DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENT

Preamble:
The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme is the UN organization that promotes volunteerism to support peace and development worldwide. Volunteerism can transform the pace and nature of development and it benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer. UNV contributes to peace and development by advocating for volunteerism globally, encouraging partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing volunteers.

In most cultures, volunteerism is deeply embedded in long-established, ancient traditions of sharing and support within the communities. In this context, UN Volunteers take part in various forms of volunteerism and play a role in development and peace together with co-workers, host agencies and local communities.

In all assignments, UN Volunteers promote volunteerism through their action and conduct. Engaging in volunteer activity can effectively and positively enrich their understanding of local and social realities, as well as create a bridge between themselves and the people in their host community. This will make the time they spend as UN Volunteers even more rewarding and productive.

1. Assignment title: Public Health Officer
2. Host entity: World Health Organisation (WHO)
3. Volunteer category: National UN Volunteer
4. Duty station, country: Colombo, Sri Lanka
5. Number of UN Volunteers: 1
6. Duration (in months): 6 months
7. Possibility of extension*: Yes
8. Assignment family status: Family assignment
9. Expected starting date: Immediate
10. Organizational context and brief project description:

WHO is a specialized agency of the United Nations that was established in July 1946 and whose objective is the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health. WHO’s primary role is to direct and coordinate international health within the United Nations system. WHO’s main areas of work are health systems; health through the life-course; noncommunicable and communicable diseases; preparedness, surveillance and response; and corporate services.

World Health Organization (WHO) is the United Nations Specialized agency for health established on 7 April 1948. WHO was one of the first United Nations agencies in Sri Lanka (1952) and over sixty years later, WHO Country Office for Sri Lanka (WCO-SRL) remains a steadfast intergovernmental
organization committed to supporting the people of the country to attain the highest level of health through the strengthening of the health system on the principles of equity, fairness and responsiveness with emphasis on the poor and marginalized.

Core functions of WCO-SRL:
- Providing leadership on matters critical to health and engaging in partnerships where joint action is needed
- Shaping the research agenda and stimulating the generation, translation and dissemination of valuable knowledge
- Setting norms and standards, and promoting and monitoring their implementation
- Articulating ethical and evidence-based policy options
- Providing technical support, catalyzing change, and building sustainable institutional capacity
- Monitoring the health situation and assessing health trends

WHO goal is to support the people of the country to attain the highest level of health through strengthening of the health system on the principles of equity, fairness and responsiveness with emphasis on the poor and marginalized.

In working towards this goal, WCO-SRL seeks the services of the Public Health Officer to support the COVID-19 response and engage in strategic planning and coordinated action to maintain essential health service delivery, mitigating the risk of system collapse.

During the current COVID-19 pandemic, WCO-SRL requires immediate assistance to balance the demands of responding directly to COVID-19.


Supervision, induction and duty of care of UN Volunteers

UN Volunteers should be provided equal duty of care as extended to all host entity personnel. Host entity support to the UN Volunteer includes, but is not limited to:
- Introductory briefings about the organisation and office-related context including security, emergency procedures, good cultural practice and orientation to the local environment;
- Support with arrival administration including setting-up of bank accounts, residence permit applications and completion of other official processes as required by the host government or host entity;
- Structured guidance, mentoring and coaching by a supervisor including a clear workplan and performance appraisal;
- Access to office space, equipment, IT support and any other systems and tools required to complete the objectives of the assignment including a host entity email address;
- Access to shared host entity corporate knowledge, training and learning;
- Inclusion of the volunteer in emergency procedures such as evacuations;
- Leave management;
- DSA for official travel, when applicable;
- All changes in the Description of Assignment occurring between recruitment and arrival or during the assignment need to be formalized with the United Nations Volunteer Programme.
12. Description of tasks:

Within the delegated authority and under the supervision of the Public Health Administrator, WHO Sri Lanka, or his/her designated mandated representative(s), the UN Volunteer is expected to support in activities that are necessary to balance the demands of responding directly to COVID-19, while simultaneously engaging in strategic planning and coordinated action to maintain essential health service delivery, mitigating the risk of system collapse.

The following activities will be undertaken to support the national and district levels reorganize and maintain access to high-quality essential health services for all.

