioritise tasks and meet deadlines.
- Excellent writing skills for drafting reports, presentations, and other programme documents.
- Proficiency in using spreadsheets and collaborative project management tools to track progress, manage budgets, and analyse implementation data.

Salary Range and Duration of Contract

The successful candidate will be offered a 12-month contract, with a two-month probation period, renewable based on satisfactory performance and availability of funds. The salary will be competitive for the region.

Application Process

Interested candidates should submit the following:

- Up-to-date Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- A cover letter detailing the applicant's motivation for applying for this position, and addressing the experience, education and skill requirements detailed above (please assume we have read your CV carefully, do not repeat the same information)
- Contact details of at least three professional references
- A short essay (up to 500 words) answering the question: "What enables think tanks in the Sahel to make a contribution to regional development?"

All applications must be submitted to jobs@gdn.int with the subject line "Think Tank Support in the Sahel – Programme Manager – [Your Name]". We are actively accepting and reviewing applications on a **rolling basis** starting **March 3, 2025**.

Please specify in the body of the email:

- Earliest date you can join
- Your salary expectations



Questions and clarifications

Queries related to the position must be sent to jobs@gdn.int.

Global Development Network is an equal opportunity employer and encourages candidates of all backgrounds and genders to apply. We thank all applicants for their interest; however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

