

**(International) Advisor – for Early Childhood Development Project
within the Ministry of Health & Human Services (MOHHS)
Marshall Islands - Highly Competitive Salary – World Bank funded post**

The Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (GoRMI) is seeking a full-time **ECD Advisor** to work with **Ministry of Health and Human Services (MOHHS)** to provide technical assistance to the ECD program and day-to-day management, administration, and coordination support for implementation of MOHHS activities under the IDA-financed project. The **ECD Advisor** will provide technical and strategic advice to MOHHS leadership for the design, implementation, and monitoring of MOHHS ECD activities whilst building the capacity of the MOHHS local counterpart coordinator and Ministry staff.

This is a full-time assignment that will initially be for a period of 2 years, subject to extension based upon need, performance, and mutual agreement.

Closing Date for applications is August 9th, 2019.

For further information & full **Terms of Reference (TOR)**, please consult the Ministry of Finance website (<http://rmi-mof.com/opportunities/recruitment/>) . To apply for this role, please send your CV and a cover letter to Ms. Malie Tarbwillin [**didadirector@gmail.com**](mailto:didadirector@gmail.com) and cc Ms. Francyne Wase [**wasejacklick@gmail.com**](mailto:wasejacklick@gmail.com).

Terms of Reference
International ECD Advisor-Ministry of Health and Human Services

Employer: Division of International Development Assistance, Ministry of Finance, Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)

Location: Ministry of Health and Human Services, Majuro, RMI

Duration: Full time for 2 years (**6 months Probationary period**), subject to extension based upon need, performance, and mutual agreement.

Expected Start Date: September 2019

1. Background

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) is one of the world's smallest, most isolated and vulnerable nations. The country consists of 29 atolls and 5 isolated islands (24 of which are inhabited) and has a total land mass of just 181 km² set in an area of over 1.9 million km² in the Pacific Ocean. The population of the RMI is estimated at 53,066¹, of which the two largest urban centers, Majuro (the nation's capital) and Ebeye, have populations of 28,000 and 9,614, respectively.

There is a growing recognition that the foundations of human capital formation in RMI are at risk despite improvements in national and household wealth. Poor early life health and nutrition, lack of early stimulation and learning, and exposure to poverty and severe stress threaten the ability of thousands of children to reach their full potential. These developmental deficits are manifest in high rates of early childhood under-nutrition and poor child development outcomes.

In RMI, children experience adversities across multiple domains, undermining children's opportunities to learn, earn, innovate, and compete. Barriers to optimal child development in RMI span across sectors, including: (i) limited availability, affordability, and consumption of nutritious diets, especially for women and children from vulnerable households; (ii) inadequate access to quality reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health and nutrition (RMNCH-N) services; (iii) inadequate access to clean water and sanitation; (iv) insufficient opportunities for early stimulation and early learning; and (v) lack of support through formalized social assistance mechanisms. Cutting across all of this is a general low awareness of the importance of early child stimulation, health and nutrition.

The Multisectoral ECD Project

To address the above constraints, the GoRMI is developing a comprehensive, integrated, and long-term early childhood development (ECD) program. The program will focus on investing in the early years—targeting the period from conception until entry into kindergarten (age 5). The GoRMI has established a high-level ECD steering committee to provide ongoing leadership and stewardship for the ECD agenda. The Office of the Chief Secretary (CSO) will serve as the secretariat for this program. The World Bank will support the GoRMI ECD program, along with planned/expected support from development partners including—but not limited to—the Asian Development Bank (ADB), UNICEF, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and others.

As a part of the GoRMI ECD Program, the World Bank IDA has provided US\$13 million financing for a six-year, Multisectoral ECD Project. The Project will aim to improve the coverage of essential multisectoral ECD services and engage the Ministries of Health and Human Services; Education; and Culture and Internal

¹ 2011 RMI Census

Affairs, among other government/non-government partners. The Project seeks to promote universal cover-age of multisectoral ECD services by: (i) supporting the government to expand public sector delivery of essential ECD services; (ii) providing targeted support to increase coverage and intervention intensity of these services for vulnerable early years families; and (iii) strengthening the public sector systems necessary to institutionalize and sustain a multisectoral ECD program.

