JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title:	**Senior Research Specialist**	**Location:**	**UK**
Department:	**Technical**	**Length of contract:**	**2 years**
Role type:	**National**	**Grade:**	**10**
Travel involved:	**30%**	**Child safeguarding level:**	**3**
Reporting to:	**Senior Research Advisor**	**Direct reports:**	**None**
Dotted line manager:	**None**	**Indirect reports:**	**None**

Organisational background

Established in 2003, Malaria Consortium is one of the world's leading non-profit organisations specialising in the comprehensive prevention, control and treatment of malaria and other communicable diseases among vulnerable and under privileged populations. We increasingly find our work on malaria can be effectively integrated with other similar public health interventions for greater impact and therefore expanded our remit to include child health and neglected tropical disease interventions.

We work in Africa and Asia with communities, governments, academic institutions, and local and international organisations, to ensure effective delivery of services, which are supported by strong evidence.

Our areas of expertise include:

- disease prevention, diagnosis and treatment
- disease control and elimination
- systems strengthening
- research, monitoring and evaluation leading to best practice
- behaviour change communication
- national and international advocacy and policy development

Country and project background

Malaria Consortium has a team of health specialists and advisors, located in the UK, Africa and Asia, providing technical oversight to its programmes and development of its projects. Within each country office, technical oversight is provided by a Country Technical Coordinators (CTC) and from above country, a Global Technical team (GTT) provides technical assistance to country programmes and projects. A Senior Technical team (STT) comprises the Technical Director, Head of M&E, Heads of Technical (West Africa, East and Southern Africa), Head of Business Development, Head of External Relations, leads of the

Communities of Practice (Monitoring & Evaluation, Capacity Building, Research, and Public Health Communications) and technical leads of the Business Areas (Vector Control, Preventive treatments, Case management, and Health Systems efficiency and effectiveness). A Board of Trustees Research Advisory Group (BoT-RAG), offers an advisory and sounding board function to the Research Group and the STT with regards to short and long term strategies for research within Malaria Consortium.

Job purpose

The Senior Research Specialist will support the implementation of the organisation research strategy and achievement of the research objectives. Based on funding, the Senior Research Specialist will lead the inception, design, management and implementation of selected research projects, within the themes and scope of the research strategy. He/She will provide methodological oversight to research projects through technical assistance, technical involvement, mentoring, and developing and maintaining research guides and tools. He/She will provide technical support in the responsible conduct of research projects and technical support to increase their potential for research uptake. Up to half of the effort of the role will be focused on research related to Chemoprevention, in particular Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention (SMC).

Scope of work

The Senior Research Specialist will work closely with the Senior Research Advisor and Research Group to deliver scientifically robust research outputs, design of study protocols, data collection methods and data analysis plans. Alongside this support, the Senior Research Specialist will provide input to the strategic direction and functions of the Research Group by supporting the uptake of research policies and guidelines within the organisation to ensure high quality and robust research procedures and practices. The Senior Research Specialist will support on the building of internal research capacity through webinars, mentoring and trainings, and supervise one or more team members as designated.

Key working relationships

The Senior Research Specialist has a straight reporting line to the Senior Research Advisor. The Senior Research Specialist will also work closely with other members of the Research Community of Practice (CoP). He/She will be in regular contact with the Head of Technical West and Central Africa, East and Southern Africa, the SMC Programme Director and the Technical Director. The position holder will actively participate in the Research CoP. The position holder will collaborate with the Head of Monitoring & Evaluation and other members of the Community of Practice on Monitoring and Evaluation. On SMC-related research projects, the post holder will work with the Programme Director; Research, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Coordinator; Epidemiologist; technical, M&E and programmes staff both at head office and country level.

Key accountabilities

1. **Strategic input, policies and guidelines (10%)**
   - Contribute to Research Strategy implementation and periodic reviews.
   - Contribute to regular research priority setting in consultation with the Research CoP, country offices, business development and Heads of Technical and in line with Malaria Consortium's strategic objectives.

2. **Business development (15%)**
   - Liaise with the Business Areas and Business Development Team to see that research ideas are collated and systematically processed towards business development products such as concept notes and proposals. In most cases the approach will be to embed research into implementation but the Senior Research Specialist will in addition look to determine ideas which could be developed into research projects.
   - Contribute to the growth of Malaria Consortium's portfolio of research projects by leading the writing of some research proposals or funding applications.

3. **Technical support and oversight, coordination and project management (60%)**
   - Lead on writing proposals and funding applications for standalone research in line with Malaria Consortium's strategic objectives.
   - Serve as Principal or Co-Principal Investigator on selected research projects, including leading and supporting the writing of research protocols, data management and data analysis.
   - Support other investigators in research projects through technical assistance, technical involvement, mentoring and guidelines and tools.
   - Work with members of the Research Group to see that research projects are effectively coordinated including meeting key milestones of each stage of the project.
   - Work with country teams, in country and remotely, to plan, design and implement operational and implementation research embedded within service delivery programmes.
   - Contribute to increasing internal research capacity through technical assistance, webinars, mentoring and training via the Research CoP.
   - Project and budget management as defined in the role of Principal or Co-Principal Investigator of specific projects.

