

Changing the world
with **women and girls**

act:onaid



CEO Candidate Pack

January 2021

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Cover: Maureen is secretary of the ActionAid-supported Sauti ya Wanawake women's movement in Kilifi County, Kenya. During the Covid-19 pandemic she has held roadshows to dispel myths about the virus and support survivors of gender-based violence.

Photo: Tommie Ominde/ActionAid

Welcome letter

Dear Candidate,

Thank you very much for your interest in becoming our new CEO and leading ActionAid UK's Senior Leadership Team. This is an exciting opportunity to join a passionate, inclusive and forward-thinking organisation with an enviable international reputation. We are looking for an exceptional individual to help us make a real difference to the lives of the world's poorest women and girls.

As part of the ActionAid Federation we work with women and girls, our partners and dedicated staff in 43 countries to end violence and fight poverty so that all women, everywhere, can create the future they want.

We raise money to support ActionAid's programme work to transform communities; we influence policy to change the systems and structures that keep people poor; we carry out research and put pressure on governments and key decision makers to bring about global change.

Our partners and our supporters play a vital role in helping to deliver our community-based projects across the world and we couldn't hope to deliver our mission without their continued commitment.

ActionAid UK reaches thousands of communities and is committed to truly shifting power to communities and partners in the Global South. We have been on a transformative journey over the past few decades, moving the Federation's Global Secretariat from the UK to South Africa, placing our strategic focus firmly on the rights of women and girls and committing to a feminist approach to global leadership.

We focus our work on three strategic areas: ending violence against women and girls, women's economic empowerment to ensure women can make a sustainable living, and women's leadership in humanitarian crises.

We are led by the needs of the women and girls we work with in the Global South (our 'rights-holders'), and ensure their voices are at the heart of everything we do. This approach informs how we work as a Board, how we work across our staff teams, and how we engage with others. We want to overtly change the way power works.

Our organisational culture is therefore critical to us, and we believe that the journey is as important as the destination. Our commitment to true diversity and inclusion is ingrained within our organisation, as is our [feminist behaviour framework](#). We are committed to embracing leadership which empowers and enables individuals to be their authentic selves in the workplace, we respect different perspectives and believe that collaboration results in a vibrant, bold and authentic organisation, which can be a game changer in the sector.

As our next CEO you will steer us to deliver our mission, embrace our feminist behaviours and value the 'ActionAid' way of doing things.

You will be able to easily engage with our stakeholders, including supporters and influencers here in the UK and colleagues from around the ActionAid International Federation.

You will have substantial previous senior leadership experience within a complex large organisation, or current CEO experience, with the ability to lead a diverse and collaborative Senior Leadership Team as 'first among equals'. You will also need the nous to lead us in a challenging external and funding environment.

It is important to us that as our new CEO you have a deep interest in international development and women's rights, that creating a genuinely inclusive and equitable culture matters to you, that you will take every opportunity to work in collaboration with international colleagues, and that you are passionate about making a real and lasting difference to the world's poorest women and girls. If this sounds like you, we'd love to hear from you.



Srabani Sen, Chair of ActionAid UK



Who we are

Our vision

A just, equitable and sustainable world in which every person enjoys the right to a life of dignity, freedom from poverty and all forms of oppression.

Our mission

To achieve social justice, gender equality, and poverty eradication by working with people living in poverty and exclusion, their communities, people's organisations, activists, social movements and supporters.

Our values - Federation wide

1. Mutual respect, requiring us to recognise the innate worth of all people and the value of diversity.
2. Equity and justice, requiring us to ensure the realisation of our vision for everyone, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, race, ethnicity, caste, class, age, HIV status, disability, location and religion.
3. Integrity, requiring us to be honest, transparent and accountable at all levels for the effectiveness of our actions and our use of resources, and open in our judgements and communications with others.
4. Solidarity with people living in poverty and exclusion shall be the only bias in our commitment to the fight against poverty, injustice and gender inequality.
5. Courage of conviction, requiring us to be creative and radical, bold and innovative – without fear of failure – in pursuit of making the greatest possible impact on the causes of poverty, injustice and gender inequality.
6. Independence from any religious or party political affiliation.
7. Humility, recognising that we are part of a wider alliance against poverty and injustice.

Schoolgirls play at an ActionAid-supported school in UI-Kpong, Ghana.
Photo: ActionAid



How we work

Strategy/ambition

Our ambition is to be a powerful force for change, fighting poverty and injustice. We have chosen to do this by focusing on the rights of women and girls. In 2017, we launched a new five-year strategy to help us achieve this: **Together, with Women and Girls**.

The denial of women and girls' rights is one of the biggest causes of poverty worldwide, and a grave injustice. We shifted our focus because no community can truly prosper when half its citizens are denied the rights enjoyed by the other half. Our work also benefits men and boys living in poverty, but we put the rights of women and girls at the centre of all that we do.

