Job Opportunity

Date: January 08, 2019

Title: Technical Advisor- Electronic IDSR Specialist (Extended)

Number of Positions: One (01)

Application Deadline: January 18, 2019

Department/Program: Ministry of Health and Sanitation

Duty Station: Sierra Leone

Background:

The Sierra Leone Ministry of Health and Sanitation in Sierra Leone with technical and financial support From World Health Organization, United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other partners has revitalized the public health surveillance and response system. The system has greatly improved the ability of all levels of the health system to detect and respond to priority diseases by providing timely and reliable data for action.

In order to enhance data accuracy, timeliness of reporting, analysis and storage, the MOHS with support from health development partners has established an electronic reporting system (eIDSR) replacing the paper-based reporting. In phase one, an IDSR instance (module) interoperable with DHIS-2 was developed and rolled out in all 14 districts. From the beginning of 2017, all the districts switched from the paper-based reporting system to an electronic platform. In phase two, a mobile phone/tablet application was developed and piloted in one district. The mobile application has been rolled out in all health facilities in the pilot district. After a successful pilot, in 2018-2019 the mobile application is being rolled out nationwide to all health facilities.

The US CDC and the African field epidemiology Network (AFENET) collaborated to support MOHS to establish a field epidemiology training program (FETP) for surveillance and other public health workers at the national and subnational levels of the health systems. Graduates of the FETP at the frontline and intermediate levels will play a critical in supporting the roll out of this electronic surveillance system.

The US CDC is committed to supporting MOHS build a reliable and robust eIDSR system, and to this end, is collaborating with AFENET to recruit and embed within the MOHS **a highly qualified and experienced public health surveillance specialist** to serve as Technical Advisor for Electronic IDSR to consolidate the roll out thus establishing a sustainable system that addresses the unique needs of Sierra Leone. This position will also work closely with MoHS to build capacity so that MoHS will ultimately be equipped to lead eIDSR independent of partner support.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Technical Advisor will work with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS), the Surveillance Lead for CDC in Sierra Leone, AFENET, and other partners to capacitate MoHS to establish and sustain an interoperable, interconnected, electronic real-time reporting system.

Key functions will include:
- Support the national rollout, implementation, and monitoring of electronic Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (eIDSR) at the national, district and health facility level
- Conduct technical troubleshooting of the system to ensure optimal functionality
- Work alongside MOHS to build capacity of key MOHS staff to assume ownership of above functions for eIDSR
- Building on the skills developed in FETP, provide technical assistance to surveillance officers to continue to apply their FETP training by performing data analyses on IDSR data and using data for decision-making
- Capacitate MOHS to assess IDSR data quality and monitor trends over time, including comparison of paper-based IDSR reporting to eIDSR
- In collaboration with MOHS, CDC, and key stakeholders, document progress and challenges in revitalizing IDSR in Sierra Leone, such as progress made since the transition from paper-based reporting to district-level eIDSR then to facility-level eIDSR and submit for publication in peer-reviewed journals to share with the scientific community
- Assess the benefits of eIDSR to the surveillance system in Sierra Leone, and draw on findings from the CDC-supported eIDSR costs analysis to explore if the benefits are substantial enough to justify the costs
- Participate in routine surveillance meetings and events, outbreak investigations, and other relevant activities
- Develop a transition plan for how MOHS will assume ownership (after this position's term ends) of monitoring implementation of eIDSR, gauging the added value of eIDSR, and assessing data quality on a continual basis
- Prepare regular and timely technical reports on activities for submission to CDC, AFENET, MoHS and other partners
- Participate in monthly Cooperative Agreement meetings with CDC and AFENET
- Assist with other duties as assigned by CDC and AFENET

Position Qualifications:

1. Master's degree in Public Health / Field , MSc. Computer Science with a concentration in Health informatics, Msc Epidemiology/Biostatistics and/ or any other relevant qualifications

2. Bachelor's degree in any of the following fields: Computer Science, Statistics, Medicine, Public/environmental Health, Pharmacy, and Veterinary Medicine.

Experience and Skills

Essential:

- At least 3 years of demonstrated experiences in developing, testing, rolling out and maintenance of electronic platforms of health information exchange and disease surveillance.
- Extensive knowledge of WHO standards and policies such as the IDSR and IHR and practical understanding of the functionality of the surveillance systems at national, sub national, local and community levels of the health systems in Africa.
- Experience in IDSR data management, verification, analyzing and reporting through weekly epidemiological bulletins.
- Proficiency in using, modifying/adapting and troubleshooting ICT software and dashboards used for health information exchanges such as the District Health Information System (DHIS2).
- Strong computer skills including use of programming languages such as MYSQL, PHP, Java, Android and Visual Basic, etc.
- Previous work experiences with Ministries of Health in African and other multilateral health agencies such as WHO, US CDC on public health surveillance and health ICT activities will be an added advantage.

Required qualities:
- Ability to work collaboratively with multiple partners and teams at national and sub national levels.
- Good team player
- Strong interpersonal, communication, leadership, collaborative and good listening skills
- Ability to work independently with minimum supervision
- Openness to new ideas and willingness to accept different opinions and feedback
- Ability to complete tasks in a timely manner
- Willingness to travel for extended periods of time within the country, sometimes through rough terrain and weather conditions

Benefits: A competitive remuneration

<u>Others: Candidate must be able to begin work in February 2019</u>

Application Process

Interested candidates should submit their Application Letters detailing their experiences and skills, Curriculum Vitae, copies of relevant academic documents and 3 references to: **The Human Resource Office, African Field Epidemiology Network (AFENET). Email: sec@afenet.net on Friday, January 18, 2019 by close of business (East Africa Time).**

Note: In your application provide**:** Your name, nationality, email address, reliable telephone numbers.