Beyond Aid

JOB DESCRIPTION

JD Unique ID:	101917
Job Title:	Project Team Leader / Project Lead – Enterprise Development, Rural Finance & Digital Agriculture
Company:	Self Help Africa (SHA)
Department:	Programmes
Location:	Operational Field Base / Regional Hub (with frequent travel across operational woredas and regular presence at the Addis Ababa Country Office)
Contract Type:	Fixed-Term Contract – 9 Months (Renewable based on performance and donor grant cycles)
Reports to:	Head of Programme (HoP)
Matrix Reports to:	Country Director (Strategic Representation) & Head of Finance & Admin (Financial Compliance)
Required Qty	One
About Self Help Africa and the Project:	About Self Help Africa Self Help Africa is an international development organisation that works through agriculture and agri-enterprise development to end hunger and extreme poverty. The organisation has programmes in 15 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and also implements projects in Brazil and Bangladesh. In early 2023, we launched a new five-year organisation strategy, which defines shared mission as the alleviation of hunger, poverty, social inequality and the impact of climate change through community-led, market-based and enterprise-focused approaches, so that people can have access to nutritious food, clean water, decent employment and incomes, while sustaining natural resources. Our wider organisation also includes social enterprise subsidiaries: Partner Africa, which provides ethical auditing and consultancy services; TruTrade, an innovative trading platform in East Africa; and CUMO, Malawi's largest microfinance provider. Our three core values are: ▪ **Impact**: We are accountable, ambitious and committed to systemic change. ▪ **Innovation**: We are agile, creative and enterprising in an ever-changing world. ▪ **Community**: We are inclusive, honest and have integrity in our relationships. **About the Project**: SHA Ethiopia is currently recruiting a dynamic, entrepreneurial, and accomplished **Project Team Leader / Project Lead** to direct our flagship economic resilience and market-systems portfolio (including the McFarland Foundation **ETM6 Project** and linked digital agriculture initiatives). This senior leadership post serves as the overall managerial, operational, and technical head of the project. The position combines comprehensive project administration with direct technical oversight of our two core pillars: **Enterprise Development & Rural Finance (the primary focus of the role)** and **Precision Digital Agriculture / HaFAS Scaling** in strategic collaboration with **ICRISAT**, the **Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)**, and regional cooperative networks.
Job Purpose:	The **Project Team Leader / Project Lead** provides total strategic leadership, managerial direction, financial stewardship, and technical oversight for the project. Serving as the primary custodian of project performance, the Project Lead ensures

	all planned deliverables are executed on schedule, within approved budget limits, and in full compliance with donor agreements and institutional standards. The role carries a dual, highly integrated technical mandate: 1. **Enterprise Development & Rural Finance (Core / Lion's Share):** Drive the transformation of rural smallholders, women, and youth into viable commercial actors. The Lead spearheads the identification, incubation, and graduation of agribusiness Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs); manages Business Development Services (BDS) funnels; strengthens the governance and loan portfolios of Rural Savings and Credit Cooperatives (RuSACCOs); and operationalizes innovative de-risking mechanisms, including **Revolving Funds (RF)** and **First-Loss Guarantee / Credit Guarantee Schemes (FLGF/CGF)**. 2. **Agriculture & Precision Digital Advisory (HaFAS Integration):** Lead the agricultural production and precision agronomy engine that feeds these rural enterprises. The Lead oversees the field operationalization of the **Harmonized Fertilizer and Agronomy Advisory Solution (HaFAS)**, ensuring that site-specific, climate-adjusted soil fertility advisories de-risk smallholder investments, enhance crop productivity, and provide the "scientific collateral" necessary for cooperatives and RuSACCOs to extend credit confidently. 3. **General Management & Leadership:** Provide comprehensive leadership over work planning, team management, procurement acceleration, Budget vs. Actuals (BvA) monitoring, high-level government stakeholder liaison, and donor reporting.
Key Responsibilities:	**1. Overall Project Management, Operations & Team Leadership** • Provide overall strategic direction, day-to-day operational management, and administrative leadership for the project in accordance with approved project documents, Detailed Implementation Plans (DIPs), and donor grant agreements. • Formulate, coordinate, and execute integrated annual and quarterly work plans, procurement tracking schedules, and cash-flow projections across target woredas. • Lead, mentor, and supervise a multidisciplinary project team (Enterprise Specialists, Agronomists, Financial Inclusion Officers, Digital MEAL Officers, and Finance/Logistics staff), conducting regular performance evaluations and fostering a culture of delivery and accountability. • Proactively monitor operational, security, financial, and climate-related risks; develop and execute adaptive management strategies to ensure project targets are achieved without interruption. • Uphold strict compliance with SHA institutional policies, including Safeguarding, Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH), Child Protection, and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI). **2. Enterprise Development, MSME Incubation & BDS (Core Focus Area)**