Over the strategy period from 2017-2022, we will:

1. Significantly reduce the risk of violence against women and girls.
2. Fight for women's equal rights to economic opportunities.
3. Prioritise women and girls' rights and leadership in humanitarian crises.

Our culture

As part of our commitment to women's and girls' rights, we recognise, embody and champion feminist principles not only in our work or what we do but also in the way we work or how we do things.

This includes how we work with our staff, supporters, partners, donors, suppliers and everyone else we come in contact with through our work and in our workplaces.

We are embracing intersectional feminist principles in the workplace not only because they are consistent with what we do, but also because we know that they are vital to the success of our mission.

Find out more [here](#).

Women taking part in a 10-day participatory video workshop run by ActionAid in Rwanda.
Photo: Pooja Kishnani/ActionAid



How we will achieve our aims

ActionAid UK is proud to be a member of the ActionAid International Federation. We support the Federation by focusing on three areas in our work in the UK:

1. **Mobilising resources.** We raise money through investment, adapting our approach and innovation, to fight poverty and injustice and achieve the rights of women and girls.
2. **Influencing for change.** We work alongside women and girls living in poverty to challenge violence and exploitation, fight for women's equal rights to economic opportunities and support women's leadership in humanitarian crises.
3. **Supporting humanitarian action.** We build our capacity to respond when emergencies strike, working with and through local communities, focusing on women's leadership and on the specific threats faced by women and girls.

Together, this represents the most effective contribution ActionAid UK can make to the struggle against poverty and injustice, and to the realisation of women and girls' rights.

You can read more about our strategy [here](#).

Cosy tends to a client at her salon in Kampala, Uganda.
Photo: Esther Mbabazi/ActionAid



Our finances

In line with the rest of the not-for-profit sector we have been impacted by the COVID pandemic both operationally and financially. However, we are pleased to report that our public facing fundraising has performed extremely well since the start of the pandemic and our draft financial results for 2020 are very positive. While we have concerns about the impact of the general UK economic environment and recent changes by the Government on our ability to raise resources for the rest of the Federation, our strong reserves position will enable us to make considered choices on how we invest to best ensure future financial sustainability.

You can find out more about our finances [here](#).

Children playing in an IDP camp,
Somaliland.
Photo: Karin Schermbrucker/ActionAid.

