World Health Organization

Request for expressions of interest for technical support to the WHO Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Health (WSH) unit’s work on drinking-water quality

WHO is seeking expressions of interest from institutions or individual(s) for technical support to WSH’s work on drinking-water quality and safety. The selected institutions(s) or individual(s) will work under the supervision of the focal point for WHO’s work on drinking-water quality and safety, in the WSH unit. The three main areas for which support is sought are:

1. Provision of country support and capacity building,
2. Development and coordination of water safety resources and

We welcome expressions of interest for the listed Work Packages or any specific or combined element(s) of the Work Packages. Deadline for applications: 8 November 2019 (full application details in section IV).

1. Background

The WHO GDWQ provides the international reference point for the development of drinking-water quality regulations world-wide. The key recommendation in the GDWQ is the implementation of the Framework for Safe Drinking-water, which was introduced in 2004 in the GDWQ. The Framework is comprised of health based targets, Water Safety Plans (WSPs) and independent surveillance. In addition to continual revision of the GDWQ to ensure that it remains up to date, WHO develops a number of supporting resources, which provide the evidence base supporting the recommendations in the GDWQ or provide detailed guidance to support effective implementation of WHO recommendations, including related to the three components of the Framework for Safe Drinking-water.

Moreover, WHO is increasingly focusing on supporting countries to incrementally strengthen water quality regulatory frameworks and implementation of those frameworks based on the national context and recommendations in the GDWQ. Specifically, on the development of drinking-water regulations, the development and implementation of WSPs and independent surveillance to ensure that WSP are effective and that national drinking-water regulations are being met.

This next phase of work needs to be informed by lessons learned collated to date, to increase effectiveness, impact and sustainability of water safety interventions. There is also a need to further analyze data from global monitoring efforts to assess progress and inform water safety programming.

2. Work Packages

Work package 1: Country support and capacity building

This work package will involve providing expert advice and technical support (remotely and in person) to governments, practitioners and partners to strengthen water quality systems – from formulation of strategies, policies and regulations, risk assessment and management of water supply systems in urban and rural settings, strengthening of monitoring systems and operational research. A particular focus will be on supporting countries in implementing these activities in a sustainable manner, to increase national expertise.
and provision of advice and training considering their financial and human resource constraints. In addition, this work package may involve contributing to national dialogues to raise the profile of water safety and foster engagement of partners. Countries that are currently being supported include Bangladesh, Bhutan, Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Liberia, Nepal, Madagascar, Mali, Philippines and Vietnam. It is expected that support will be needed for other countries to respond to the SDG 6.1 target of safely managed drinking-water services. Additional activities could include piloting global materials, supporting countries in developing training packages and preparation of reports tailored to different target audiences (e.g. WHO, governments and water suppliers).

Work package 2: Development and coordination of water safety resources

This work package will involve the provision of technical input and supporting the coordination of the revision of the Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality to produce the 2nd addendum of the 4th edition of the GDWQ and supporting technical resources. Areas covered include toxicology, microbiology, risk assessment and management and water treatment. Documents currently under development to inform the GDWQ revision include chemical risk assessments, Toxic Cyanobacteria in Water (revision), microbial fact sheets (revision), and a fact sheet on disinfection-by-products. Practical tools are also needed to support application of the GDWQ to small water supply systems while risk assessment and risk management resources need to be revised to reflect lessons learned and to more practically address climate change risks. Additional resources may also need be developed based on identified needs.

Work Package 3: Global coordination and advocacy

This work package involves providing input to WHO on how to strengthen WHO’s work on water safety. This should be informed by an analysis of global monitoring data including on the status of safely managed drinking-water services and the enabling environment around achieving this target. This work also involves developing messages and key tools to raise political will on water safety.

3. Specific requirements:

Qualifications required:
- Master level or equivalent experience in relevant area

Experience desired:
- At least ten years’ experience working on water safety issues, with at least five years of international development and/or in-country experience supporting capacity building, training and/or coordination.

Skills/Technical skills and knowledge (will vary depending on work package of interest):
- Excellent knowledge of drinking-water safety and risk assessment/management practices as applied at national, regional and global levels;
- Experience in interfacing with different actors and WASH partners (governments, NGOs, donors, inter-governmental organizations);
- Excellent organizational, team and inter-personal skills in view of interacting with multiple stakeholders at country and regional levels;
- Advanced training, presentation and facilitation skills (for parts of work packages related to technical assistance and training);
- Advanced writing skills with a strong attention to detail;
• Competency in understanding and interpreting reviews, reports and expert opinions on science as they relate to WASH and health.

Language requirements:
• Expert level in English (reading, writing and speaking).
• Proficiency in French and other UN (AR, CH, FR, SP, RU), African or Asian languages is an advantage.

Location and travel:
• No specified place of assignment. The incumbent can work remotely with occasional visits to Geneva and/or countries;
• The consultant will be expected to travel upon request as required for undertaking assigned tasks.

4. Application details

Submission of application package:
Applications should be submitted by email by midnight GMT on 8 November 2019 to gdwq@who.int and include:
• Up-to-date curriculum vitae;
• Summary statement outlining:
  o Specific areas of interest from the above Work Packages (listed Work Packages and/or any combined element(s) of the Work Packages)
  o Expertise and experience relevant for the role(s)
  o Availability during 2020/21
  o Availability for field work
  o Consultancy rates (daily or monthly).

Application review criteria includes:
1) The required qualifications, experience, technical skills and knowledge and language skills outlined above, as relevant to the selected elements of the work package(s);
2) Availability for specific tasks and travel in consideration of needs during 2018/19; and
3) Cost effectiveness.

Successful applicants will be contacted by email no later than 12 November 2019. If successful, applicants will be invited to take part in phone interviews on 14 or 15 November 2019. Please inform in your cover letter of any limitations to your availability on these dates.

Please note that applications for this request for expressions of interest will be used to develop a pool of consultants for both long and shorter-term consultancies. It is envisaged that support is needed for 2020-2021 but depends on availability of funding.