



Australian Government

AusAID

Rural Development Specialist

The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) is seeking applications to fill the Rural Development Specialist position to be based at the Australian Embassy in Vientiane, Laos. For more information about AusAID, please visit www.ausaid.gov.au.

The Rural Development Specialist will provide strategic direction, quality assurance, and policy advice on social protection, food security and livelihoods issues within the Mekong country programs. The successful candidate will support work related to social protection and sustainable livelihoods, access to land, food security and access to financial services and markets which will be conducted as part of AusAID's rural development programs.

A strong preference will be given to applicants with significant experience working in developing countries on rural development issues, accompanied by postgraduate qualifications in a relevant discipline.

The successful candidate will be offered an initial contract for 3 years with a possibility of further extension in this non-Australian Public Service position. An attractive remuneration package will be offered commensurate with the demonstrated skills and experience of the successful applicant.

Full details of the main duties and selection criteria for this position are provided below.

Important: Applicants must provide a self-evaluation of their suitability to perform the duties of the position including personal qualities, experience, skills and knowledge relevant to the prescribed selection criteria. Failure in providing this statement will disqualify them from further selection processes.

How to apply

Those interested in this position should lodge:

- A covering letter.
- A Curriculum Vitae (CV) of no more than 3 pages.
- A statement (no more than half a page per criterion) in support of their application, using the provided selection criteria as headings.
- Updated contact details of two referees.

with AusAID Recruitment Email mekong.jobs@ausaid.gov.au, by 5:00pm (Hanoi Time) on **Friday 16 November 2012**. Only short-listed applicants will be contacted for further processes.

POSITION DESCRIPTION AND SELECTION CRITERIA FOR

Rural Development Specialist

Job Description and Selection Documentation

An attractive remuneration package will be negotiated commensurate with the demonstrated experience and skills of the successful applicant

Initial term of 3 years with the possibility of 1 year extension

We are looking for a Rural Development Specialist to join our Agency, based in Vientiane, Laos. We aim to get the right person into the right role.

About AusAID

The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) is the Australian Government agency responsible for managing Australia's overseas aid program. Consistent with the MDGs, AusAID is guided by five core strategic goals. The goals are:

- saving lives
- promoting opportunities for all
- sustainable economic development
- effective governance, and
- humanitarian and disaster response. .

With a head office in Canberra, and strongly complemented by its country offices around the world, AusAID works in close partnership with Australian and foreign government officials, international and multilateral organisations (including the United Nations, World Bank and Asian Development Bank), the private sector, non-government and community organisations, and civil society. AusAID has working relationships with many more companies and organisations, which help us design and deliver important programs of assistance

For more information on AusAID, please visit our website www.ausaid.gov.au.

AusAID in the Mekong Subregion

AusAID country offices in Hanoi, Phnom Penh, Vientiane and Rangoon lead day-to-day engagement with implementing partners and other stakeholders on AusAID projects, supported by the AusAID Mekong Hub in Hanoi and AusAID headquarters in Canberra.

Job Description

The Rural Development Specialist will provide strategic direction, quality assurance, and policy advice on social protection, food security and livelihoods issues within the Mekong country programs. The successful candidate will support work related to social protection and sustainable livelihoods, access to land, food security and access to financial services and markets which will be conducted as part of AusAID's rural development program.

The Rural Development Specialist will work in support of the teams in each Post to undertake the following key tasks:

- Provide technical quality assurance of key program activities, and undertake or supervise sectoral analysis that contributes to program development and implementation;
- Provide strategic advice that contributes to an efficient and effective delivery of AusAID's rural development programs;
- Provide technical advice in support of coordination efforts among implementing partners and other key stakeholders in the sector, particularly in informing policy dialogue.
- Provide technical support to develop the rural development capabilities of the Posts, including through specific learning and development events, coaching and mentoring, harnessing external expertise;
- provide technical input into policy guidance to AusAID Posts and/or to the Canberra-based rural development team, as required;
- Contribute to periodic quality assurance of knowledge management facilities related to social protection, food security, livelihoods and infrastructure;
- Support the improvement of results measurement and reporting across the rural development portfolio including rural infrastructure;
- Lead and participate in teams undertaking identification, design, appraisal, review and evaluation missions for activities within the rural development programs;
- Contribute to, as required, the development of communication strategies and materials that help promote best practice in rural development in AusAID.