The CEO role

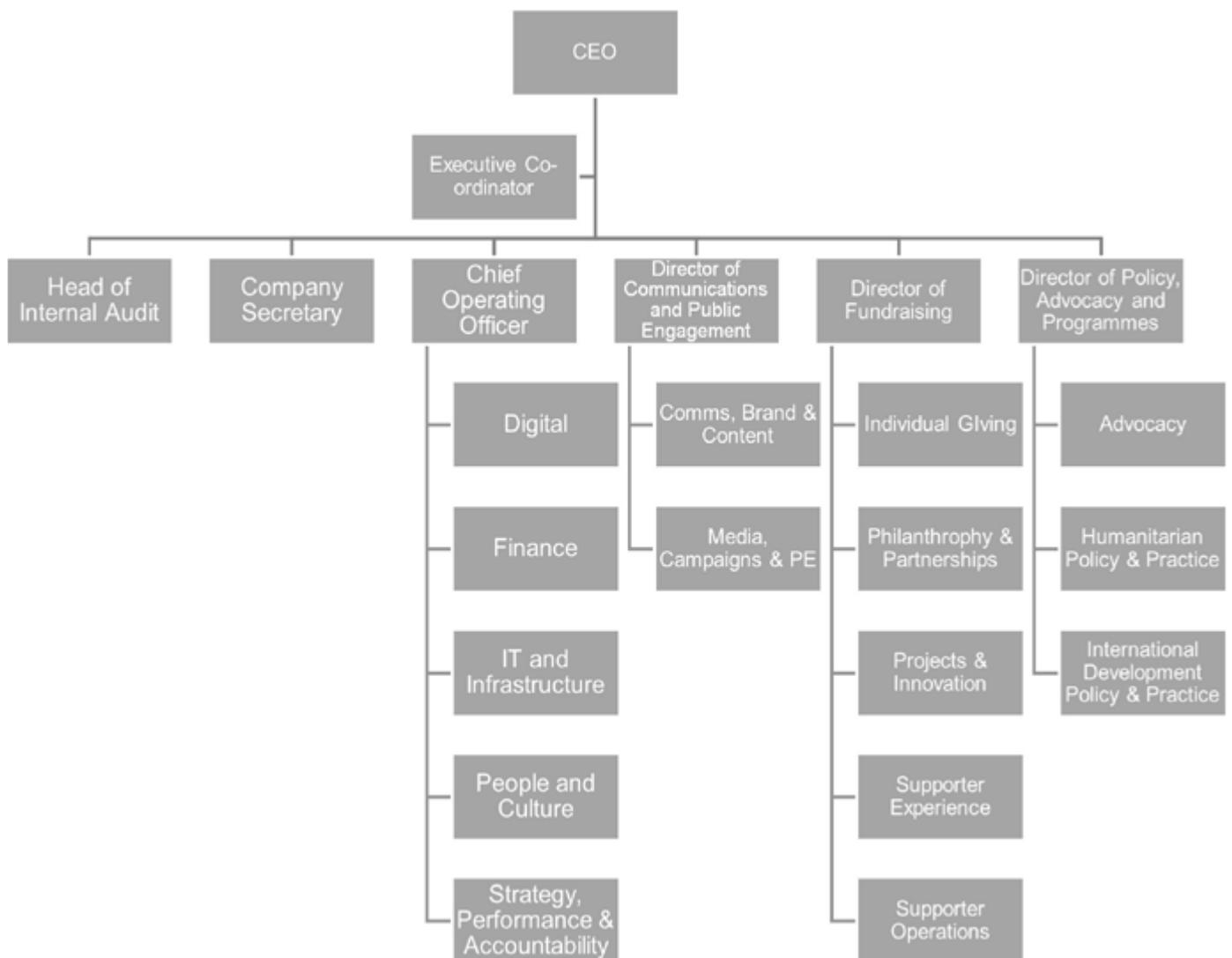
Location

This role will be located mainly in our London office with some travel expected to our country programmes once the travel ban has been lifted post Covid restrictions.

Salary

Up to £105,634

Structure of the organisation



Overview of the role

This role represents an exciting opportunity to help us create a world without poverty and injustice in which every person enjoys the right to a life with dignity.

You will be building on a strong foundation and working with a talented, passionate and innovative team across ActionAid UK, the Board and the wider Federation to make this a reality.

Reporting to the Board of Trustees, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will be responsible for leading our activities in the UK whilst playing a 'dual citizen' role within the wider Federation, ensuring that UK interests are represented in a respectful way acknowledging and being mindful of the power dynamics in all relationships. These activities include raising funds, campaigning and lobbying those in positions of power for change, as well as building a strong organisational profile externally, and building recognition of our work with communities focused on the rights of women and girls living in poverty in the Global South.

The CEO will play a key role as an ambassador for ActionAid UK within the UK and internationally as part of the global ActionAid Federation and will be responsible for developing relationships with key stakeholders including donors and partners in the UK and across the wider Federation.

The CEO will directly manage the Senior Leadership Team and will be ultimately responsible for circa 210 staff in the UK and the sustainable generation and growth of our annual income (currently circa £50 million).

How our CEO will spend their time

- Demonstrating commitment to AAUK's mission, vision, values and strategic aims.
- Inspiring buy-in to ActionAid UK's vision and strategy, and leading the organisation to ensure we deliver.
- Raising our profile and representing ActionAid UK's work compellingly to external audiences to help achieve our aims, including generating income and driving advocacy.
- Building support for AAUK's work and impact within the Federation so that engagement across the organisation remains high and all teams are aligned behind the charity's vision and strategy.
- Providing clear direction, decision making and support to colleagues.
- Forming and nurturing partnerships and coalitions with other NGOs, both in the UK and globally to strengthen the impact of our work and campaigns.
- Creating an inclusive culture that embodies our feminist behaviours, where everyone feels respected and valued so they can thrive by being their authentic selves. This includes acting as a positive role model at all times.
- Championing our approach to diversity, inclusion and equity, including in the representation of our work.
- Leading the development and implementation of ActionAid UK's strategy to ensure we are financially viable and able to support the work of ActionAid in programmatic countries. This includes ensuring that the strategic planning approach produces aligned, robust and deliverable plans to bring in sustainable income, demonstrate value for money in expenditure and use funds effectively to enable the delivery of key goals.
- Holding colleagues to account for delivering against the strategy and key decisions. This includes developing and supporting Directors and colleagues through constructive challenge and holding them accountable for performance and innovation in their areas of responsibility.
- Ensuring that ActionAid UK is prepared for new challenges and open to new opportunities.
- Playing a leading role in supporting and influencing the strategy and direction of the ActionAid International Federation in line with our feminist behaviours and the 'dual citizen role' a Country Director plays. This includes

playing a full part in developing a shared culture across the Federation and further improving the effectiveness of the Federation.

- Ensuring good governance and accountability in line with regulatory, legal and contractual responsibilities.
- Enabling the effective decision making of the Board and measuring and reporting on ActionAid UK's organisational performance. This includes working closely with the Chair to ensure effective communication and coordination with the Board.
- Undertaking any other appropriate duties in accordance to agreed procedures and guidelines.
- Proactively engaging with and taking responsibility for seeking appropriate development opportunities personally and taking part in learning.

