



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title: Children's Surgical Safety Fellow

Location: Ethiopia

About us: Global nonprofit making surgery and anesthesia safer worldwide

Reporting to: Global Clinical Director

Key relationships: Global Clinical leads, all the Clinical team members; Program Team colleagues; communications & development staff, and hospital team where the fellow will be based.

Time commitment: 3 days per week

Duration: 12 months (effective from May 2nd, 2026)

Number of fellows to be hired: 1

About Lifebox

Lifebox is a growing and dynamic global health non-profit founded by Dr Atul Gawande, dedicated to saving lives by improving the safety of surgery and anaesthesia around the world. Lifebox works to increase anaesthesia safety, reduce surgical infection rates, and strengthen operating room teamwork through tools, training, and partnerships. Since its founding in 2011, Lifebox has worked in over 116 countries and trained more than 14,000 healthcare providers. Lifebox is registered as a charity in Ethiopia, the UK, and US, with over 50 staff and affiliated faculty, and an operating budget of nearly \$4M supported by individual donors and foundations. To learn more, see: www.lifebox.org

Improving Children Surgical Safety in Ethiopia and beyond

Lifebox is initiating a program to improve the safety and quality of Children surgical care, where perioperative mortality among children remains significantly higher than in high-income settings and is largely driven by preventable system-level gaps across the surgical pathway.

The program focuses on addressing key drivers of poor outcomes in Children surgical patients, including inadequate perioperative monitoring, poor thermal and fluid management, delayed recognition of deterioration, inconsistent infection prevention practices, and limited use of standardized safety processes across the ward, operating room, and ICU settings.

This initiative will be implemented using Lifebox's **Safer Surgical Systems Strengthening (S4)** approach, which combines system assessment, targeted safety interventions, and continuous quality improvement to strengthen care delivery across the full perioperative pathway.

The program will be implemented at selected hospitals in Ethiopia, working with multidisciplinary teams including surgeons, anesthetists, nurses, and perioperative staff. Through a structured, facility-based approach, the program will:

- Conduct perioperative system assessments to identify gaps in Children surgical care
- Implement targeted interventions focusing on high-impact areas such as:
 - Prevention of perioperative hypothermia
 - Safe fluid and electrolyte management
 - Strengthening monitoring and early recognition of deterioration
 - Infection prevention and safe instrument handling
- Adapt and integrate pediatric-specific checklists and standardized care protocols
- Deliver multidisciplinary training and simulation-based learning
- Establish quality improvement (QI) systems using Plan–Do–Study–Act (PDSA) cycles
- Support ongoing data collection, review, and use for decision-making

The program aims to strengthen perioperative systems rather than isolated clinical practices, ensuring that improvements are embedded into routine care and sustained over time.

Through this approach, the program seeks to improve adherence to key safety practices, strengthen team-based care, and ultimately reduce preventable morbidity and mortality among pediatric surgical patients.

The model is designed to be scalable and adaptable across different hospital settings, contributing to broader efforts to improve surgical safety and health system performance in Ethiopia and beyond.

Roles and responsibilities of the Fellow

The fellow will coordinate, monitor, and support the implementation of Lifebox’s Children Surgical Safety Improvement project in Ethiopia and beyond and is also expected to work closely with clinical and program teams of Lifebox working globally and to collaborate with other Lifebox staff on an ad-hoc basis in line with agreed project deliverables. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Lead perioperative system assessments, data analysis, and gap prioritization, and support the implementation of tailored interventions based on identified needs
- Adapt existing Lifebox core programs and co-design new, context-specific interventions in collaboration with facility teams.
- Monitor the effectiveness of implemented changes, provide timely solutions to identified gaps, and offer continuous feedback for improvement.
- Actively participate in quarterly mentorship sessions with Lifebox’s Clinical Leads, and Medtech and Innovation Lead Leads and engage in regular coordination meetings with the Clinical leads, Senior Program Manager for East & Southern Africa, and Ethiopia Program Coordinator.

- Contribute to Lifebox's global children surgical initiatives, focusing on surgical safety system, surgical outcomes, quality improvement, and measurable safety advancements.
- Lead or support research and academic efforts to evaluate project impact and patient level outcome, ensure sustainability, and contribute to knowledge sharing through presentations and reports.
- Serve as the liaison between hospital S4 implementation teams, hospital leadership, and Lifebox, addressing quality issues in real time.
- Lead Lifebox-led training sessions.
- Attend Lifebox's clinical team meetings, all team meetings and program implementation meetings, and present relevant content as needed.
- Prepare, submit, and present project related research or quality improvement work, activity plans, reports and final fellowship reports based on set timeline.
- Notify Lifebox at least one week in advance of any planned absence.

The Fellow will get:

- Hands-on experience and training in quality improvement, program delivery, human-centred design, operations management, and research in surgery and anaesthesia, with a focus on low-resource settings.
- Comprehensive mentorship and technical support from Lifebox's global team, including senior clinical leaders, innovation experts, researchers, and program staff.
- Opportunities to contribute to impactful, publishable academic work and collaborate with an international network of clinicians, researchers, and global health stakeholders.
- Exposure to abstract submissions and presentation in a national or international conferences.
- Exposure to global health program development, implementation, training pedagogy, device distribution, and nonprofit operations.
- A structured support to develop leadership, project management, and communication skills.
- A 12-month monthly stipend of \$833.33 which is subject to applicable tax and paid from Lifebox upon submission of an activity report and receiving approval from the Global Clinical Director.

Position Requirement:

- Final-year Pediatric Surgery resident, recent Pediatric Surgery graduate, currently working in Ethiopia.
- Demonstrated interest in children surgical care, perioperative safety, and quality improvement

- Ability to work within multidisciplinary teams across ward, operating room, and ICU settings
- Strong communication, coordination, and organizational skills
- Ability to support data collection, basic analysis, and use of data for improvement
- Commitment to the duration of the project.
- Able to dedicate three days per week to the required activities.

Duration:

The position will last for 12 months from May 2nd, 2026, to April 30th, 2027.

Accountability

Direct accountability is to the Lifebox Global Clinical Director, with close collaboration with Clinical leads, Senior Program Manager for East & Southern Africa, Ethiopia-based Program Coordinator, and with collaboration across the program implementation team.

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply please email your CV and a cover letter as a single document explaining your motivation and how you are best suited for this position to opportunities@lifebox.org.

Please note the following:

Correspondence will only be entered with candidates who have been shortlisted. If you have not received a reply within two weeks of the closing date, please consider your application unsuccessful.

Closing date: April 14, 2026.

Lifebox is an equal opportunity employer and values diversity