- Assess threats to human life and health, damage to health infrastructure for primary and secondary care, the state of health referral and support systems, including cold chain, laboratory, essential drugs and health information systems, and the vital needs of the affected populations;
- Collaborate with national authorities and health partners to coordinate and implement public health response activities as part of the health cluster’s strategic response; analyse existing coordination mechanisms, designing and recommending improvements;
- Provide analysis of the public health risks, needs and capacities and advise on priority interventions for WHO and partners; challenges and operational course correctors, as applicable;
- Monitor progress towards achievement of universal health coverage; analyse social determinants of health and their impact on the incident management system, including identifying inequities, gaps in the delivery of health services or emergency interventions, recommending appropriate actions and innovative approaches to improve the situation;
- Facilitate the implementation of effective, evidence-based policies, public health programmes and interventions through all life cycles, this might include maternal and new born health, health promotion and education, non-communicable diseases (NCDs), the elderly, social determinant of health, violence and injury prevention including road safety, gender and health equity and other related areas;
- Secure information from a broad range of health sectors, analysing such and consolidating health data in trends and trends assessment, with particular attention to surveillance, monitoring and early warning;
- Perform any other related incident-specific duties, as required by the functional supervisor.

Furthermore, UN Volunteers are encouraged to integrate the UNV mandate within their assignment and promote volunteerism through engagement with communities in the course of their work. As such, UN Volunteers should dedicate part of their time to the following suggested activities:

- Strengthen their knowledge and understanding of the concept of volunteerism by reading relevant publications, developing networks with volunteering organisations in the area of health and taking an active part in UNV activities (for example, in events that mark International Volunteer Day and World Health Day);
The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

13. Results/expected outputs:

- Be acquainted with and build on traditional and/or local forms of volunteerism in the host country;
- Provide annual and end-of-assignment reports on UN Volunteer actions, results and opportunities;
- Contribute articles/write-ups on field experiences and submit them for UNV publications/websites, newsletters, press releases, etc.;
- Promote or advise local groups in the use of online volunteering, or encourage relevant local individuals and organizations to use the UNV Online Volunteering service whenever possible.

14. Qualifications / requirements:

a) Qualifications, skills, experience:

Required Degree Level: Master's degree

Required Experience: 2 years

The incumbent must be a dynamic, multifunctional individual, who supports WHO with professionalism, dedication and client orientation, and who must be willing to work on both programmatic/substantive aspects, and to provide operational/logistical services. The following qualifications are required:
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- Master’s degree or equivalent in public health and/or health-related field, from an accredited and recognized academic institution is required, or:
- A Bachelor’s degree or equivalent in combination with relevant training and/or professional experience may be accepted in lieu of an advanced university degree;
- At least 2 years of professional work experience at the national level in public health and health sector coordination.
- Post graduate studies or specialized training in emergency response or disaster management in the context of public health, is desirable.
- Diploma in tropical medicine or disaster management, is an asset.
- Past experience in capacity building, developing and promoting collaborative partnerships, is required.
- Prior relevant work experience in WHO/UN system, health cluster partners, relevant nongovernmental or humanitarian organizations, is desirable.
- Experience in capacity building Programme planning/development, project management, monitoring and evaluation, is desirable.
- Strong overall computer literacy, including proficiency in various MS Office applications (Excel, PowerPoint, and Word, etc.), and office technology equipment;
- Fluency in spoken and written English; and/or knowledge of Sinhala and Tamil is an advantage;
- Proven ability to multitask across various planning and implementation processes within a highly demanding environment;

Functional Knowledge and Skills:

- In-depth knowledge of public health programmes with focus on prevention and control of NCDs and their major risk factors, health system, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience of operational management of health aspects/consequences of humanitarian crises and outbreaks in field settings;
- Demonstrated skills in proposal and report writing, knowledge of and experience with needs assessments in emergency settings, strategic information analysis and planning and ability to anticipate new trends in the field of public health and take actions accordingly;
- Capacity building skills for the development, implementation and analysis of technical cooperation programmes and activities, including the development of programmatic indicators.

b) Competencies and values:

**Professionalism:** demonstrated understanding of operations relevant to WHO; technical capabilities or knowledge relevant or transferrable to WHO procedures and rules; discretion, political sensitivity, diplomacy and tact to deal with clients; ability to apply good judgement; ability to liaise and coordinate with a range of different actors, especially in senior positions; where appropriate, high degree of autonomy, personal initiative and ability to take ownership; resourcefulness and willingness to accept wide responsibilities and ability to work independently under established procedures; ability to manage information objectively, accurately and confidentially; responsive and client-oriented;
Integrity: demonstrate the values and ethical standards of the UN and WHO in daily activities and behaviours while acting without consideration of personal gains; resist undue political pressure in decision-making; stand by decisions that are in the organization’s interest even if they are unpopular; take prompt action in cases of unprofessional or unethical behaviour; does not abuse power or authority;

Teamwork and respect for diversity: ability to operate effectively across organizational boundaries; excellent interpersonal skills; ability to establish and maintain effective partnerships and harmonious working relations in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, mixed-gender environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity; sensitivity and adaptability to culture, gender, religion, nationality and age; commitment to implementing the goal of gender equality by ensuring the equal participation and full involvement of women and men in all aspects of UN operations; ability to achieve common goals and provide guidance or training to colleagues;

Commitment to continuous learning: initiative and willingness to learn new skills and stay abreast of new developments in area of expertise; ability to adapt to changes in work environment.

Planning and organizing: effective organizational and problem-solving skills and ability to manage a large volume of work in an efficient and timely manner; ability to establish priorities and to plan, coordinate and monitor (own) work; ability to work under pressure, with conflicting deadlines, and to handle multiple concurrent projects/activities;

Communication: proven interpersonal skills; good spoken and written communication skills, including ability to prepare clear and concise reports; ability to conduct presentations, articulate options and positions concisely; ability to make and defend recommendations; ability to communicate and empathize with staff (including national staff), military personnel, volunteers, counterparts and local interlocutors coming from very diverse backgrounds; capacity to transfer information and knowledge to a wide range of different target groups;

Flexibility: adaptability and ability to live and work in potentially hazardous and remote conditions, involving physical hardship and little comfort; to operate independently in austere environments for protracted periods; willingness to travel within the area of operations and to transfer to other duty stations within the area of operations as necessary;

Genuine commitment towards the principles of voluntary engagement, which includes solidarity, compassion, reciprocity and self-reliance; and commitment towards WHO’s mission and vision, as well as to the UN Core Values.

c) Language skills
   - Fluency in spoken and written English is required;
   - Working knowledge of Sinhala and/or Tamil is an advantage;

15. Living Conditions:

Colombo is located on the Western Province of Sri Lanka and is the commercial capital of the country. Colombo is located on the west coast of the island and adjacent to the administrative capital, Sri Jayewardenepura, Kotte. The climate is temperate all throughout the year, but humidity is usually high. From March to April the temperature averages around 31 degrees Celsius (88 degrees Fahrenheit). The only major change in the Colombo weather occurs during the monsoon seasons from May to August and October to January when heavy rainfall occurs.

As this is a national UN Volunteer assignment, the UN Volunteer will be responsible for arranging his/her own housing and other living essentials.
16. Conditions of Service

The contract lasts for the period indicated above with possibility of extensions subject to availability of funding, operational necessity and satisfactory performance. However, there is no expectation of renewal of the assignment.

Travel to duty station (if applicable) and a Settling-In-Grant will be provided in the event the duty station is not within commuting distance from the place of recruitment. The applicable Volunteer Living Allowance of LKR 91,675 is provided monthly to cover housing, utilities and normal cost of living expenses. Life, health and permanent disability insurance are included (health insurance for up to 3 dependents), as well as final repatriation (if applicable) and resettlement allowance for satisfactory service.

Furthermore, in non-family duty stations that belong to hardship categories D or E, as classified by the ICSC, a Well-Being Differential (WBD) will be provided monthly.

UNV will provide, together with the offer of assignment, a copy of the Conditions of Service, including Code of conduct, to the successful candidate.

17. How to Apply

These posts are open only to Sri Lankan nationals.

Submit your CV with a cover letter (in English) and telephone/email contact information by email to info@unv.lk clearly indicating the post title "Public Health Officer" in the subject line of the email, by 8th May 2020 (Friday).

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted and invited for an interview.

United Nations Volunteers is an equal opportunity programme which welcomes applications from qualified professionals. We are committed to achieving diversity in terms of gender, nationality, age and culture.