For over 50 years and in 146 countries, ACDI/VOCA has empowered people in developing and transitional nations to succeed in the global economy. Based in Washington, D.C., ACDI/VOCA is a nonprofit international development organization that delivers technical and management assistance in agribusiness, financial services, enterprise development, community development and food security in order to promote broad-based economic growth and vibrant civil society. ACDI/VOCA currently has approximately 34 projects in 26 countries and revenues of approximately $174 million.

Political Economy Expert, Liberia

ACDI/VOCA is currently seeking a Political Economy Expert for a potential Title II Development Food Aid Program (DFAP). This multi-year, non-emergency program is integrated with USAID strategies to address the underlying causes of chronic food insecurity. The program’s ultimate goal is to reduce food insecurity among vulnerable households. The program focuses on strengthening livelihoods and improving nutrition among children under five, incorporating disaster risk reduction and response mechanisms and conflict sensitive approaches.

The Political Economy Specialist will bring an in-depth understanding of the political economy dynamics of governance structures in Liberia. S/he will have existing networks and will use their in-depth understanding of the political economy environment of Liberia to input into the design of program interventions. As Political Economy Expert, his/her responsibilities will be to research local systems relevant to the project, including how local communities interact with district and country governments. The Political Economy Expert will assist with program design, including the design and execution of project assessments and adapting assistance approaches during implementation based on project learning. The Political Economy Expert will act as a liaison with key stakeholders, utilize political economy-informed analysis to guide activities and tailor interventions and advocacy approaches to the local context. The Political Economy Expert will facilitate strong relationships with the USAID Mission, the host government, sub-recipient partners and other donor and non-governmental organizations. Travel is expected to be over 50% of the time in-country.

Responsibilities:

- Contribute to the development of program design and implementation of the governance structure strengthening activities, developing sustainability strategies, and building capacities of counterparts.
- Ensure that incentive structures are adequately accounted for in the design of interventions, as well as throughout the design and execution of the year one assessments, and the entire implementation process.
- Assist with the collection of learning during implementation and the adaptation of the assistance approaches during implementation.
- Develop a learning agenda, and facilitate lessons learned and best practices sharing within various stakeholders in Liberia.
• Conduct policy analyses and assessments and adapt assistance approaches during implementation based on project learning.
• Establish and maintain strategic partnerships and relationships with key government, donor, NGO, and private sector stakeholders.
• Regularly prepare analysis and monitoring reports on activities, outputs and outcomes for application in policy or programmatic changes, including contributing to donor deliverables and reports.
• Conduct research on local systems relevant to the project (patron-client relationships in agriculture and marketing, ethnic differences in gender and MCH feeding practices, community structures, and ways that communities interact with district and county governments, etc.).
• Review current policies, legal and regulatory frameworks related to decentralization and local governance structure strengthening, including health, nutrition, agriculture policies in Liberia.
• Ensure appropriate linkages are made with government stakeholders to draw upon country experiences, lessons learned, and knowledge sharing.
• Provide information for linkages across program activities and between external stakeholder activities to help identify critical points of integration.
• Provide background information to identify opportunities for project development.
• Identify needs and interventions for capacity building of beneficiaries and potential partners.
• Provide updates on indicators and technical inputs for reporting.

Minimum Qualifications:

• Minimum of 8 years of experience.
• Advanced university degree in relevant field, including sociology, economics or political science.
• Extensive experience, deep networks and understanding of political economy dynamics in Liberia.
• Experience and understanding of economic development issues in Liberia (in particular health, nutrition, agriculture and livelihood policies, political history of Liberia, including decentralization policy, and county and district level governance).
• Experience working on donor funded programs in Liberia is preferred.
• Record of delivering excellent political economy insight and inputs into donor funded program design and implementation preferred.
• Prior experience with USAID projects, procedures, policies and reporting requirements is required.
• Familiarity with collection of learning, information dissemination and facilitation meetings, workshops or seminars preferred.
• Effective record of building relationships with governmental organizations as well as private and community organizations is required.
• Established track record of working in difficult environments is required.
• Superior inter-personal and communication skills, to develop network and contacts across numerous sectors.
• Excellent writing and oral skills.
• Fluency in English is required.

Please apply before Friday, February 5th by sending your CV to AVLiberia@joinav.org. No phone calls please. Only finalists contacted. Women and minorities encouraged to apply. EOE ACDI/VOCA will never request payment from candidates in the recruitment process.