BACKGROUND

The position is based in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The Associate Programme Officer reports to the project coordinator in Freetown, under the overall supervision of the project manager based at ITC HQ in Geneva. The focus of this position is on monitoring and evaluation, communication and coordination of activities with implementing partners and the donor agency.

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is a joint agency of the United Nations and World Trade Organization based in Geneva. ITC’s mission is to enable small business export success in developing and transition-economy countries, by providing, with partners, sustainable and inclusive development solutions to the private sector, trade support institutions (TSIs) and policymakers.

Having worked with SMEs for 60 years, ITC is familiar with the unique needs of SMEs, including youth and women-led enterprises, and has vast experience in improving their international competitiveness and connecting them with markets:

- **ITC’s Youth & Trade Initiative** takes a market-led approach to address gaps in skills and enhance the competitiveness of young entrepreneurs. The programme works with ecosystem actors to strengthen the business environment for youth-led companies and provide pathways to youth employment in key value chains. ITC manages a global community supporting young entrepreneurs – Ye! Community, which connects youth entrepreneurs and key ecosystem actors to provide access to resources, tools, opportunities, and networks, to enhance their entrepreneurial capacities.

- **ITC ecomConnect** has developed a well-practiced methodology accompanies SMEs on their digital journey through its training programme, research, and facilitation of innovative solutions, collaborative structures, partnerships, and digital tools and technologies. In addition, the ecomConnect programme works closely with a wide range of local stakeholders and partner agencies, especially BSOs, and provides them with capacity building and knowledge on online trade and exports.

- **ITC’s Tech Sector Development** team supports the internationalization of African tech start-ups. ITC has implemented projects in Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Senegal and Uganda focused on supporting local tech companies and digital freelancers, as well as the local innovation ecosystems. In 2019, ITC launched the #FastTrackTech initiative. FastTrackTech provides targeted coaching, matchmaking with potential clients and investors to digital entrepreneurs who aspire to international growth in Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Mali, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Zambia.

- **ITC SheTrades Initiative** aims to create an ecosystem of integrated solutions that empower women economically through greater integration in trade and investment. The Initiative ensures
that the right capacities and conditions are present for women to trade and that they are supported by an ecosystem of market partners and effective support organizations. At the same time, SheTrades works to remove inequalities in the trade policy space that hinder women’s participation.

- **ITC Institutions and Ecosystems section** is dedicated to support and enhance the performance of business support organizations (BSOs). The support to BSOs is structured in three key pillars: assess, improve, and connect organizations. The end goal of the support is to ensure that MSMEs and startups receive targeted and well-structured support from efficient and professional organizations.

- **The ITC Trade Policy and Investment Facilitation (TPIF) Unit** supports trade and investment policy formulation and implementation by working with policymakers to review and update policies and regulatory frameworks and informing and advising trade and investment negotiators. TPIF also assists chambers of commerce and other business support organizations (BSOs) to articulate MSMEs views effectively to ensure that policies, regulatory reforms, and negotiations all reflect a well-informed business perspective.

Unemployment and underemployment are key drivers of poverty in Sierra Leone. At 10.1%, the youth unemployment rate is over double the national average, and 60-70% of the working population are classified as working poor. The digital economy provides opportunities for more and better paid jobs, and digitalization has the potential to drive SME competitiveness and growth.

However, Sierra Leonean youth, especially young women, lack awareness of opportunities available in the digital economy as well as the relevant knowledge and skills to take advantage of them. Consequently, many youths are not employable in technology-related jobs. Youth entrepreneurship is key to reduce unemployment in Sierra Leone, yet most youth-led MSMEs, especially those led by young women, lack skills to adopt digital technologies in their businesses, maximize e-commerce opportunities, and secure financing. Young people and young entrepreneurs lack an effective and coordinated voice to influence policymaking processes related to the digital economy to ensure that their needs are met.

At the business ecosystem level, entrepreneurship support provided by the government, development agencies, and NGOs rarely offer a combination of sector, digital, and entrepreneurship-oriented programmes. There is a lack of coordination among BSOs, tech service providers, and market partners. Business and digital support services are insufficient and not adapted to the needs of young people and young entrepreneurs. BSOs and tech hubs do not provide sufficient digital entrepreneurship support to youth-led MSMEs, and financial institutions have limited service offerings to support young women entrepreneurs to contribute to the digital economy.

Implemented over a four-year period from June 2024 to 2028, the ‘Sierra Leone: Empowering youth through digital technologies’ project is funded by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and has overall objective of contributing to economic growth and job creation in Sierra Leone by enhancing the participation of youth in the digital economy.

To achieve this, the project will:

- **Output 1**: Increase the capacity of youth to use digital technologies for work, entrepreneurship and social inclusion;
- **Output 2**: Enhance the competitiveness of young entrepreneurs through the adoption of digital technologies;
- **Output 3**: Improve youth-specific service offerings of business support organizations and tech hubs;
- **Output 4**: Strengthen the inclusive national strategies and policies related to the digital economy.
# FUNCTIONS

Under the direct supervision of the project manager based at ITC HQ in Geneva and in close collaboration with the national project coordinator, the Associate Programme Officer is responsible for the following duties:

- Works with key clients to facilitate the development, implementation and evaluation of assigned programmes/projects, etc.; monitors and analyzes specific aspects of programme/project development and implementation; reviews relevant documents and reports; identifies problems and issues to be addressed and recommends corrective actions; liaises with relevant parties; identifies and tracks follow-up actions.