- Direct the identification, screening, and selection of viable, market-oriented agribusiness opportunities across targeted value chains (including grain/seed aggregation, shoat fattening, poultry production, commercial apiculture, and input supply).
- Oversee the execution of comprehensive **enterprise feasibility studies and market assessments** (evaluating market demand, gross margins, break-even points, capital requirements, and environmental risks).
- Design and execute intensive **Investment Readiness and Business Development Services (BDS) Clinics**, deploying a competitive **2:1 screening pipeline funnel** to build the business management capacity of emerging entrepreneurs and cooperative leaders.
- Coach, mentor, and technically support entrepreneurs and MSMEs to prepare bankable business plans, realistic financial cash-flow projections, and investment pitch proposals.
- Facilitate product diversification, quality packaging, localized branding, and value addition to transition informal micro-enterprises into registered, commercially viable businesses.
- Establish youth- and women-led green enterprises, designing targeted incubation pathways that overcome traditional barriers to land and startup capital.

3. Rural Finance, RuSACCO Institutional Strengthening & De-risking Facilities

- Direct the design, operationalization, and management of the project's **Unified Capital De-Risking Facility**, dynamically deploying funds across **Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP matching grants)** and **First-Loss Guarantee Funds (FLGF)** to de-risk commercial lending to youth and women entrepreneurs.
- Establish and govern **Cooperative Revolving Funds (RF)**, developing clear operational guidelines, selection criteria, credit-appraisal tools, and recovery mechanisms to ensure 100% capital preservation and continuous reinvestment.
- Lead the institutional capacity strengthening of partner **Rural Savings and Credit Cooperatives (RuSACCOs)** and their unions, improving performance across governance, savings mobilization, loan administration, liquidity management, and internal controls.
- Promote standard financial documentation and double-entry bookkeeping across RuSACCOs (member passbooks, cashbooks, loan registers, reconciliation sheets), and support the adoption of digital Management Information Systems (MIS).
- Promote financial literacy, responsible borrowing, and savings mobilization among smallholders, designing financial products that match the seasonal biological cash-flow cycles of agriculture and livestock.

	4. Agricultural Value Chain Financing & Commercial Market Linkages • Facilitate structured **Business-to-Business (B2B) Matchmaking Forums**, formalizing legal off-take agreements, forward contracts, and commercial supply ties between primary producer cooperatives, commercial processors, input distributors, and regional unions. • Design and execute **tripartite financing models** (linking producers, RuSACCOs/banks, and commercial off takers), enabling smallholders to access seasonal inputs on credit with loan repayments deducted directly from produce sales. • Organize and supervise capacity building for cooperative warehouse managers and aggregators on post-harvest loss management, crop cleaning, grading, and warehouse inventory control. **5. Technical Leadership: Agriculture, Precision Agronomy & HaFAS Integration** • Lead the agricultural production and technology transfer component of the project, serving as the operational lead for scaling the **Harmonized Fertilizer and Agronomy Advisory Solution (HaFAS)** in partnership with ICRISAT and the Ministry of Agriculture. • Guide the technical localization of site-specific fertilizer recommendations (Urea, DAP/NPSB, micronutrients) for four major cereal crops (**Wheat, Teff, Maize, and Sorghum**), ensuring advice is calibrated to soil fertility, soil acidity, and seasonal weather forecast tiers (EMI data). • Oversee the establishment of standardized **on-farm demonstration clusters, Farmer Training Center (FTC) demonstration sites, and side-by-side comparative trials** (HaFAS precision rate vs. conventional blanket practice). • Organize high-impact **Farmer Field Days and Crop-Cut Yield Verification events**, mobilizing government officials, researchers, and smallholders to generate empirical proof of yield increments and Nutrient Use Efficiency (NUE). • Champion Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM) practices, bundling digital soil advisories with certified seed supply (drought-resilient and biofortified varieties), lime application, vermicomposting, and in-situ moisture conservation tillage. • Collaborate with cooperative leadership to pilot **commercial fee-for-service / embedded input-margin models**, ensuring primary cooperatives bundle advisory services into seasonal fertilizer distribution to sustain digital tools post-grant. **6. Financial Stewardship, Procurement Governance & Compliance** • Maintain overall financial governance over the project budget, ensuring expenditures comply with donor regulations, SHA financial policies, and approved budget lines.

