

The mission of WHO is the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health.

Vacancy Notice No: SEAR/CO/12/FT09

Date: 21 September 2012

Title: Medical Epidemiologist

Application Deadline: **20 October 2012**

Grade: P5

Duty Station: New Delhi, India

Contract type: Fixed-Term Appointment

Organization unit: SEARO Countries (SE\_ACO) /  
SE\_IND WR Office, India (SE\_IND)

Duration of contract: Two years

### OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME :

#### Underlying Values and Core Functions of WHO

All the Member States of WHO in the South East Asia Region share the common value of the highest attainable standard of health as a fundamental human right. All of WHO actions are based on this and rooted in the underlying values of equity, solidarity and participation.

The seven point global health agenda contained in WHO's Eleventh General Programme of Work (2006-2015) includes: (i) investing in health to reduce poverty; (ii) building individual and global health security; (iii) promoting universal coverage, gender equality and health related human rights; (iv) tackling determinants of health; (v) strengthening health systems and equitable access; (vi) harnessing knowledge, science and technology; and (vii) strengthening governance, leadership and accountability.

WHO's mandate revolves around six core functions: (i) providing leadership on global health matters; (ii) shaping the health research agenda; (iii) setting norms and standards; (iv) articulating evidence-based policy options; (v) providing technical support to countries; and (vi) monitoring and assessing health trends.

The South -East Asia Region of WHO is made up of 11 countries, with over 1.8 billion people, with India's population of 1.2 billion. The diversity of people and health situations requires, on the demand side, a solid understanding of the emerging socio-economic, epidemiologic and demographic patterns and trends at both aggregate as well as national and sub-national levels, with due sensitivity to disadvantaged populations and vulnerable segments of the society. On the supply side, it is equally crucial to have a solid understanding of the commonalities and divergences of the health systems, the circumstances and political economy under which they have evolved and operate.

#### Mission of the WHO Country Office for India

Within the framework of WHO's Country Cooperation Strategy the mission of the WHO Country Office is to support India in: (i) developing and sustaining its own health policies, health systems and public health programmes; (ii) working to prevent and overcome threats to health; (iii) anticipating future challenges; and (iv) advocating public health

As a part of WHO Country Office for India the National Polio Surveillance Project (NPSP) is a partnership between the Government of India (GoI) and WHO towards eradication of polio, measles mortality reduction (90% by 2013) and measles elimination and strengthening of Universal Immunization Programme (UIP) to substantially reduce the number of an estimated 10 million unimmunized children and enable prevention of the estimated 500,000 annual child deaths in India due to vaccine-preventable diseases. WHO-India NPSP assists GoI in the following main aspects of the country's immunization program:

- conduct, coordination and quality assurance of poliovirus surveillance, including laboratory support;

- tactical planning, quality assurance and monitoring of supplementary polio immunization activities (SIAs);
- coordination of measles and rubella outbreak surveillance with laboratory confirmation;
- strategic planning, quality assurance and monitoring of mass measles catch-up vaccination campaigns;
- collection, analysis, dissemination and strategic use of surveillance and immunization monitoring data;
- overall strategic and policy support for strengthening of UIP, including introduction of new vaccines;
- monitoring of routine immunization activities in low coverage states;
- improvement of routine immunization coverage, especially among high risk populations;
- training and capacity building for the immunization program and vaccine-preventable disease surveillance as well as for surveillance and management of adverse events following immunization (AEFI);
- conduct of research, including vaccine immunogenicity/effectiveness studies and operational research; coordination and strategic linkages with other priority WHO programs under the Country Cooperation Strategy.

#### Description of duties:

Under the direct supervision of the WHO Representative to India, the incumbent will perform the following functions:

#### General Responsibilities:

1. Serve as the lead WHO technical advisor to the Government of India on polio eradication, control and elimination of other vaccine-preventable diseases, introduction of new vaccines and on strategic, policy, disease surveillance and vaccine safety aspects of the Universal Immunization Program of India. Play an advisory role in coordinating and leveraging resources of national and international partners and stakeholders in polio eradication, disease control, vaccines and immunization.
2. Provide leadership and oversight to the NPSP operations throughout India. Identify, organize and effectively manage the financial, human and logistical resources needed to achieve results and ensure close coordination with union and state governments and partner/donor agencies;
3. Lead and coordinate strategic planning in the Project; ensure clear and accountable work plans linked to adequate financial and human resources and monitor their implementation and impact; oversee project budgetary planning and resource mobilization activities.
4. As a key technical expert of WHO, make presentations, draft reports, strategic documents and programme updates for policy makers and partners, and ensure the quality of programme bulletins, surveillance reports and other scientific publications by the Project.
5. Monitor and ensure that donor funding is utilized efficiently and appropriately as per WHO rules and regulations and that reports to donors are produced on time and according to the requirements of the respective donor agreements.
6. Oversee human resources, ensure recruitment and retention of high quality team members in the project in an efficient manner and in accordance with WHO rules and regulations. Implement personnel development and learning activities and ensure effective performance management and accountability;
7. With the imminent successful eradication of polio in India, coupled with the new six year Country Cooperation Strategy 2012-17, manage the programmatic and organizational transitions of NPSP which involves expanding WHO support to broader immunization goals and repositioning the project to enable strategic WHO assistance to states in other priority public health programmes while maintaining high quality and effectiveness of the polio eradication programme. A key management aspect of this transition includes assisting the government to take over, in a phased manner, certain functions that are currently being carried out by the project, in parts of the country, while shifting the project focus on building local government capacity and assuring quality and sustainability of operations.
8. Promote close internal communication and coordination between the project and the rest of the WHO country office for India to ensure harmonization of managerial and administrative practices. Coordinate development of strategic and technical linkages with other health programmes of WCO-India. Coordinate the integration of project functions into the WCO-India office operations in accordance to the Country Cooperation Strategy 2012-17.
9. To support WHO Representative to India in his/her representational institutional role with strategic partners such as the UN family, the World Bank, multilateral and other partners in improving transparency and accountability as well as undertaking additional ad hoc assignments aimed at improving health and health systems in India, as requested by the WR India.