What will our new CEO bring to the role?

A combination of:

- A demonstrable passion for the mission of ActionAid.
- A visible commitment to improving the lives of our programme participants, and to our Federation values (including internationalisation/the decolonisation of international development through an understanding of power dynamics).
- A successful track record of building and delivering a strategic vision in a complex international organisation, that inspires and engages individuals both internally and externally.
- A strong understanding of and commitment to women's rights, feminist behaviours, intersectionality (being an active ally to marginalised groups), becoming an anti-racist organisation, safeguarding, the international development sector, and the global and regional geo-political context of international development.
- Proven ability to speak out and stand up for the right course of action.
- A track record of being collaborative, non-hierarchical and inclusive.
- The ability to create a culture where everyone feels empowered and valued whilst being comfortable to take tough decisions and communicate the rationale for them clearly.
- A proven ability to build, motivate and enthuse a senior team towards the delivery of key goals, whilst creating effective frameworks for holding people to account and inspiring a high-performing culture.
- A marketing mindset, with financial and commercial astuteness.
- Experience of working with multiple income streams, projects and funding cycles.
- A talent for innovation and taking considered risks that may involve tough choices: you will be a forward-thinker who makes prompt, creative decisions and communicates them clearly.
- Experience working in a regulated industry/with regulators.
- Strong diplomatic communication: you will have the ability to have meaningful, strategic discussions with key stakeholders, that persuade, influence and drive change internally at AAUK and within the Federation.
- Comfort with being an ambassador for ActionAid UK, networking and representing the organisation credibly, including with donors.
- The ability to influence policy and practice at multiple levels and an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the political landscape in which change happens and key decisions are made.
- Strong judgement and strategic thinking, with the ability to assess what the future may hold and plan accordingly.
- Integrity, pragmatism and perspective.

Key terms

To help understand the role there are a number of concepts we thought it would be useful to better explain.

Ally

We are passionate about everyone being able to feel like they can belong, are respected and valued, and are therefore able to flourish at AAUK and within the Federation. This means that we are looking for someone who is committed to being an ally (active supporter and advocate) for all marginalised groups. This includes gender equity, racial equity, trans inclusion and wider LGBTQI+ inclusion, and equity for everyone with a disability (although this is not an exhaustive list).

Anti-racist

Being an actively anti-racist organisation is a critical element to who we are, bearing in mind we work in international development. The concept of people in developing countries needing to be 'saved' by the predominantly white 'rich' nations of the global north was the basis for the initial operating model in the sector. Our aim therefore is to understand and tackle the institutionalised and systemic nature of racism within international development and how the concept of 'white supremacy' and/or 'white saviourism' plays out within the sector and more specifically within AAUK.

We are therefore committed to being an anti-racist organisation and to help shape this we have created a Tackling Racism Steering Group to ensure that this programme of work is delivered and embedded within the organisation. To champion this approach, you will need an understanding of how power dynamics impact the life chances of individuals, and the systems and processes within organisations that continue them.

Dual citizenship

This concept revolves around ensuring that the priorities and activities of AAUK are well aligned to the strategy and mission of the wider Federation and its members; that when interacting with the wider Federation there is an understanding of the power differential that is inherent in AAUK being a key funding affiliate and therefore there is a sensitivity shown in how the UK interests are pursued.

Feminist behaviours

In order to deliver the impact we want as an organisation, we know that how we do things – as well as what we do – will be critical. The way we behave in the workplace helps to create our culture and define our organisational DNA: we all help to shape this, every day. Our culture is brought to life through ActionAid's 10 'My Feminist Behaviours' – self-awareness, self-care and caring for others, dismantling bias, inclusion, sharing power, responsible / transparent use of power, accountable collaboration, respectful feedback and courage.

My Feminist Behaviours outline the practices and behaviours that ActionAiders strive to follow. In line with the feminist precept that 'the personal is political', and because leadership begins with changing our own behaviour, they are framed as pledges starting with the words 'I will'. For us this is a never-ending journey. My Feminist Behaviours set aspirational goals to serve as guide stars in that journey. They are not policies. No one is expected to execute all of them perfectly; that would be contrary to the spirit of feminist leadership which says that we are all imperfect and we should all expect to fail, learn, and keep moving.



Would you like to find out more?

If you wish to have an informal discussion about the opportunity, have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, or need additional information, please contact Andrea Metcalf, andrea.metcalf@actionaid.org or jobsuk@actionaid.org.

Closing date: 23:59 on Monday 1st March.

Initial assessment centre to be scheduled w/c 15th March.

Interviews will take place on 26th March.

To apply you will need to follow the link in the advert, which will take you to our in-house recruitment system. There you will be asked to fill in an application form and upload your CV.

Sarmin escaped child marriage in Bangladesh and now campaigns against it.
Photo: Gustavo García Solares/ActionAid