The applicant should expect these duties to change over time in response to emerging challenges and priorities within the broad social development field in the Mekong subregion.

The adviser's work program and Individual Performance Plan will be developed in consultation with the Mekong Hub and country offices and will be shaped by country and regional annual work programs.

This is a non-Australian Public Service position.

Eligibility/Other Requirements

The successful candidate will be expected to provide practical advice based on sound judgement, an understanding of what works in the field and ensure consistency with AusAID policies. Please refer to **Annex A** for AusAID's Knowledge Requirements for specialist positions in this sector.

Applicants are not expected to demonstrate expertise across all elements of the knowledge requirements, but preference will be given to those who can demonstrate a strong background in those themes most relevant to this position.

Essential Qualifications

- Relevant professional qualifications at the post-graduate level
- At least 10 years international experience in developing rural livelihoods interventions and policy
- Practical working knowledge of international best practice in rural development.
- Demonstrated experience in design and implementation of complex rural development activities
- Excellent interpersonal, cross-cultural and negotiation skills

Desirable Qualifications

- Professional work experience on activities in the Mekong region.

Eligibility/Other Requirements

The Specialist will be based in Vientiane on a full time basis, and must be willing and able to travel to remote rural areas within the Mekong countries as well as to other locations, as required.

Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be used to assess a candidate's suitability for a position. When considering candidates, the Selection Committee (the Committee) will seek evidence of performance against each of the criteria. It is therefore in the interests of candidates to present their application in a way that demonstrates significant outcomes associated with the criteria, as well as the capabilities and behaviours that underpin them.

1. Shapes strategic thinking

- Inspires a sense of purpose and direction
- Focuses strategically
- Harnesses information and opportunities
- Shows judgement, intelligence and commonsense

2. Achieves results

- Builds organisational capability and responsiveness
- Marshals professional expertise
- Steers and implements change and deals with uncertainty
- Ensures closure and delivers intended results

3. Cultivates productive working relationships

- Nurtures internal and external relationships
- Facilitates cooperation and partnership
- Values individual differences and diversity
- Guides, mentors and develops people

4. Exemplifies personal drive and integrity

- Demonstrates public service professionalism and probity
- Engages with risk and shows personal courage
- Commits to action
- Displays resilience
- Demonstrates self-awareness and a commitment to personal development

5. Communicates with influence

- Communicates clearly
- Listens, understands and adapts to audience
- Negotiates persuasively

6. Awareness of Aid Management and Development

- Awareness of the Australian Government's priorities for international development policy and management of official development assistance.
- Envisions how systemic change can be brought about, and has an explicit and detailed view of sustainability and scale from the outset
- Has a nuanced understanding of local contexts (norms, rules of the game, culture), and carefully interprets the roles of different actors in this context
- Identifies realistic solutions consistent with context & resources and facilitates innovative and flexible intervention approaches consistent with objectives

7. Specific specialist/professional knowledge, skills and experience

- Demonstrated international development experience in rural development, with sufficient depth to enable negotiation of strategic partnerships and influence sector policy discussions in international fora.
- Understanding of the role of aid in development and awareness of a range of different aid delivery instruments.

- Ability to undertake or interpret complex sector analyses and apply the implications of these to country, regional or global sector strategy and program and policy development
- Capabilities against this criterion will be further assessed against AusAID's rural development Knowledge Framework.

How to apply

Those interested in this position should lodge the following:

- A covering letter.
- A Curriculum Vitae (CV) of no more than 3 pages which outlines:
 - a. Personal details (do not include marital status, religion or date of birth)
 - b. Employment history
 - c. Education, qualifications and relevant training
- A statement (no more than half a page per criterion) in support of your application, using the selection criteria as headings, to describe how you consider yourself suitable against each of the selection criteria by providing relevant examples from work, study or community roles.
Applicants should ensure that they address all of the prescribed selection criteria
- Details of two referees who may be contacted if required.

