

## **PROGRAMME FOR JUNIOR PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WHO SOUTH-EAST ASIA REGION**

Member States of the WHO South-East Asia (SEA) Region are undergoing rapid transition in respect of their respective health situations. Globalization, along with new and emerging diseases, pose new challenges to many Member States that are already burdened by other health issues. The perspective of health too continues to change. Today, health is considered as central and a key component of socio-economic development.

In many countries of the Region, public health has been neglected to some extent. One important concern has been the lack of adequate number of public health professionals and public health leadership programmes. The Junior Public Health Professional (JPP) programme has been conceived in order to address the need to develop technical and managerial capacity while building public health leadership in the Region, including capacity-building aimed at developing a group of promising young health professionals.

The JPP programme of the WHO SEA Region is an opportunity for young professionals from health and health-related fields develop their knowledge, skills and positive attitudes in the area of public health while working in WHO for one to two years. This opportunity will allow them to gain valuable learning experiences and leadership skills in the management of health-related programmes and projects. While working in a specific programme area, the JPP is expected to acquire public health programming skills applicable to a broad range of situations. The JPP programme envisages "a residency programme initiative in public health with particular emphasis on leadership quality for people with required qualifications who will receive further training and at the same time render valuable services to the Organization".

## 1. Objectives

The overall objective of the programme is to develop a pool of technical and managerial expertise in the field of public health in response to the increasing human resource needs of Member States of the SEA Region, by:

- providing a “*hands-on*” training opportunity to young health professionals to strengthen their practical skills and knowledge essential to participate in public health functions at the national level; and
- exposing them to ways and means used by WHO and other international health development partners to support Member States.

## 2. Guiding principles

- 2.1 The programme will be developed based on country-specific Public Health Leadership needs of one or two years’ duration. Requests received from individuals through governments of Member States will be given the utmost priority while maintaining alignment with the mandate of the Organization. However, professionals in the private sector or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) may also be considered.
- 2.2 The JPPs will be given every opportunity to learn about and participate in the regular work of the Organization. They will be encouraged to participate freely in relevant technical activities and in all departmental meetings. However, they will not be treated as WHO staff members and will not be authorized under any circumstances to express their opinion on behalf of the World Health Organization nor to work with government counterparts on their own without the direct supervision of their supervisor.
- 2.3 The JPPs will have opportunities to travel and participate in country activities in countries of the SEA Region, as well as to participate in regional consultations and workshops, etc. on the recommendation of their supervisors who will determine the relevance of the event to JPPs work/professional development.
- 2.4 The Technical Unit or the country office will be responsible for the cost incurred including allowances, duty travel and for attending training courses during the period of assignment.
- 2.5 At the end of the programme, the Regional Office will provide a certificate of completion and encourage the individuals to return to their countries.

## 3. Contractual framework

- 3.1 In terms of the contractual arrangement, the JPP programme is modelled on the WHO Fellowship programme. While the JPP programme is similar in some respects to the WHO Fellowship framework, some procedures, terms and conditions of JPP assignments have been modified, taking into consideration the unique requirements of the JPP programme.

#### **4. Formulation of requests for JPPs**

- 4.1 The Technical Unit or WHO Representative initiates the request with a memorandum addressed to DRD/RD, along with a concept paper expressing the Terms of Reference and the duration. The request should provide an explanation as to why a JPP is needed.
- 4.2 Upon approval by DRD/RD, the Technical Unit will prepare the Vacancy Notice and submit to PER for advertisement on the WHO website for job opportunities. A copy of the vacancy Notice should be forwarded through usual channels to WHO country offices (WCOs), in order to bring it to the notice of respective Ministries of Health of Member States. Applications thus received should be forwarded to the requesting unit for completion of the selection process.

#### **5. Recruitment and selection**

- 5.1 The selection of JPPs begins with receipt of applications. The Technical Unit, Department Director or WHO Country Representative, who receive applications will carefully review them and shortlist four to five candidates based on the objective criteria developed by the Technical Unit/WCO. The JPP Programme is highly selective and only a small number of candidates are finally chosen to participate in the programme.

#### **6. Selection criteria**

- 6.1 The candidates should meet the following minimum qualifications to be considered eligible for the JPP programme. Exceptions can be made only with the agreement of the JPP Selection Panel and approval by the Regional Director. The candidate should:
- be a national of a country of the WHO SEA Region;
  - possess a university degree equivalent to a Master's Degree in health-related sciences, preferably in public health, from a reputed university;
  - have two years of relevant professional work experience;
  - be fluent in written and spoken English;
  - be between 30 and 35 years of age;
  - have computer literacy in standard software applications;
  - have the ability to successfully interact with individuals of different cultural backgrounds and beliefs, which includes willingness to understand and be tolerant of different opinions and views; and
  - not have any relative working with WHO.
- 6.2 The shortlist of candidates will be forwarded to the JPP Selection Panel. The following documents must be submitted to the JPP Selection Panel along with the short list:
- The approved concept paper with Terms of Reference;
  - Organizational chart showing where the JPP will be located.