Under the Project, essential ECD services target the period between pregnancy and the transition to kindergarten (at age 5); families with at least one member in this target group will be considered “early years families.” Essential ECD services include: (i) essential RMNCH-N services focused on the first 1,000 days of life between pregnancy and age two; and (ii) essential stimulation and early learning services to children’s cognitive and socio-economic development and facilitate children’s readiness to enter primary school. Vulnerable early years families will be identified using a contextually adapted hardship targeting mechanism developed under the Project.

The project objectives will be achieved through four main components: (1) improving the availability and coverage of an evidence-based package of essential RMNCH-N and stimulation services for the first 1,000 days (pregnant and lactating women and children up to age 2) (implemented by MOHHS); (2) expanding access to stimulation and early learning services by extending pre-schools to children aged 3-4 years, strengthening an existing program of home visits for vulnerable families and promoting community engagement (implemented by the Public School Service (PSS) in collaboration with NGOs); (3) introducing a social assistance pilot for vulnerable early years families as a means to increase uptake of essential ECD services and change behaviors (MOCIA); (4) establishing systems and functions to sustain an effective multisectoral programs and Project management. Because the essential maternal and child nutrition and early stimulation services are largely absent from RMI’s current service package, the Project will have a strong focus on social and behavior change communication (SBCC) and leveraging facility and community platforms across components to increase the dose and intensity of these interventions and messages.

The GoRMI is seeking a full-time ECD Advisor-Health to work with the Ministry of Health and Human Services (MOHHS) to provide technical assistance to the ECD program and day-to-day management, administration, and coordination support for implementation of MOHHS activities under the IDA-financed project. The position will be based in Majuro, RMI

2. Objectives of the assignment

The ECD Advisor-Health will provide technical and strategic advice to MOHHS leadership for the design, implementation, and monitoring of MOHHS ECD activities whilst building the capacity of the MOHHS local counterpart coordinator and Ministry staff. The ECD Advisor-Health will also support MOHHS leadership in institutionalizing the ECD Program within MOHHS as well implementing IDA-financed ECD project activities.

3. Scope of Services

A. Technical Advice to MOHHS for the ECD Project

Provide day-to-day technical advice to the MOHHS to ensure the development and delivery of an evidence-based, contextually relevant, and operationally sound ECD project:

- (i) Serve as technical focal point for all MOHHS consultants/firms hired under the project (including, for instance, the human resource, service delivery, institutional capacity, and health financing assessment(s); development of the basic package of reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health and nutrition (RMNCAH-N) services; and others).
- (ii) Provide technical inputs into the development and/or revision of key clinical guidelines and standard operating procedures for a contextually relevant package of essential reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and nutrition services. Ensure alignment with accepted evidence-based best practice (including WHO, UNICEF, and other normative guidelines);
- (iii) Provide technical inputs into the development of training materials, and support delivery of trainings for MOHHS staff in Majuro, Ebeye, and/or Outer Islands, as requested;
- (iv) Provide technical inputs on behalf of the ECD project to MOHHS strategic initiatives such as hospital reform, MHIS reform, quality assurance and improvement, human resource development and deployment, and others, as necessary;
- (v) Provide health and nutrition technical inputs into the Multisectoral ECD Strategy and actively engage in the development process;
- (vi) Provide health and nutrition technical inputs into the development of the multisectoral Social and Behavior Change Communication Strategy. Ensure incorporation of MOHHS knowledge and formative research and appropriateness of campaign delivery through MOHHS channels;
- (vii) Participate in and provide health and nutrition technical inputs to the Chief Secretary's Office ECD Working Group;
- (viii) Proactively identify resources and technical guidance that can improve the quality of the MOHHS ECD Program; and
- (ix) Others as required to ensure development and implementation of a high quality, evidence-based and contextually relevant ECD program in RMI.