All lodgement of applications and enquiries and should be addressed to: AusAID
Recruitment by email mekong.jobs@ausaid.gov.au or facsimile +84 4 3831 7706, by 5:00pm (Hanoi Time) on Friday 16 November 2012. Only short-listed applicants will be contacted for interview.

Rural Development¹ Knowledge Framework

This framework identifies the specific sector knowledge needed by AusAID staff who work wholly or partly on rural development activities, both in Canberra or at post. This work can include a wide range of things that AusAID staff might do, such as:

- Analysing sector context (locally, regionally or globally)
- Developing sector policies and strategies
- Engaging in policy dialogue on sector issues with governments, donor partners and in international forums, and influencing outcomes (i.e utilising the “seat at the table”).
- Entering into, or managing, partnerships in the sector with governments, private sector, civil society or donor partners
- Selecting, conceiving and designing programs and projects, drawing on good practices
- Managing the project cycle and quality assurance of sector programs
- Learning lessons and articulating good practice in the sector
-

Knowledge needs are defined in the attached table according to topic. Twelve topics are grouped into five categories. Not all of the knowledge topics will be relevant for all job roles. While some will be necessary for most people who are working on sector programs, others will be more specific to particular roles or sub-programs (e.g. related to social protection, agricultural research or financial services).

The depth of knowledge of each topic also varies according to job roles. Depth of knowledge and capability in the sector have been defined at three levels:

1. **Awareness level:** Knowledge at this level provides a basic overview of the topic’s issues, terminology and relationship to other knowledge areas and sectors. It provides generalist staff with a foundation to engage in the topic area as a part of a broader portfolio of responsibilities, to apply advice from sector specialists, and to be an informed participant in multi-stakeholder forums related to the topic. Awareness level knowledge also provides a base for staff to progress to higher levels.
2. **Operational level:** Knowledge at this level enables staff to take a lead role in commissioning, designing, assessing, or managing programs, or in strategy or policy formulation in the topic area, with the support of other sector specialists in more complex situations. It enables staff to be a valued contributor in multi-stakeholder forums related to these programs.
3. **Strategic level:** Knowledge at this level incorporates operational level knowledge, combined with the experience and confidence to apply this effectively in complex situations. It enables staff to drive systemic change related to the topic in complex national, regional or global environments, to lead multi-stakeholder exercises, and to influence policy directions. It also equips the holder to mentor other sector staff.

It is intended that the descriptions of knowledge needs will be used in job descriptions and selection criteria for particular positions in AusAID where sector knowledge might be important, or in helping to design individual learning and development programs for staff.

¹ The term “rural development” is used throughout the paper as shorthand for a broader range of sector topics, which include activities related to agriculture, food security, rural livelihoods and poverty, rural enterprise development, social protection, financial services (microfinance) or natural resource management (i.e. water resources, forestry, fisheries).

AusAID staff working on RD programs will need sector specific knowledge, skills or understanding (at different levels) on the following topics* ...				Enabling staff to.....,
	Basic awareness level: A basic overview the topic's issues, terminology and relationship to other knowledge areas and sectors. Provides generalist staff: - with a foundation to engage in the topic area as a part of a broader portfolio of responsibilities, - enables staff to apply advice from sector specialists, and - enables staff to be an informed participant in multi-stakeholder forums.	Operational level: Incorporates awareness level knowledge, combined with greater depth of experience to apply this effectively to less complex sector programs Enables staff to: - take a lead role in commissioning, designing, assessing, or managing programs, strategy or policy formulation in the topic area, with the support of other sector specialists in more complex situations; and - to be a valued contributor in multi-stakeholder forums related to these programs	Strategic level: Incorporates operational level knowledge, combined with the experience and confidence to apply this effectively in complex situations. Enables staff to: - drive systemic change related to the topic in complex national, regional or global environments, - to lead multi-stakeholder exercises, and to influence policy directions. - mentor and support other AusAID staff working in the sector at operational level	
Overarching capabilities	•Consider how <i>large scale, sustainable change</i>, can be brought about. - a. •Have a broad <i>understanding of</i>	•Envision how <i>systemic change</i> can be brought about, and have an explicit and detailed view of <i>sustainability and scale from the outset</i>; - b.	•Envision how <i>systemic change</i> can be brought about, and have an explicit and detailed view of <i>sustainability and scale from the outset</i>; - e.	•Promote sustainable change at scale based on careful analysis of context •Develop a flexible portfolio of

