

NOTICE OF VACANCY
Technical Assistance on Laboratory
Capacity Strengthening for the ongoing
COVID-19 Response Activities



World Health
Organization

Representative Office
for the Philippines

1. Summary

The World Health Organization (WHO) Philippines is looking for an individual contractual partner who will provide technical assistance on laboratory capacity strengthening for the ongoing Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Response Activities in the Philippines.

The submission of applications is due by 18 April 2021.

2. Background

On 31 December 2019, WHO was informed of cases of pneumonia of unknown cause detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China. The pathogen was subsequently identified as a Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS CoV-2) with cases detected worldwide. On 31 January 2020, WHO declared the Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) and Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has been characterized as pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General. As cases continue to be reported globally, enhanced preparedness and response efforts are required in the Region.

The COVID-19 response operations in the WHO Western Pacific Region (WPR) are expected to continue for several months. To support the response in the Philippines, the WHO Country Office (WCO) is being strengthened in order to provide technical assistance to the Member State.

Outbreak Response

The purpose of this emergency deployment is to support effective country response operations related to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a technical focus on laboratory capacity, as part of the Incident Management Team (IMT) of the WHO Country Office in Philippines, working in support of the Department of Health (DOH) Philippines.

3. Timeline

The contract period is from **26 April 2020 to 31 August 2021**. Depending on availability of funds and satisfactory work the contact can be extended.

4. Place of Assignment

The consultancy will be based in Manila, Philippines with the option of limited remote support (except in the scenario that travel restrictions are reinstated, limiting relocation).

5. Scope of Work

Under the overall supervision of the WHO Country Office Incident Manager, the consultant will provide technical and operational assistance to the COVID-19 response activities with a focus on strategic planning for laboratory capacity and laboratory networks.

Method(s) to carry out the activity

The consultant will be assigned to:

- Provide technical expertise and operational support for the timely response to the COVID-19 outbreak, in collaboration national health officials, including laboratory staff, and other partner organizations.
- Work in coordination with the Regional Office COVID-19 incident management support team to ensure laboratory priorities and activities are managed effectively are aligned with the WPR COVID-19 Regional Action Plan and in compliance with WHO technical guidelines and national standards.
- In collaboration with national counterparts develop a strategic plan for strengthening laboratory services across the Philippines, including the use of whole genome sequencing.
- Cooperate with partners in improving analytical and diagnostics services, quality and environmental management, equipment maintenance, safety and biosafety for laboratories.
- Facilitate the establishment of laboratory networks across regions and laboratories
- Maintain strong and productive relationships with local and international collaborators, donors and partners.
- Update and maintain related reporting and information systems, documenting the response and laboratory strengthening activities and reporting as and when required.
- Manage the implementation, reporting, performance assessment and evaluation of the approved activities and ensure proper communication with partners as appropriate.
- Perform any other incident-specific related duties, as required by the Incident Manager or WHO Country Representative.

Deliverable:

- Weekly Situation Reports (Sitreps)
- Progress interim (monthly) report
- Submission of a report at the end of the consultancy

6. Qualifications

The contractual partner must fulfil the following qualifications:

Education and Certifications

- **Essential:** Advanced University degree (Master's level or above) in life science, microbiology, or medical virology from an accredited/ recognized institute. Certified training or qualification in molecular biology, virology, bacteriology, infectious diseases, and/or epidemiology and laboratory techniques.
- **Desirable:** Master's level degree in public health, epidemiology, infectious diseases or health emergency management. Experience with GeneXpert useful.

Work Experience

- **Essential:** At least seven years of practical and operational application and management of laboratory services, laboratory diagnosis of communicable diseases at the national and international levels. Some related experience in outbreaks and/or health emergency response of international impact.
- **Desirable:** Academic background and/or experience in technology transfer and/or biomedical research. Experience in planning and implementing laboratory trainings at national and regional levels. Experience in evaluating novel diagnostics assays for emergency use authorization during outbreak response. Previous experience in UN organizations/agencies, health cluster partners, recognized humanitarian organizations, international institutions or nongovernmental organizations, particularly in developing countries.

Technical Skills and Knowledge

- Excellent inter-personal skills, diplomacy and tact to communicate effectively with senior officials, multiple stakeholders and professionals
- Excellent analytical, planning and organizational skills
- Ability to work collaboratively in a multicultural environment with limited supervision
- Ability to work under pressure

Language requirements:

- Proficient in written and spoken English

In addition, the Consultant must have no direct or indirect interest in the tobacco industry, alcohol industry, arms dealing or human trafficking, and breast milk substitutes.

7. Other Requirements

- Readiness to travel, if needed
- Medical Clearance through WHO HR/Admin
- Required and/or willing to relocate to live in close proximity of the DOH premises

8. Competencies

The following competencies are mandatory:

- Building and promoting partnerships across the organization and beyond
- Moving forward in a changing environment
- Ensuring the effective use of resources
- Fostering Integration and teamwork
- Communication in a credible and effective way

9. Submission Requirements

Interested individuals should submit electronic copies of the following:

- Cover letter
- Curriculum vitae

Address all applications to:

Dr Rabindra Abeyasinghe

WHO Representative in the Philippines
Ground Floor, Building 3, Department of Health
San Lazaro Compound
Rizal Avenue, Sta Cruz, Manila

Please submit the electronic copy of the applications with the title: **Technical Assistance on Laboratory Capacity Strengthening for the ongoing COVID-19 Response Activities** to Mrs Ying Chen (cheny@who.int) with a copy to wpplwr@who.int. Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted by WHO Philippines.

Deadline of submission of applications is on **18 April 2021**.