## Specific responsibilities:

### A) Polio Eradication: assist the Government of India (GOI) in:

1. Coordinating, monitoring and assuring quality, timeliness and sensitivity of acute flaccid paralysis surveillance and laboratory testing. Ensuring timely and sensitive environmental surveillance for poliovirus. Overseeing support for field and laboratory surveillance for poliovirus;
2. Overseeing strategic planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of supplementary immunization activities that achieve high coverage, ensuring in particular that high risk populations are fully vaccinated. Assuring high levels of emergency preparedness in all states for rapid detection and robust response to any circulating poliovirus;
3. Assist in preparing the necessary documentation required for certification by the National Certification Committee for Polio Eradication;
4. Positioning the national programme to effectively implement the 'End Game' strategies for polio eradication, including guidance and support for development of new polio vaccination policies and strategies during the post polio eradication era.
5. Overseeing and coordinating research studies on polio vaccines and immunity;

### B) Measles Mortality Reduction: Assist the Government of India (GOI) in:

1. Further expanding measles and rubella outbreak surveillance with laboratory confirmation building on the existing AFP/poliovirus surveillance systems. Coordinating technical and logistical support to the measles/rubella laboratory network;
2. Overseeing strategic planning, monitoring preparedness, and assisting in evaluating implementation of mass measles vaccination campaigns to ensure their safety and achievement of high coverage. Assisting the Government in introduction and high coverage of the second measles vaccine dose in the routine immunization program across India;
3. Assisting in enhancing surveillance for measles and the immunization program to embark upon measles elimination after the goal of 90% reduction in measles mortality by 2013 has been achieved.

### C) Strengthening India's Universal Immunization Programme: Provide technical assistance and cooperation in:

1. Strategic planning and national vaccination policy formulation, tactics to rapidly improve immunization coverage particularly among high risk populations, building human resource and program monitoring and management capacity, development of laboratory supported surveillance for vaccine-preventable diseases, and surveillance and management of adverse events following immunization (AEFI);
2. Intensifying monitoring of immunization program and building capacity for strategic and high quality micro-planning in five states with large numbers of unimmunized children;
3. Collecting, managing, analyzing and strategically using data on immunization coverage, program monitoring, disease and AEFI surveillance and organizing state of the art knowledge and information on vaccines and immunization and translating these streams of information into evidence for programme action and policy making;
4. Coordinate operations research, evaluation and special studies related to best practices in immunization, control of vaccine preventable diseases and effective program strengthening activities.

## REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

### Education:

Essential: Medical degree with postgraduate degree or training in epidemiology or control of communicable diseases.

Desirable: Degree in Public Health or Preventive Medicine.

### Skills:

Functional Knowledge and Skills :

In-depth knowledge and strong technical and managerial expertise of polio eradication, vaccine-preventable disease surveillance and laboratory testing, immunization, vaccines, epidemiology, control and elimination of vaccine-preventable diseases. Public health leadership skills with ability to work effectively with governments and colleagues in a team setting at national and international level.

Competencies:

1. Producing results
2. Building and promoting partnerships across the organization and beyond
3. Communicating in a credible and effective way
4. Creating an Empowering and Motivating Environment
5. Ensuring the effective use of resources

Other Skills (e.g. IT):

Capacity to analyze and summarize complex information, strong writing skills and ability to make succinct high quality presentations.

Experience:

Essential: At least 10 years of extensive national and/or international experience in managing large complex teams working in epidemiology and control of communicable diseases and all aspects of EPI, including in particular expertise in polio eradication.

Desirable: Substantial/working experience as a team leader for polio eradication and/or EPI in a WHO country or regional office setting.

Languages:

Excellent knowledge of spoken and written English.

Knowledge of other WHO languages an asset.

Annual salary: (Net of tax)

US\$ 80,734 at single rate

US\$ 86,904 with primary dependants

Post Adjustment: % of the above figure(s). This percentage is to be considered as indicative since variations may occur each month either upwards or downwards due to currency exchange rate fluctuations or inflation.

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A written test and interviews may be used as a form of screening

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All applicants are encouraged to apply online as soon as possible after the vacancy has been posted and well before the deadline stated in the vacancy announcement.

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Any appointment/extension of appointment is subject to WHO Staff Regulations, Staff Rules and Manual. Only candidates under serious consideration will be contacted.

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Currently accepting applications



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