	<i>local context and the roles of different actors in this context;</i> •Be aware of <i>the range of possible and appropriate interventions.</i> •Pursue the above in <i>partnerships and communications</i>	•Have a nuanced <i>understanding of local contexts</i> (including norms, rules of the game, culture), and <i>interpret the roles of different actors</i> in this context; - c. •<i>Identify realistic solutions</i> consistent with context & resources; facilitate <i>flexible intervention approaches</i> consistent with objectives - d. •Pursue the above in <i>partnerships and communications</i>	•Have a nuanced <i>understanding of local contexts</i> (norms, rules of the game, culture), and carefully <i>interpret the roles of different actors</i> in this context; •<i>Identify realistic solutions</i> consistent with context & resources; facilitate <i>innovative and flexible intervention approaches</i> consistent with objectives; - f. •Pursue the above in <i>partnerships and communications</i>	relevant responses.
--	--	---	---	-----------------------------------

	Basic awareness level:	Operational level:	Strategic level:	Enabling staff to.....,
1. Sector Analysis relevant to rural development and social protection				
Approaches, frameworks and analytical tools	• Broad knowledge of the terminology and main issues of different approaches to rural development and social protection. • Understanding of when more detailed sector analysis may be required to inform the design and delivery of sector programs. • Ability to broadly interpret sector analysis done by others to draw out issues of relevance to AusAID's sector activities in a country.	<i>As for Awareness level, plus:</i> • Knowledge of the history of rural development and social protection approaches and their applicability. • Ability to interpret (or in simpler cases to undertake) sector analyses as needed for activity design, review or delivery (e.g. market development/ value chains, sustainable livelihoods, rural poverty, Drivers of Change, environmental and social impact).	<i>As for Operational Level, plus:</i> • Knowledge of emerging global trends and evidence related to the effective-ness of different approaches in different regions • Ability to undertake or interpret complex sector analyses and apply the implications of these to country, regional or global sector strategy and program development.	Support development of consistent sector policies and implementation strategies based on an appropriate understanding of context, including: i. Analysing sector contexts ii. Developing sector policies iii. Developing sector implementation strategies iv. Promoting integration of programs, sectors and cross-cutting issues v. Providing appropriate policy advice and briefing based on sound analysis <i>For example, staff may:</i> ▪ Lead/commission/manage <u>analytical studies</u> related to the
Country or region specific analysis	• Knowledge of significant country analyses of the sector that have been undertaken • Broad understanding of the scale and significance of hunger and rural poverty in the country in relation to other development issues • Broad appreciation of linkages between sectors (e.g agriculture,	<i>As for Awareness level, plus:</i> • Knowledge and understanding of the main determinants of the rural economy in the country/region, and factors driving broad-based growth, including in the informal sector.	<i>As for Operational Level, plus:</i> • Knowledge of emerging trends, evidence and research outputs related to the rural economy, broad-based growth and poverty reduction in the country/region (or globally as appropriate) • Ability to effectively apply knowledge of inter-sectoral	

	nutrition, health and education, and rural infrastructure) and between rural and urban areas.		linkages to guide country/regional global strategies and allocation decisions	<i>sector, e.g.:</i> - sector reviews at country/regional level - specific studies (e.g. poverty analysis, political economy, rural market systems, economic analysis, etc.) - assessments of sector institutions
Key cross-cutting issues	• Broad appreciation of how <i>climate change & environmental degradation</i> impact on agriculture, food security and poverty in the country (& vice versa) • Understanding of <i>gender roles</i> in agriculture and food production, processing, marketing, natural resource access and management. • Broad understanding of role of agriculture, natural resource management and social protection in disaster risk reduction • Broad appreciation of the impact of state fragility and conflict on food security and agriculture. • Broad understanding of the transition from humanitarian assistance to sustainable development	<i>As for Awareness level, plus:</i> • Sufficient depth of knowledge of each of the cross-cutting issues to be able to incorporate into the design or quality assessment of sector activities in the country/region, consistent with AusAID and country-level policies.	<i>As for Operational Level, plus:</i> • Knowledge of emerging global evidence or trends related to each of the cross-cutting issues, and how this can be applied to developing sector strategies at country, regional or global level as applicable	j. Provide <u>advice to the Minister</u> or senior management on <u>policy options</u> in the sector, or evidence of impacts ▪ Contribute sector perspectives into <u>country strategies</u>, or develop a <u>thematic strategy</u>. ▪ Develop <u>implementation frameworks</u> for sector programs in a country/region ▪ Lead/commission/manage <u>assessments of cross-cutting issues</u> relating to the sector
	Basic awareness level:	Operational level:	Strategic level:	Enabling staff to.....,