- 6.3 The requisitioning party must ensure the availability of funding for the entire duration of the JPP's assignment, including the spill-over period in the following biennium. Technical units which have the resources (e.g. DSE, EHA and IVD) could include provision of JPP in their workplans under activities and funds can be pooled, and the JPP once recruited could be rotated from one Department to another.

## 7. JPP Selection Panel

- 7.1 The JPP Selection Panel is established to review the shortlist of applications based on the selection criteria and to shortlist the most appropriate candidate in an objective manner. Upon selection, the JPP Selection Panel is expected to recommend its nomination to the Regional Director for approval.

- 7.2 Composition of the JPP Selection Panel

**Chairperson:** Director, Health Systems Development (HSD).

**Interested Party:** Regional Adviser or Director of Technical Unit concerned or WR (for JPP to be assigned to the country office).

**Secretary:** Technical Officer-Education, Training & Support (TO-ETS).

**Facilitator:** Regional Personnel Officer (RPO).

- 7.3 The Chairperson will have no voting right except in case of a tie. The Interested Party and Secretary will have equal voting rights.
- 7.4 The Selection Panel will review the short-list of nominations to verify that the proposed candidate(s) meet(s) the minimum selection criteria that have been spelled out above. It will decide whether there is a need to conduct an interview, and if so, whether it should be a face-to-face interview or a video or tele conference.
- 7.5 After the interviews, the Selection Panel will prepare its recommendations using the form "Junior Public Health Professional Selection Recommendations and Decision" and the Secretary will submit the same to the Regional Director through DRD.
- 7.6 The Regional Director is the final approving authority.
- 7.7 Upon receiving the Regional Director's approval of selection, ETS will notify the successful candidate and issue a letter of award, together with the details of assignment as JPP and the Terms of Reference agreed upon.
- 7.8 The recruiting technical unit should also ensure that the JPP is rotated to different departments in the Regional Office particularly to PPC and BFU, and also undertakes visits to countries for obtaining wider experience in the field. The JPPs should also be encouraged to attend relevant meetings/workshops organized by WHO.

## **8. Management and administration of the JPP programme**

- 8.1 The JPP programme will be technically coordinated by Technical Unit/Department concerned and managed and administered by the ETS Unit based on a structured training outline.
- 8.2 While the Technical Unit will be responsible for the day-to-day management of JPPs under the supervision of the Director/WR, the JPP programme will be administered by the ETS Unit in collaboration with the Technical Unit concerned.
- 8.3 Acceptance to the JPP programme is subject to completion of administrative formalities, i.e. medical clearance and release by employers, if currently employed. Two references from previous employers may also be obtained. Form JMS 1.E is used for purposes of obtaining medical clearance. The Regional Staff Physician (RSP) is responsible for administering medical clearance.
- 8.4 Upon the candidate's acceptance of offer and completion of all administrative formalities including the JPP for obtaining clearance from his/her government or employer, which is a prerequisite to joining the programme, the Fellowships unit will issue the following:
- Letter of Award (LOA) with cover letter and Letter of Acceptance.
  - Terms and Conditions of assignment of the Junior Public Health Professional.
  - Terms of Reference.
  - Travel Request.
- 8.5 The JPP is responsible for arranging the appropriate visa (if required) to the country of assignment. The Regional Administrative Services Officer or the Administrative Officer in the Country Office where the JPP will be assigned may assist in (a) facilitating the issue of visa and other relevant permits, and (b) arranging travel and airport pick-up on arrival at the place of assignment.
- 8.6 The Technical Unit or Administrative Officer (if assigned to a WHO Country Office) will organize induction training for the JPP on arrival at the place of assignment. The Technical Unit concerned will provide technical briefing.
- 8.7 Payment of monthly allowances will be the responsibility of ETS/BFO/SEARO (or Finance unit in the Country Office). Payment of allowances will be initiated by ETS unit upon receipt of Reporting Form from the JPP.
- 8.8 The JPP will receive first month's emoluments in US dollars while subsequent payments will be made in the local currency of the duty station.

## **Terms and conditions applicable to JPPs**

### **9 Status of JPP**

- 9.1 Individuals engaged as JPP will be issued a Letter of Award (LOA). They will serve as independent professionals in their personal capacity and not as representatives of a government or any other authority external to the World Health Organization (WHO).
- 9.2 The JPPs are neither staff members of WHO nor “officials” for the purpose of Conventions of the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies.
- 9.3 The JPPs require a valid national passport and, depending on their nationality, a non-immigrant visa to enter the country of their assignment. JPPs are not entitled for the issue of a United Nations Laissez-Passer (UNLP).

### **10 Letter of Award**

- 10.1 A Letter of Award (LoA) will be issued by TO-ETS to the successful candidates to formalize their acceptance to the JPP Programme. The Terms and Conditions as set out therein will be an integral part of the said LoA issued to individual JPPs.
- 10.2 The obligations of WHO are strictly limited to the expressed terms and conditions of the LoA. Accordingly, the JPP will not be entitled to any benefit, payment, or subsidy from WHO except as expressly provided for in the LoA.
- 10.3 The LoA may be amended with the mutual consent of WHO and the JPP, to the extent it is within the objectives of the JPP programme.
- 10.4 The duration of the LoA is for one to two years depending on the need from the date of commencement as stated therein.