B. Implementation Support for IDA-Financed ECD Activities within MOHHS

Working in collaboration with the MOHHS ECD Coordinator, support the management, administration, and coordination of IDA-financed ECD activities, including but not limited to:

- (i) In alignment with MOHHS processes, prepare monthly and annual workplans and reports for review by MOHHS Secretary and endorsement by Project Manager;
- (ii) Serve as coordination focal point for IDA-financed ECD project implementation. Liaise with: (a) the project implementation unit (PIU); (b) Ministry of Finance central implementation unit (CIU) staff and consultants; (c) the MOHHS ECD Working Group and relevant bureaus, departments, and programs; (d) other Project implementing entities; (e) the World Bank team (see Annex Table); and others as necessary;
- (iii) With MOHHS ECD Coordinator, convene an inception retreat to (a) organize MOHHS staff for project implementation; and (b) initiate the collaborative process to prepare the MOHHS chapter of the Project Operations Manual (POM);
- (iv) Support the ECD coordinator in the mapping of relevant ECD activities within the MOHHS;
- (v) Draft the MOHHS chapter of the POM based upon inputs of the MOHHS team;
- (vi) Ensure MOHHS financial management, safeguards and procurement practices for IDA-financed activities comply with the financing agreement;

- (vii) As requested, support the MOHHS hiring team to prepare terms of reference (TOR) and carry out timely hiring of project-related surge staff, including pediatricians, zone nurses, community health outreach workers, and others;
- (viii) With support of procurement staff in the Central Implementation Unit (CIU), lead IDA-financed MOHHS procurement activities, such as: (a) drafting TORs; (b) ensuring timely advertisement; (c) convening selection committee and facilitating shortlisting process; (d) preparing evaluation report; (e) support contracting processes; (d) processing requests for payment, as needed; and (e) recommending to the CIU updates of the project procurement plan to align with MOHHS needs;
- (ix) Support the delivery of consultant/firm deliverables by: (a) proactively communicating with consultants/firms; (b) coordinating missions and arranging necessary meetings; (c) following up, as needed; (d) supporting collection of required data and documents for desk review; (e) monitoring quality of Technical Assistance; (f) updating MOHHS leadership on TA progress; and (g) facilitating alignment with MOHHS strategic directions and initiatives;
- (x) Coordinate the availability of data to monitor project goals and objectives as per project monitoring and evaluation requirements through: (a) following up to ensure all monitoring data is collected on a regular basis from programs and health facilities; (b) coordinating with the mHIS team to ensure improved availability of ECE-related data; (c) providing recommendations and capacity building support to improve data quality; and (d) preparing monthly, quarterly, and six-monthly reports as required by the project and the MOHHS;
- (xi) Coordinate World Bank implementation support on behalf of MOHHS, including: (a) facilitating active and responsive communication with the World Bank project team and partners; (b) compiling data for project results indicators; (c) coordinating MOHHS inputs to aide memoires and other project documents; (d) responding to *ad hoc* World Bank requests for data, information; and others as needed;
- (xii) Work closely and collaboratively with the ECD coordinator in order to improve the two-way transfer of knowledge and skills; proactively identify opportunities to develop and deliver capacity building for MOHHS colleagues;
- (xiii) Facilitate roll-out of SBCC materials in health facilities, communities, etc.; and
- (xiv) Others as required to ensure successful implementation of the ECD project.

4. Deliverables and Reports

The ECD Advisor-Health will be responsible for: (i) MOHHS chapter of the Project Operations Manual; (ii) monthly work plans and reports aligned with MOHHS processes and procedures; (iii) MOHHS inputs to semi-annual ECD implementation status report; (iv) budget reporting as required by the CIU; (v) preparing terms of reference and obtaining deliverables (as per contracting requirements) from all IDA-financed firm/individual consultants.

