# Job Opportunity

**Date:** January 08, 2019

**Title:** Technical Advisor– Sierra Leone Informatics Specialist (Extended)

**Number of Positions:** One (01)

**Application Deadline:** January 18, 2019

**Department/Program:** Ministry of Health and Sanitation

**Duty Station:** Sierra Leone

**Back ground:**

The Sierra Leone Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) in Sierra Leone with technical and financial support from World Health Organization, United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US CDC) 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) using DHIS2 and replacing the paper-based reporting. After a successful pilot in 2017, the mobile application is now being rolled out nationwide to all health facilities. In 2018, US CDC is also supporting MoHS to develop an electronic Case Based Disease Surveillance (eCBDS) system that compliments the aggregate weekly reporting of eIDSR. This system transitions the existing paper-based forms into electronic forms within DHIS2 to allow for real-time reporting of individual case investigations. It also links surveillance data with laboratory data electronically for rapid outbreak detection and response. Implementation of eCBDS will help expedite the immediate reporting of priority diseases, including epidemic prone diseases, to identify outbreaks early and support a rapid response.

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 the electronic surveillance system.

The US CDC is committed to supporting MOHS build a reliable and robust eCBDS system, and to this end, is collaborating with AFENET to recruit and embed within the MOHS **a highly qualified and experienced public health informatician** to serve as Technical Advisor for Electronic CBDS to guide the pilot and national rollout 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 eCBDS with minimal 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 in Information Technology to ensure indicator and event-based systems are in place that link surveillance and laboratory systems.

**Key functions will include:**
- Provide technical assistance for electronic Case Based Disease Surveillance (eCBDS), including:
    - monitoring the eCBDS pilot in four districts
    - making adaptions to the web-based application as needed
    - ensuring implementation of the tablet-based application
    - rollout of eCBDS nationwide
- Build capacity of MOHS staff in Information Technology and Information Systems (IT/IS) as related to DHIS2 with a focus on implementation and monitoring of eCBDS
- Serve as a liaison between key IT/IS stakeholders involved with surveillance data in DHIS2 including the MOHS Directorate of Policy, Planning, and Information (DPPI), the MOHS Surveillance Program, CDC, HISP, eHealth Africa, and University of Oslo
- Collaborate with the FETP Team in SL to add training on DHIS2, eIDSR, and eCBDS to the FETP Frontline and Intermediate courses so that graduates are equipped to use these new systems and cascade the knowledge gained to their colleagues
- Capacitate MOHS to assess CBDS data quality and monitor trends over time, including comparison of paper-based CBDS reporting to eCBDS
- In collaboration with MOHS, CDC, and key stakeholders, document progress and challenges in implementing eCBDS in Sierra Leone, such as progress made since the transition from paper-based reporting to eCBDS, and submit for publication in peer-reviewed journals to share with the scientific community
- 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 eCBDS, gauging the added value of eCBDS, 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 Informatics, 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.

## Essential Experience and Skills

- 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

**Others: Candidate must be able to begin work in February 2019**

## 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.