	• Conduct monthly **Budget Variance Analyses (BvA)** in coordination with Finance, monitoring burn rates, forecasting expenditures, and implementing timely budget realignments. • Authorize project expenditures, payment requests, operational travel advances, and liquidations within delegated financial authority. • Manage and enforce the project **Procurement Plan**, coordinating with Procurement to expedite Purchase Requisitions (PRs), technical bid evaluations, and delivery verifications. • Supervise the construction, quality assurance, and formal handover of physical infrastructure (cooperative offices, training halls, storage facilities) within contractual deadlines. **7. Stakeholder Liaison, Policy Dialogue & External Representation** • Serve as the principal project representative with Zonal and Woreda Administrations, Agriculture Desks, Cooperative Promotion Offices, and Enterprise/Job Creation Departments. • Maintain productive working partnerships with research institutes (**ICRISAT, EIAR, ARARI, partner universities**) and financial institutions (commercial banks, microfinance institutions). • Represent SHA in regional agricultural and economic working groups, multi-stakeholder platforms, and national policy dialogues. • Facilitate joint government-partner supportive monitoring missions, ensuring transparency and institutional ownership. **8. MEAL Systems, Quality Assurance & Reporting** • Oversee the implementation of the project MEAL plan, ensuring that all enterprise, financial, and agronomic indicators are systematically tracked using digital platforms (**CommCare / KoboToolbox**). • Ensure data disaggregation by sex, age, youth status, and disability (using the Washington Group Short Set) across all project registers. • Direct the compilation and timely submission of high-quality, evidence-backed monthly, quarterly, bi-annual, and final narrative reports for the Head of Programme, Country Director, and Donors. • Support the ICRISAT MELIA research agenda, tracking enterprise turnover growth, advisory yield gains, gross margin improvements, and household Food Consumption Scores (FCS). • Coordinate the development of human-interest case studies, business success profiles, and mandatory donor founder packages (Attachment B compliance).
Key Relationships:	**Internal** • Head of Programme (Direct Line Manager / Supervisor)

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	• Country Director (Strategic Direction & Policy Representation) • Head of Finance & Administration (Financial Compliance, Audits & BvA) • Senior Communications Advisor (Visibility, Case Studies & Media) • Digital MEAL Specialist / MEAL Lead (Monitoring Architecture & Research) • Procurement & Logistics Manager (Tenders, Contracts & Fleet Logistics) • Project Technical Officers & Field Teams (Direct Supervisory Management) **External** • Ministry of Agriculture (Extension Directorate, Soil Health Desk, Agribusiness Directorate) • Federal and Regional Cooperative Promotion Agencies / Commissions • ICRISAT Ethiopia Country Office & Research Scientists (Scientific Co-Developers) • Woreda and Zonal Administrations, Agriculture, Livestock, and Enterprise Development Offices • Primary Multipurpose Cooperatives (MPCs), RuSACCOs, and Cooperative Unions • Microfinance Institutions (MFIs), Commercial Banks, and Agri-Input Distributors • Donor Representatives (Foundations, WFP, Irish Aid)
Required Safeguarding Competencies	• Know about child and adult abuse, harm and neglect in its different forms and the potential impact on children and adults at risk of harm. • Understands the legal, professional, and ethical responsibilities around information sharing. • Understands the best practice in documentation, record keeping, and data protection issues in relation to information sharing for safeguarding purposes. • Be familiar with the guidance related to participation in safeguarding enquiries and reviews. • Understands the professional duty to report crime in line with organisational and professional guidance • Understands the importance of establishing, acting or making a decision in person's best interests as reflected in legislation and key statutory and non-statutory guidance. • Able to document safeguarding concerns, and maintain appropriate record-keeping, recording the wishes and views of the adult or child at risk, differentiating between fact and opinion. • Able to share appropriate and relevant information between teams – in writing, by telephone, electronically, and in person within relevant information sharing protocols. • Able to identify where further support is needed, when to take action, and when to refer to managers, supervisors or other relevant professionals, including referral to available social services. • Recognises how own beliefs, experience and attitudes might influence professional involvement in safeguarding work.
Qualifications/Knowledge and Experience	**Essential:** • **Educational Background:** Master's Degree (MSc/MA) in Agribusiness, Agricultural Economics, Rural Finance, Enterprise Development,