2. Policy & Institutional Architecture in the sector				
Australian policy and institutional framework	• Knowledge of Australian aid policy and how rural development and food security fits within this, including knowledge of the content of AusAID sector policy notes (e.g. March 2011: AusAID's approach to food security and rural development), and annual thematic program reviews • Knowledge of which other Australian agencies may have interests or activities in the sector in the country/region in question. (e.g. as appropriate: ACIAR, DAFF, DFAT, State departments of primary industries, CSIRO, Universities and Australian NGOs etc.)	<i>As for Awareness level, plus:</i> • Detailed knowledge and understanding of AusAID policies and approaches in the sector and their background. • Sufficient depth of knowledge of the perspectives, roles and programs of other Australian agencies with interests in the sector and region - and how these relate to the AusAID sector programs - to enable the facilitation of activity partnerships and contribute to partnership discussions	<i>As for Operational Level, plus:</i> • Knowledge of emerging new policy directions of the Australian Government, and ability to apply these to relevant AusAID sector programs and policies • Sufficient depth of knowledge of the perspectives and programs of other Australian agencies in the sector to enable negotiation of strategic partnerships and influence sector policy discussions in domestic forums	Establish and manage partnerships and relationships and exercise influence in dialogue and debate, including: - Influencing outcomes of policy dialogue and debate - Forming and managing partnerships and relationships with stakeholders - Representing AusAID in appropriate sector forums and "using the seat at the table" - Supporting donor co-ordination <i>For example, staff may:</i> ▪ Contribute to <i>high-level debates</i> on sector topics in international forums and within partner countries. ▪ Support and <i>influence partners</i> to develop an effective policy environment for the sector ▪ <i>Conduct policy dialogue</i> with national governments, donor
International policy and institutional framework	• Knowledge of the content and targets of MDG 1 and how these affect and interact with the other MDGs • Awareness of other significant international policies, commitments and targets that are relevant to the sector program in the country/region • Knowledge of which key international or regional	<i>As for Awareness level, plus:</i> • Sufficient knowledge of <i>relevant</i> international sector policies, commitments, institutional perspectives, strengths and weaknesses (e.g. of the IFIs, GFASP, CGIAR, FAO, WFP, IFAD, Global Donor Platform, CAADP, G8 and G20 commitments etc.) to enable the selection and facilitation of	<i>As for Operational Level, plus:</i> • Sufficient depth of knowledge of the international policies, commitments and institutional perspectives, strengths and weaknesses in the sector/region to enable negotiation of strategic partnerships, and to influence sector policy discussions in international forums.	

