

Profile: Water, sanitation and hygiene specialist

Required Qualifications

Education

Degree in medicine, environmental health, environmental/sanitary engineering or a related discipline plus post-graduate qualifications or proven equivalent experience in public health, environmental health or water and sanitation management in emergencies

Experience

- Considerable experience in the rapid assessment and management of environmental health emergencies;
- Specialized knowledge and field experience in (i) water, sanitation and health in emergencies, (ii) environmental health and vector-borne disease outbreaks, (iii) environmental health and health care facilities, or (iv) waste management;
- Knowledge of WHO, UN and NGO humanitarian and development community.

Personal skills

- Maturity, initiative, tact and a high sense of responsibility;
- Willingness and ability to work in hardship environment;
- Readily available for deployment in emergency situation;
- Ability to work in close collaboration with different nationalities and cultural backgrounds;
- Excellent knowledge of English or French with a good knowledge of the other. Other UN languages would be an advantage.

Terms of Reference

Overall objectives

To facilitate timely and effective response to environmental health emergencies including evaluation of basic environmental health services such as water and sanitation and healthcare waste management, and assessment of other environmental health factors impacting on health.

Specific objectives

- To oversee environmental health activities in WHO's response to disasters, emergencies and other crises;
- To set priorities for WHO activities and response during the recovery phase in areas related to water, sanitation, solid waste management, vector control and hygiene promotion;
- To collaborate with national and international agencies concerned, and provide advice on designing, establishing, testing, operating and maintaining facilities to supply affected people with essential water supply and sanitation services;
- To coordinate environmental health activities among WHO field offices and provide technical guidance and assistance to the WHO environmental health field officers;

- To coordinate surveillance and monitoring activities as well as environmental health awareness raising efforts.

Main tasks

During the response phase and in collaboration with the national authorities:

- Coordinates the activities related to the preparation of technical specifications; communications for arranging supplies of chemicals, equipment, and material and related to water quality and sanitation monitoring and surveillance;
- Conduct sanitary surveys, in collaboration with sector partners, to assess the potential for water source contamination;
- Ensure the correct use of portable testing kits provided to the state ministries of health from the WHO EH programme;
- Support and assist local governments, through technical guidance and advice, in their efforts to develop plans of action for building and strengthening water quality surveillance and monitoring programmes;
- Disseminate guidelines and protocols associated with water quality to local governments including the WHO Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality;
- Carry out assessments on existing excreta disposal facilities in IDP camps and settlements;
- Provide technical support and assistance to implementing organizations on excreta disposal in emergencies according to the guidelines provided by the WHO or Sphere standards;
- Promote the use of improved solid waste management practices including use of containers and burner, collection schemes, waste disposal pits, and cleanup campaigns for selected town and camps;
- Provide the municipalities with guidelines and technical support on the best practice for the final disposal on municipal solid waste;
- Provide technical assistance to health care facilities on the best practices to manage medical solid waste;
- Provide technical guidance and assistance to the hygiene promotion partners and particularly to the hygiene promoters of local governments;
- Help the local authorities and other implementing partners in conducting vector control campaign.
- Provide technical guidance and assistance to local authorities and implementing partners on the proper usage and precautions when using different insecticides;
- Act as a link for transferring information between health and the WATSAN cluster partners.
- Prepare progress reports, technical reports and any financial expenditure statements.