Consultancy for research on infertility and human rights.

The WHO Department of Reproductive Health and Research (RHR) seeks an individual to assist with its work on infertility and human rights.

The Department of Reproductive Health and Research (RHR) works towards improving sexual and reproductive health by developing guidance and tools on specific health topics, by supporting countries to implement these tools, and generating evidence on specific health topics. The Department addresses thematic areas related to vulnerability to sexual and reproductive health problems, in order to promote equitable access to services and sexual and reproductive health rights for all. These activities are in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3, which seeks to ensure health and well-being for all and SDG Goal 5, which promotes gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

RHR includes the UNDP/UNFPA/UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP). HRP is the main instrument within the United Nations system for promoting, conducting, evaluating and coordinating interdisciplinary research on sexual and reproductive health; for collaborating with countries in enhancing national capacities to conduct this research; for promoting and facilitating the use of research results in policy-making and planning for sexual and reproductive health care; and for the setting of standards and guidelines, including technical and ethical guidelines, in the field of sexual and reproductive health research.

More information about HRP can be found at http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/hrp.

Infertility affects an estimated 180 million men and women globally. Still, information and education about infertility, as well as fertility treatments and prevention, including assisted reproductive technologies, remain difficult to access for many individuals. Among the challenges are the non-prioritization of (in)fertility issues in policies on SRH and prohibitive costs although its causes include sexually transmitted infections, unsafe abortions, and poor maternal care – all preventable with good quality comprehensive SRH services, including comprehensive sexuality education. Issues of (in)fertility can create devastating social stigma, rooted in harmful gender stereotypes, and can heighten the risk of domestic violence. Couples and individuals seeking fertility care and treatments, whether because of medical or social reasons, may also be vulnerable to misinformation and unknown and known physical and mental health risks.

Approaches to infertility must be developed with attention to wider structural discrimination against women, which impacts age of child bearing and ability to make decisions about the timing and spacing of their children. Addressing infertility also requires an intersectional approach because it cuts across gender, class, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity. (In)fertility implicates multiple human rights including the rights to plan the timing and spacing of children, to benefit from scientific progress, to health, including SRH, to non-discrimination, as well as informed consent and confidentiality.
The work on infertility and human rights will be conducted in the context of the Department’s work on human rights and SRHR. The overall objectives are to systematically expand the knowledge base and fill some of the evidence gaps in the area of infertility and human rights.

**Summary of duties:**
Under the guidance of the department’s focal point on human rights, and the coordinator Human Reproduction Team (HRX) the consultant will:


**WHO Competencies**

1. Producing results
2. Communications
3. Building and promoting partnerships across the organization and beyond.

**Essential knowledge and skills**

1. Previous experience conducting evidence-synthesis and familiarity with methods for conducting systematic reviews.
2. Experience working on and knowledge of human rights in the context of SRHR issues.
3. Excellent written English
4. Strong analytical skills
5. Demonstrated planning and organizational skills
6. Demonstrated ability to deliver high-quality products under tight deadlines
7. Ability to communicate effectively with different audiences
8. Sensitivity in dealing with sensitive topics

**Essential educational qualifications**

Advanced degree in public health, sociology or related degree, ideally with a focus on social determinants of health, including disability and health, and related topics.

**Essential relevant experience**

At least 10 years of experience combining:

1. Proven competencies in evidence synthesis methods (e.g. systematic reviews) and in qualitative and quantitative research methods
2. Proven communications skills and publications
3. Experience working in sexual and reproductive health and infertility.

**Desirable experience**

Experience conducting research in low-income settings on sensitive topics; experience working for an international organization.

**Language Skills**

Essential: Excellent knowledge of English;

**Other Skills**

Excel, PowerPoint, and word processing software.

**Period of application**

Closing date 31 May 2019
Please send your CV and cover letter to reproductivehealth@who.int.