

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR EMERGENCY (SURGE) MISSIONS

Title:	WASH Specialist (Indicative Level P3)
Reports to:	UNICEF Representative, North Macedonia
Duration:	Six-month deployment
Location:	Skopje, North Macedonia (with travel to other locations around the country).

BACKGROUND:

Following the outbreak of COVID-19 in northern Italy, in late February 2020, the Government of North Macedonia initiated a set of measures aimed at preventing the transmission of the disease in the country. These included strengthening existing health checks at border crossings and procurement of additional medical supplies. On 26 February 2020, the Government announced the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in North Macedonia. The 50-year woman traveled to North Macedonia from Italy and was placed in isolation in the Skopje Hospital. To further contain the spread of the virus, on 10 March 2020 the Government closed all schools, kindergartens and Universities for an initial period of 2 weeks. All major public gatherings were also prohibited. By May 27, 2020, the total number of confirmed cases is 2014 (116 dead).

In response to COVID-19, the Ministry of Health set up a special crisis body to follow developments and propose recommendations to the Government. This body works in cooperation with the MoH Communicable Disease Commission, the Steering Committee for coordination and management of crisis and the Institute for Public Health in monitoring the situation and proposing measures and recommendations to the Government. The ultimate executive decisioning body remains the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia. The UN system is represented through the WHO which plays an active role in the crisis body.

In March 2020, the President of the country declared a nation-wide state of emergency which effectively transferred all legislative authorities to the Government, still in place. As in much of Europe, social distancing, school closures, partial lockdown and curfew measures have also been introduced.

To support the Government, UNICEF has developed and is implementing COVID-19 response plan, focusing on the immediate measures to ensure preparedness and/or response actions. The plan is aligned with the WHO-led Country COVID-19 Comprehensive Preparedness and Response Plan (CPRP) and is considering lessons learned from similar responses in the past, based on established inter-agency partnerships, collaboration with the national Government and unhindered access and where possible depending on securing the sustained presence by partners. The response strategy builds on and expands the significant investments which have been made over the past years in supporting national health and social systems, previous outbreaks or health response, and draw on strong risk communication networks, especially for the most vulnerable communities.

Aimed at minimizing morbidity and mortality due to n-CoV-2, one of the priorities in UNICEF response plan is strengthening infection prevention and control and WASH in health facilities designated or likely to receive suspected cases of COVID-19 and improving WASH in educational facilities, particularly in high risk communities, focusing on schools for the return of students in September to physical structures, after 3 months of distance learning.

For this purpose, the UNICEF Country Office urgently requires an experienced WASH Specialist to support the planned WASH assessment in health and educational facilities to respond to the rapidly evolving situation with COVID-19. It is important to note that the Country Office currently does not have any human resource capacity in WASH.

PURPOSE:

Under the general guidance of the UNICEF North Macedonia Deputy Representative and in close cooperation with Emergency coordinator, Education Specialist and Health and Nutrition Officer, the Emergency WASH Specialist will support assessment of WASH needs and prepare costed action plan with broad range of WASH interventions as part of UNICEF's country emergency response to COVID-19, in line with UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children (CCCs).

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS

- Lead the development and implementation of WASH assessment in health and education institutions in North Macedonia, in line with UNICEF's Core Corporate Commitments for Humanitarian action and sector co-ordination commitments. The focus for schools is for the return of students in September to physical structures, after 3 months of distance learning.
- In conjunction with the relevant partners and based on situation assessment, identify priorities and define response strategies in WASH i.e. delivery of safe drinking water, safe excreta disposal facilities and/or promotion of safe hygiene practices among affected children and their families.
- Engage with local municipal and national government agencies, sister UN agencies, NGOs, Red Cross and private sector partners in the different stages of emergency programme implementation to facilitate delivery of WASH response;
- Assess UNICEF country office response capacities in the sector and propose potential partnerships and modalities for addressing the gaps for the response delivery; including the definition of appropriate materials specifications and contracting modalities to achieve objectives consistent with "do-no-harm" principles.
- Coordinate WASH emergency interventions with the different programme sectors (especially with health and education) to ensure a comprehensive and convergent approach to emergency service delivery for vulnerable population groups.
- Prepare funding proposals and provide inputs to the regional/country situation reports and media notes as requested;
- Any other tasks that may be requested by the supervisor.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCIES

- Advanced university degree or equivalent experience in Environmental Public Health, Civil Engineering, Programme Communication, Mechanical Engineering, Geology, Hydrogeology, or Sanitation Engineering, or other related field.
- Experience working with government agencies, local authorities, international organizations, NGOs and communities in the field of water, sanitation and participatory approaches in health and hygiene promotion.
- A minimum of 10 years of experience with either the UN and/or NGO's in humanitarian WASH activities.
- Fluency in English (verbal and written). Good written and spoken skills in the language of the humanitarian operations and knowledge of another UN language may be an asset.

Additional Competencies of Successful Candidate

- Able to work quickly and effectively in a multi-cultural environment.
- Sets high levels of quality and productivity for self and co-workers.
- Demonstrates and shares detailed technical knowledge and expertise.
- Sets clearly defined objectives and plans activities for self or department.

Background & familiarity with southeastern Europe and the COVID-19 crisis is a significant advantage.