4. **Asset management, data protection and risk management (5%)**
   - Work with Research Group members to support the development of a culture that favors and encourages research integrity at head office, regional and country levels.

5. **Representation and positioning (10%)**
   - For selected projects for which the Senior Research Specialist is leading, be responsible for writing project reports of findings as well as leading on the preparation of manuscripts for publication in peer-reviewed journals.
   - Develop project related material (case studies, policy briefs, study reports) and publications from research findings.
   - Present research findings at research conferences or partner/donor meetings.
   - Support production of external communication materials for selected projects.

Person specification

Qualifications and experience:

Essential

- PhD, or MSc with extensive experience, in Public Health, Global Health, Epidemiology or a related research discipline with a substantial quantitative research component.
- Substantial experience in research design and management; experience in operational and/or implementation research
- Experience securing large research grants or multiple research funding
- Experience providing technical and programmatic leadership in research
- Substantial experience in publishing work in peer-reviewed journals
- Experience working in South East Asia and/or Sub-Saharan Africa
- Experience and understanding of working with Ministries of Health in policy and strategy formulation related to research
- Experience of designing and/or implementing research uptake strategies

Desirable

- Experience in supervising/mentoring other research staff
- Demonstrable experience collaborating with academic institutions in the UK and in Low- and Middle- Income Countries

Work-based skills and competencies:

Essential

- Excellent skills in mixed methods research including operations and/or implementation research
- Strong technical knowledge and skills in child or maternal health epidemiology
- Familiar with public health and health systems principles
- Good quantitative and qualitative data analysis and data presentation skills
- Competent user of statistical software such as STATA or R.
- Excellent academic/scientific publication writing skills
- Good presentation and facilitation skills
- Able to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences inside and outside the organisation
- Able to provide remote support to research teams
- Excellent personal and time management skills
- Meticulous attention to detail and accuracy
- Problem solving attitude
- Positive work attitude
- Interpersonal skills
- Flexibility, and able to work under pressure and to tight deadlines

Desirable

- Excellent team management skills including the development of high performing teams; when required.
- Familiar with qualitative research software such as NVivo or MAXQDA
- Familiar with Statgraphics or Grapher software
- Excellent project management and planning skills
- Is able when required to delegate effectively and remotely support teams

- Comfortable being a mentor of others
- French or Portuguese language skills

Core competencies:
Delivering results
LEVEL C - Supports others to achieve results ✓ Displays a positive and enthusiastic approach and is not deterred by setbacks, finding alternative ways to reach goals or targets ✓ Supports others to plan and deliver results ✓ Supports others to manage and cope with setbacks
Analysis and use of information
LEVEL C - Works confidently with complex data to support work ✓ Interprets complex written information ✓ Works confidently with data before making decisions, for example, interpreting trends, issues and risks ✓ Acquainted with the validity, relevance and limitations of different sources of evidence
Interpersonal and communications
LEVEL D - Communicates complex technical and/or sensitive/high risk information effectively ✓ Communicates complex operational, technical and strategic issues clearly and credibly with widely varied audiences ✓ Uses varied communication to promote dialogue and shared understanding and consensus across a variety of audiences ✓ Influences internal and external audiences on specific issues ✓ Scans the internal and external environment for key information and messages to support communications strategies
Collaboration and partnering
LEVEL C - Builds strong networks internally and participates actively in external networks and think tanks ✓ Builds strong networks internally ✓ Participates actively in external networks and/or think tanks. ✓ Engages with relevant experts to gather and evaluate evidence ✓ Shares and implements good practice with internal and external peers
Leading and motivating people
LEVEL C - Effectively leads and motivates others or direct reports. ✓ Gives regular, timely and appropriate feedback, ✓ Acknowledges good performance and deals with issues concerning poor performance ✓ Carries out staff assessment and development activities conscientiously and effectively ✓ Develops the skills and competences of others through the development and application of skills ✓ Coaches and supports team members when they have difficulties
Flexibility/ adaptability
LEVEL C - Supports others to cope with pressure ✓ Responds positively to change, embracing and using new practices or values to accomplish goals and solve problems and supports others to do the same ✓ Adapts team approach, goals, and methods to achieve solutions and results in dynamic situations ✓ Sets realistic deadlines and goals for self or team
Living the values
LEVEL C - Supports others to live Malaria Consortium's values ✓ Demonstrates personal integrity by using position responsibly and fairly ✓ Cultivates an open culture within the wider team, promoting accountability, responsibility

and respect for individual differences
Strategic planning and thinking and sector awareness
LEVEL C - Keeps up to date with the internal and external environment ✓ Takes into account economic, political and other business factors when drawing up medium and long-term plans, covering both public and private sectors ✓ Looks beyond the immediate operations to prospects for new business ✓ Engages with appropriate internal and external sources to establish major influences on future plans