	Cooperative Development, Rural Development, Agronomy, or a related discipline. *(A Bachelor's degree with exceptional, proven senior leadership experience may be considered).* • **Professional Experience:** Minimum of **seven (7) to ten (10) years** of progressively responsible professional experience, with at least **four (4) years in a Project Manager, Team Leader, or Senior Project Lead role** managing agricultural enterprise development, rural finance, or market-systems programs within an international NGO, financial institution, or development agency. • **Mastery of Enterprise Development & BDS:** Proven track record in conducting enterprise feasibility studies, market assessments, business model canvas (BMC) design, business plan coaching, and MSME incubation for rural women and youth. • **Rural Finance & Capital De-Risking Expertise:** Hands-on experience working directly with **RuSACCOs, primary cooperatives, and microfinance institutions**. Proven expertise in designing, managing, and recovering **revolving loan funds, credit guarantee funds (FLGF/CGF), or matching grant schemes**. • **Agricultural Value Chain & Agronomic Literacy:** Solid practical understanding of agricultural value chains and smallholder crop production systems. Familiarity with precision agriculture, fertilizer management, crop-cut assessments, and digital agro-advisory platforms (knowledge of tools like HaFAS, NextGen, or LandWise is an asset). • **Demonstrated Project Leadership & Budget Stewardship:** Proven competence in full-cycle project management, leading multidisciplinary technical teams, managing complex work plans, and governing annual budgets exceeding USD 1 Million with rigorous BvA tracking. • **Commercial Linkages & Negotiation:** Exceptional facilitation skills in organizing B2B buyer-seller forums, value chain financing arrangements, and contractual off-take agreements. • **Stakeholder Coordination:** Proven ability to build collaborative relationships with senior government officials (Bureau Heads, Woreda Cabinets), cooperative leaders, research scientists, and private sector buyers. • **Communication & Technical Reporting:** Superior verbal communication and technical report-writing skills in English. Ability to synthesize business performance, financial ledgers, and agronomic trial data into high-level donor reports. • **Language Proficiency:** Complete professional fluency in spoken and written English and Amharic. Working knowledge of Afaan Oromoo or Wolayttatto is an added advantage.

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	• **Digital Literacy:** High proficiency in MS Office (advanced Excel, Word, PowerPoint) and experience with mobile data collection platforms (CommCare, KoboToolbox). **Desirable:** • Familiarity with the Ethiopian Government's **New Pluralistic Agricultural Extension Proclamation** and national cooperative proclamation guidelines. • Experience in gender-transformative approaches (**Family Life Model - FLM**) and youth-inclusive programming. • Experience operating effectively and diplomatically in complex, remote, and volatile field environments. • Possession of a valid driving license with active field driving experience.

Self Help Africa is an international development charity and is committed to the safeguarding of all those who we come into contact with or through our work. We are committed to preventing any type of unwanted behaviour relating to our work including sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse, lack of integrity and financial misconduct; and we are committed to promoting the welfare of children and the people we aim to assist with whom Self Help Africa engages. Self Help Africa expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment and uphold the values and behaviours outlined in the **Code of Conduct and Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy**, inside and outside of work hours. We place a high priority on ensuring that only those who share and demonstrate our values are recruited to work for us. Recruitment to all roles in Self Help Africa may include, and be subject to, a criminal records self-declaration, references, and other pre-employment checks, which may include police and qualifications checking. Self Help Africa is committed to the principles of the Misconduct Disclosure Scheme and will request information from previous employers about any findings of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment during employment. By submitting an application, the applicant confirms her/his understanding of these recruitment procedures.

Self Help Africa/United purpose strive to be an equal opportunities employer