	institutions are involved in the sector in the country/region in question	activity partnerships and to contribute to partnership discussions.		partners, regional forums, or WoG agencies. ▪ Assess the roles, interests and comparative advantages of prospective partners, and <u>identify opportunities for collaboration</u> ;
Institutional roles and delivery modalities	• Basic knowledge of evidence on the appropriate roles of the state, private sector, NGOs and producer organisations in agricultural production and services, rural livelihoods and social protection. • Basic knowledge, as relevant, of the range of funding modalities available for the sector (e.g. for agricultural research and services, market development, community-driven development and social protection) – such as grants, loans, sector budget support, challenge funds, equity contributions etc.	<i>As for Awareness level, plus:</i> • Knowledge of public financing, governance and incentive systems in the sector (e.g. for agriculture natural resources, decentralisation and social protection). • Ability to select, design or apply appropriate funding or partnership modalities based on knowledge of specific issues to be taken into account in the sector.	<i>As for Operational Level, plus:</i> • Knowledge of emerging evidence related to the role of the public and private sectors, funding modalities and the effectiveness of aid in the sector.	▪ Help develop <u>partnership agreements</u> with key stakeholders to achieve common goals ▪ Contribute to <u>multi-institutional teams</u> (including, for e.g., with donor partners, NGOs or WoG agencies)
	Basic awareness level:	Operational level:	Strategic level:	Enabling staff to.....,
3. Agricultural Productivity				Contribute to the delivery of results through process management and technical inputs, including:
Factors affecting agricultural productivity growth	• Basic understanding of the role of agriculture in broad-based growth and poverty reduction • Basic understanding of the linkages between agricultural research and increased productivity • Knowledge of the role and programs of institutions involved in	<i>As for Awareness level, plus:</i> • Knowledge of the factors influencing agricultural productivity in the country/regional context. • Sufficient knowledge of the perspectives, roles and programs of country, regional or international agricultural	<i>As for Operational Level, plus:</i> • Sufficient depth of knowledge of the agricultural productivity and research issues, and institutional perspectives of stakeholders in the region to enable negotiation of strategic partnerships, and to influence	i. Conceiving or designing programs ii. Providing quality assurance

Issues in agricultural research	agricultural research, innovation and extension in the country/region (e.g. ACIAR)	research institutions (e.g. CGIAR) to contribute to funding or reform negotiations.	sector policy and reform negotiations.	iii. Monitoring and evaluating programs iv. Providing/commissioning/managing technical support v. Disseminating knowledge and learning lessons <i>For example, staff may:</i>
4. Rural livelihoods & Enterprise Development				
Market development	• Basic knowledge of the sources of incomes and employment of the rural poor and what enabling factors influence these. • Basic understanding of the range of different approaches to market-led development (e.g. business enabling environment reform, value chain approaches, and making markets work for the poor). • Basic knowledge of issues in the provision of sustainable financial services (e.g. micro-credit, savings, micro-insurance, payment services)	<i>As for Awareness level, plus:</i> • Knowledge of the critical issues in the that enable private sector contribution to poverty reduction or making markets work better for the poor. • Sufficient knowledge of different approaches to market-led development to apply these to activity designs or quality assessments. • Sufficient knowledge of different approaches to provision of inclusive financial services to apply to policy or activity designs or quality assessments.	<i>As for Operational Level, plus:</i> • Knowledge of emerging issues, global evidence and approaches to market-led development and/or provision of financial services. • Sufficient depth of knowledge issues and institutions in one or more of rural livelihoods, market-led approaches, or inclusive financial services to enable negotiation of strategic partnerships, and to influence sector policy discussion in international forums.	▪ <i>Identify and <u>prioritize investment opportunities</u></i> in the sector ▪ Prepare <i><u>concept notes</u></i> for new programs ▪ Lead, commission or participate in <i><u>design</u></i> of sector interventions ▪ Contribute to <i><u>peer review</u></i> of program designs, or ongoing quality assessments (e.g. QAI's) ▪ Prepare/review <i><u>tender documentation</u></i> for sector programs
5. Social Protection				

Formal social protection systems Informal social protection & community-driven development	• Basic knowledge of the drivers of household risk and vulnerability and informal community approaches to social protection in the country/region. • Basic knowledge of different approaches to provision of social protection including targeting approaches, cash transfers and community-driven development.	<i>As for Awareness level, plus:</i> • Knowledge of formal social protection systems and issues in the country, including the pros and cons of conditional and unconditional cash transfers, approaches to targeting and financial sustainability. • Knowledge of approaches to community-driven development and their application in country/regional contexts	<i>As for Operational Level, plus:</i> • Sufficient depth of knowledge of social protection issues, evidence and approaches to enable negotiation of strategic partnerships, and to influence sector policy discussion in international forums.	▪ <u>Monitor ongoing programs</u>, for AusAID alone or as part of multi-partner teams ▪ Conduct/commission <u>evaluations and reviews</u> of sector programs ▪ Compile or input into thematic or country progress reviews (e.g. ATPR) or otherwise <u>seek to feed lessons from practice into future programming</u>.
---	--	---	--	---