

Job Title:	Grade:	Organization:	Location:
Senior Research Officer		Afya na Haki	Plot 6105 Valley Road, Canaan Sites, Nakwero
Reporting to:			
Head of Research			
Position Type:	Probationary Period:		
Full-Time	6 months for 2-year contracts / 3 months for 1-year contracts		

Introduction

Afya na Haki (Ahaki) Institute, in collaboration with prominent educational institutions, is implementing the Science Collaboratives for Pandemics, Epidemics, and Endemic Diseases programme in Africa. This initiative is designed to address the urgent scientific needs related to all aspects of pandemic preparedness, while also responding to the broader developmental challenges facing the continent as it recovers from the initial phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As part of this effort, Ahaki is leading the Strengthening Health Systems Capacity in Africa for Pandemic Equity and Responsiveness (SHARPER) programme, which aims to support the development of research excellence across Africa, foster the establishment of robust continental knowledge exchange networks, and nurture a new generation of exceptional leaders. These leaders will contribute to building a thriving ecosystem of research and innovation, ultimately strengthening the resilience, equity, and responsiveness of health systems across the continent in the face of both current and future health challenges.

Role Purpose

The Senior Research Officer (SRO) plays a strategic role in designing, leading, and delivering the CSO's research and policy agenda. This role is responsible for conceptualising high-impact research projects, ensuring methodological rigour, and translating evidence into accessible formats for advocacy, public engagement, and policymaking.

Working in close collaboration with program teams, partners, and communities, the SRO ensures that Ahaki's research advances critical thought, centres African epistemologies, and drives measurable influence in health and social justice spaces. The role also supports institutional fundraising, partnership development, and internal capacity building in evidence generation and use.

Key Responsibilities

1. Research Design & Leadership

- ▶ Lead the conceptualisation and execution of research projects aligned with Ahaki CSO's thematic priorities.
- ▶ Design robust, context-sensitive research methodologies that centre participatory, feminist, decolonial, and ethical approaches.
- ▶ Coordinate multi-country or multi-stakeholder research assignments, ensuring quality control, timeliness, and budget adherence.

2. Knowledge Production & Translation

- ▶ Produce high-quality knowledge outputs, including policy briefs, research reports, journal articles, and working papers.
- ▶ Ensure research products are accessible, audience-appropriate, and strategically disseminated for impact.
- ▶ Translate complex research findings into advocacy messages, multimedia formats, and public-facing narratives.

3. Policy Influence & Thought Leadership

- ▶ Engage in horizon scanning to identify emerging policy issues, evidence gaps, and advocacy opportunities.
- ▶ Support policy dialogues, roundtables, and coalition engagements that use evidence to drive civic mobilisation and reform.
- ▶ Represent Ahaki CSO in strategic research and policy platforms, articulating clear, values-based positions.

4. Partnerships, Collaboration & Fundraising

- ▶ Cultivate research partnerships with academic institutions, think tanks, CSOs, and regional bodies.
- ▶ Contribute to the development of funding proposals, concept notes, and research grants aligned with Ahaki's mission.
- ▶ Participate in donor engagement and reporting processes by providing research-specific updates and learning insights.

5. Capacity Strengthening & Mentorship

- ▶ Mentor junior researchers, interns, and programme staff in research methods, ethics, and evidence translation.
- ▶ Facilitate internal learning sessions and communities of practice to advance institutional research literacy.
- ▶ Contribute to the refinement of institutional research standards, protocols, and ethics procedures

6. Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

- ▶ Collaborate with MEL staff to ensure that research informs programme adaptation and impact measurement.
- ▶ Document and share learning, reflecting critically on the use of evidence in advocacy and systems change.

Person Specification – Core Competencies & Experience

▶ Strategic & Technical Expertise

- ▶ Proven experience in leading M&E strategy design, including results frameworks and adaptive M&E systems.
- ▶ Demonstrated ability to bridge academic metrics with development sector outcome measurement.
- ▶ Expertise in both qualitative and quantitative research and evaluation methods.

▶ Qualifications

- ▶ A Master's degree in Public Health, Social Sciences, Development Studies, Public Policy, or related field (PhD preferred or in progress).
- ▶ Additional certification in research methods, monitoring and evaluation, or policy analysis is an advantage.

▶ Professional Experience

- ▶ At least 6–8 years of progressively senior experience in applied research within academia, civil society, or policy institutions.
- ▶ Proven experience designing and delivering interdisciplinary research that informs civic action or policy reform.

▶ Technical Competencies

- ▶ Advanced qualitative and/or quantitative research skills, with experience leading mixed-methods studies.
- ▶ Strong knowledge of participatory action research, feminist methodologies, or decolonial research frameworks.
- ▶ Track record of publishing or producing high-quality research outputs, including peer-reviewed work.

▶ Policy & Advocacy Alignment

- ▶ Demonstrated experience translating research into policy and advocacy materials.
- ▶ Strong familiarity with regional and national policy frameworks on health, gender, social protection, or governance.

▶ Communication & Influence

- ▶ Excellent writing, synthesis, and presentation skills tailored for diverse audiences (academic, community, policy).
- ▶ Comfortable engaging in public speaking, media interviews, and external representation on technical matters.

‣ **Teamwork & Institutional Engagement**

- Strong leadership, mentoring, and cross-team collaboration abilities.
- Self-driven, solutions-oriented, and committed to equity, integrity, and participatory engagement.

‣ **Language Proficiency**

- Full professional fluency in English required; working knowledge of Kiswahili, or local languages is an asset.