5. Institutional and Organization Arrangements

The ECD Advisor-Health will be located in the MOHHS and report to the ECD Program Manager in the Chief Secretary's Office. The ECD Advisor-Health will be co-supervised by the Secretary of MOHHS and will submit workplans and reports jointly to the Secretary and Program Manager. The Advisor will receive fiduciary, procurement and safeguards support from the CIU in the Ministry of Finance. The Ad-

visor is required to follow the GoRMI's working hours; depending on the business needs, s/he may be requested to work extended hours. Travel internally with the Marshall Islands, including for implementation support to Ebeye, will be required. Limited international travel is anticipated.

6. Selection Criteria

Mandatory requirements

- Advanced degree (PhD or MPH, MS, or similar degree with equivalent experience) in health systems and administration, public health, public health nutrition, early childhood development, or related field.
- Minimum of 7 years of relevant experience in the development and delivery of public health programs in low- and middle-income country settings. Experience working across countries and development contexts and ability to adapt and apply global knowledge to local context.
- Prior field-based work experience in the design, implementation, management, and evaluation of public health/nutrition programs and working with interdisciplinary teams. Minimum three years leading and managing project implementation and supervising staff. Demonstrated experience in preparing project workplans, budgets, and reports.
- Strong technical knowledge of global best practice and evidence base in the development and implementation of primary health care systems and RMNCAH-N programs, including maternal and child health, immunization, maternal, infant, and young child nutrition, child development, and other relevant areas.
- Demonstrated leadership skills, project management, budget and resource management, etc.
- Demonstrated success in working with and coordinating multiple stakeholders, including government and development partners in diverse country settings.
- Strong problem solving, analytical, and solution-oriented skills;
- Ability to develop and apply monitoring and evaluation plans to determine program results and monitor impact; experience in the design and implementation of health surveys and assessments.
- Flexibility and demonstrated ability to work effectively in low-resource, multicultural environments.
- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively in speech and in writing to a variety of stakeholders and audiences.

Desired Competencies

- Ability to deal sensitively in multi-cultural environments and build effective working relationships with clients and colleagues.
- Ability to identify complex issues and to respond and handle accordingly; does not add unnecessary complexity to tasks or projects.
- Strong interpersonal skills and ability to function effectively in multi-disciplinary teams within a matrix management environment.
- Proven leadership skills, and the ability to manage multiple activities simultaneously. Strong record of collaboration and fostering new and effective partnerships.
- Understanding of public sector dynamics and constraints and competing incentives.
- Knowledge and experience in the integration of health and social assistance programs, especially conditional cash transfers
- Strong computer skills, especially with Microsoft Outlook, Word, Excel, Powerpoint, and Skype

Annex 1. Stakeholder Coordination Required

Chief Secretary's Office (CSO)	Participate in CSO ECD Working Group meetings; provide updates on ECD activities to the ECD Steering Committee and members, as requested.
Project Implementation Unit	Work effectively with the Project Manager, Project ECD Advisors (Education and Social Assistances) and ECD Coordinators. Liaise with the social and behavior change communication (SBCC) coordinator in the PIU in order to ensure alignment of SBCC strategy and campaign with MOHHS activities and delivery channels.
CIU	Proactively engage the financial management, procurement, and safeguards specialists to ensure timely delivery of project activities and adherence to the IDA financing agreement
MOCIA	Coordinate with MOCIA to ensure they are able to monitor cash transfer conditionalities, including through availability of patient data; Participate in MOCIA social assistance community activities
MOEST/PSS	Coordinate with PSS and WUTMI to review and advise on health and nutrition messages in the Parents as Teachers curriculum
World Bank	Proactively and responsively communicate with World Bank team; prepare for and provide mission support;