- Liaises with the implementing partners as well as in-country and HQ project teams for coordination and communication of project activities, challenges and results.

- Liaises with project implementing partners, including NGOs, Business Support Organizations and the private sector to improve their capacity in competitiveness and business development.

- Carries out basic research on selected aspects of programmes, operations and other activities, etc., to include collecting, analyzing and presenting statistical data and other information gathered from diverse sources.

- Provides substantive support for technical coordination and evaluation functions, including the review and analysis of emerging issues and trends, participation in evaluations or research activities and studies.

- Assists in performing consulting assignments, in collaboration with the client, by planning facilitating workshops, through other interactive sessions and assisting in developing the action plan the client will use to manage the change.

- Provide substantive support and in survey initiatives: assists with design of data collection tools and project monitoring and evaluation framework; issues data collection tools, reviews, analyzes and interprets responses, identifies problems/issues and reports findings to the project team (both in-country and in HQ) as well as the donor.

- Contributes to the preparation of various written outputs, e.g. draft background papers, analytical notes, sections of reports and studies, inputs to publications, etc.

- Provides administrative and substantive support to consultative and other meetings, conferences, etc., to include proposing agenda topics, identifying and proposed participants, preparation of background documents and presentations, handling logistics, etc.

- Undertakes outreach activities; participates in the development of training workshops, seminars, etc.; participates in and makes presentations on assigned topics/activities.

- Participates in field missions, including provision of substantive and administrative support, data collection, etc.

- Coordinates activities related to budget funding (programme/project preparation and submissions, progress reports, financial statements, etc.) and preparation of related documents/reports (pledging, work programme, programme budget, etc.).

- Performs other duties as required.

NOTE – The selected candidate must be available for frequent duty travel to rural areas in the country.

# KEY DELIVERABLE AND MONITORING / PROGRESS CONTROLS

Provides well researched and sound analysis of issues and developments affecting programme/project development, administration, monitoring and evaluation, implementation, etc. Provides thorough, well reasoned written contributions. Effectively, and in a timely manner, liaises and interacts with colleagues and concerned parties internally and externally.
**RECRUITMENT QUALIFICATIONS**

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<th>Minimum education and qualifications (level and field of study)</th>
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<tr>
<td>An advanced university degree (Master’s or equivalent) in international development, management, economics or a related field.</td>
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<td>A first-level degree (Bachelor’s degree or equivalent) in the specified fields of studies with two additional years of relevant work experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.</td>
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<th>Minimum experience (nature, length and field of experience)</th>
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<td>A minimum of two (2) years of experience in project or programme management, administration or related area.</td>
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<td>Experience in tech and digital skills development.</td>
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<td>Experience in issues related to youth entrepreneurship and empowerment desirable.</td>
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<td>Experience working with development institutions and/or NGOs.</td>
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<td>Work experience with a Korean institution/NGO or the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) is an advantage.</td>
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<th>Minimum language requirement</th>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced knowledge of English (written and spoken). Knowledge of Korean is an advantage.</td>
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**Critical job-specific competencies**

**ITC core values:** Professionalism, Integrity, Respect for Diversity

**Professionalism:** Knowledge and understanding of theories, concepts and approaches relevant to particular sector, functional area or other specialized field. Ability to identify issues, analyze and participate in the resolution of issues/problems. Ability to assist with data collection using various methods. Conceptual analytical and evaluative skills to conduct independent research and analysis, including familiarity with and experience in the use of various research sources, including electronic sources on the internet, intranet and other databases. Ability to apply judgment in the context of assignments given, plan own work and manage conflicting priorities. Shows pride in work and in achievements; demonstrates professional competence and mastery of subject matter; is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results; is motivated by professional rather than personal concerns; shows persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges; remains calm in stressful situations. Takes responsibility for incorporating gender perspectives and ensuring the equal participation of women and men in all areas of work.

**Communication:** Speaks and writes clearly and effectively; listens to others, correctly interprets messages from others and responds appropriately; asks questions to clarify, and exhibits interest in having two-way communication; tailors language, tone, style and format to match audience; demonstrates openness in sharing information and keeping people informed.

**Teamwork:** Works collaboratively with colleagues to achieve organizational goals; solicits input by genuinely valuing others’ ideas and expertise; is willing to learn from others; places team agenda before personal agenda; supports and acts in accordance with final group decision, even when such decisions may not entirely reflect own position; shares credit for team accomplishments and accepts joint responsibility for team shortcomings.

**Commitment to Continuous Learning:** Keeps abreast of new developments in own occupation/profession; actively seeks to develop oneself professionally and personally; contributes to the learning of colleagues and subordinates; shows willingness to learn from others; seeks feedback to learn and improve.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

For information on how to apply please click [here](#). Applicants will be contacted only if they are under serious consideration. Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.