### **11 Obligations and responsibilities**

- 11.1 The JPPs are exclusively responsible to WHO with respect to their performance. They shall neither seek nor accept instructions regarding the duties to be performed from any government or from any authority external to WHO.
- 11.2 During the period of their assignment with WHO, JPPs may not engage in any activity that is incompatible with the discharge of their duties while with WHO. They will be required to exercise the utmost discretion in all matters of official business of WHO, and to conduct themselves at all times in a manner compatible with their association with WHO.
- 11.3 The JPPs may not share any information that has not been made public (except in the course of providing services under the LoA) at any time to any other person, government or authority external to WHO, unless requested to do so by the Regional Director or his designate. Nor shall JPPs use such

information to personal advantage at any time. These obligations do not lapse upon termination of the LoA.

- 11.4 The JPP should not be entrusted with the responsibility to represent WHO in any forum at country or regional level.
- 11.5 The JPPs, after their training, should return to their previous jobs for at least one/two years commensurate with the time spent on training provided by WHO.

## **12 Allowances**

- 12.1 **Monthly subsistence allowance:** WHO shall pay a fixed monthly subsistence allowance at par with P2 base salary at “single” rate. For the first 30 days this may be paid in advance once the JPP has reported for duty.
- 12.2 **Baggage:** A lumpsum amount of US\$ 200/400 (depending on the duration of the programme – one or two years) will be given at the end of assignment by way of “terminal allowance” to cover the cost of baggage, etc. provided the Technical Unit has received the final report due under the terms and conditions of the LoA. On the basis of the request by the Technical Unit, including certification that final report has been received, TO-ETS will issue a payment authorization to effect final settlement.

## **13 Travel**

- 13.1 Travel will be facilitated through a Travel Request by the most economical and direct air route from the place of residence of the JPP to the place of assignment and *vice versa*. After issuance of the Travel Request, country offices may make travel arrangements where applicable.
- 13.2 In addition, all official travel during the course of the JPP and any special training programmes arranged for the JPP will be the responsibility of the Technical Unit/AO Country Office concerned, wherever applicable, that will issue the relevant travel authorization and arrange for “economy” class travel. The JPPs should be paid the standard “per diem” as applicable to all others participating in that particular event. In case the participation of the JPP pertains to any approved non-WHO meetings, as part of learning, the registration and other costs involved will also be covered by the travel authorization and should be settled by the technical and finance units directly with the relevant organizers.

## **14 Time-off**

- 14.1 A time-off not exceeding 2.5 days per month will be granted, subject to the exigencies of the programme and the supervisor’s approval. Time-off not exceeding 15 days may be carried forward to the next year. Unused time-off is not reimbursable.

## **15 Health insurance**

- 15.1 The JPPs will be covered under "Life, Disability and Medical Insurance Policy", provided by J. Van Breda and Co. International. The current coverage includes:

Death (from any cause):	US\$ 50 000
Permanent total disability (from any cause):	US\$ 75 000
Medical expenses:	Up to maximum of US\$ 50 000 in any twelve-consecutive- month period

The first US\$ 10 of any claim for medical expenses is not reimbursable (per 12-month period starting from the commencement of the coverage)

The monthly insurance premium will be borne by WHO.

## **16 Taxation**

- 16.1 The Regional Office undertakes no liability, including by way of reimbursement, for any taxes, duty or other contribution payable by JPPs on payments received by them under the LoA.

## **17 Publication and title rights**

- 17.1 The JPPs are required to submit to WHO, through their supervisor, for possible publication in one of the Organization's periodicals, any papers on the work they have performed during their assignment. Papers that are not retained for publication will be returned to the JPP.

All publications, write-ups and reports prepared by the JPP are the property of WHO and if published elsewhere, prior permission must be obtained. When published, it must state that the work was performed as part of a WHO assignment and that the opinions expressed are not necessarily those of WHO.

## **18 Termination**

- 18.1 WHO may, at any time, cancel or terminate the LoA if, for no valid reason, the JPPs do not report on the date indicated in the LoA or due to reasons of ill health, unsatisfactory performance and personal problems, etc. Any conviction for a violation of the common law, whatever the nature of the offence, irrespective of the place where it has been committed, should also be a reason for cancelling the assignment granted under the LoA.

## **19 Exceptions**

- 19.1 Any exceptions in the terms and conditions not expressly stated herein are solely at the discretion and decision of WHO. All queries relating to the terms and conditions should be addressed to the TO-ETS unit at the WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia.

## 20. Security

- 20.1 All JPPs are expected to adhere to the basic security procedures that are followed by WHO staff. Based on the security situation of the duty station, the JPPs will be advised on regular basis to follow procedures that are applicable to the WHO staff.

-----

