

Request for Proposals from independent contractors- Environmental Health Surveillance

Purpose and Scope

We are seeking an independent consultant in Bogota, Colombia to work with local government and health sectors in strengthening national health systems and local expertise to collect, store, analyze, and use childhood lead exposure data, not only to identify lead sources but to also raise awareness and enable governments to plan, advocate for, and enact sound, cost-effective policies to address root causes.

Vital Strategies Organizational Background

Vital Strategies is an international public health organization headquartered in New York City. Vital Strategies develops and oversees programs that strengthen public health systems and address leading causes of morbidity and mortality worldwide, providing expertise in project implementation and management, strategic communications, and other core public health capabilities to guide policy and decision-making. Specific programs include road safety, obesity prevention, tobacco control, and data for health. Activities take place in a range of low- and middle-income cities in over 60 countries.

Our experts provide technical and professional guidance to partners and government agencies. We speak out, through press releases, publications, social media, and participation in convenings and conferences against the practices of tobacco and the sugary drinks industries. Vital Strategies does not accept gifts or funds from industries related to tobacco, sugary drinks and alcoholic drinks. We actively seek to engage with stakeholders who share our values and seeks to work with partners who endorse and encourage the highest ethical work practices and standards.

Project Overview

In collaboration with Pure Earth, Vital Strategies is leading public health surveillance design and clinical training for the “Realizing Children’s Full Potential by Ending Lead Poisoning” project. This project aims to protect children from lead poisoning, enabling them to reach their full potential, by strengthening countries’ health care systems to identify, monitor, treat, and reduce toxic childhood lead exposure. We are working with local partners in five locations including Colombia, India (Maharashtra), Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, and Peru to overcome key technical and clinical hurdles and implement effective national action to monitor and reduce lead poisoning risks.

The independent consultant will lead efforts to engage the public health sector in Colombia, including 1) assessing and building laboratory and health care system capacity to monitor lead exposure among children 2) working with government to design and establishing a national system to monitor lead exposure among children and 3) strengthen the ability of healthcare professionals to early identify, treat, and prevent lead poisoning, and educate communities and children about lead poisoning and ways to avoid/mitigate risks.

Deliverables

The consultant will be responsible for the following deliverables:

- Develop and sustain partnerships with government and non-government organizations in various sectors including health, environment, and education.
- Act as a Vital Strategies focal point and representative for key partner organizations in Colombia.
- Prepare local stakeholder mapping to identify priority health stakeholders and champions, including clinical, government, and health research communities.
- Produce a capacity assessment report that evaluate national laboratories and health care systems to conduct monitoring of lead exposure among children and recommendations on building/expanding this capacity.
- Provide technical and programmatic assistant for designing and launching a national biomonitoring surveillance system jointly with local government to evaluate lead exposure among children.
- Coordinate efforts across different departments to consolidating existing data and create national integrated databases that help evaluate lead exposure risks among children.
- Develop and deliver health-oriented content for workshops and trainings with local stakeholders or health professionals as needed.

Assignment

This is expected to be a part-time (17-20 hours per week) consultant position not to exceed 12 months, with possibility of renewal for a total period of 36 months. The consultant must be based in Bogota, with the ability to meet with local partners in person regularly, while maintaining flexible working hours to connect as needed with the broader global team.

Qualifications

Independent consultant background must include:

1. Bachelor's in science with 10 years of relevant work experience or master's degree in public health, environmental science, epidemiology, or related field with 8 years of relevant experience
2. Professional oral and written proficiency in English and Spanish
3. Strong foundational understanding of public health principles
4. Excellent interpersonal skills, including ability to communicate effectively to technical and non-technical audiences, develop partnerships, and contribute to interdisciplinary team
5. Ability to work flexibly with colleagues across time zones
6. Outstanding organizational skills and ability to successfully manage competing priorities and meet deadlines.
7. Demonstrated ability to take initiative, work independently, and make sound, informed decisions
8. Solid knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite (Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Outlook).
9. Current residency and work authorization in Bogota, Colombia.

Preferred qualifications:

Demonstrated interest and at least five years of experience in environmental health sciences, epidemiology, policy, and/or program implementation.

1. Prior experience working in collaboration with governmental health or environmental ministries.
2. Prior work experience with international non-governmental organizations
3. Prior work experience with environmental epidemiology, especially related to lead poisoning prevention or heavy metal pollution
4. Experience liaising with government stakeholders
5. Experience conducting public health surveillance
6. Strong foundational understanding of epidemiologic analysis and terminology
7. Experience managing complex data flows
8. Proficient in SAS, STATA, SPSS or other statistical software

Application

Submit a CV and cover letter including your local rate to ylu@vitalstrategies.org. Proposals must be submitted in PDF format to Yi Lu by no later than **5.00 PM EST on April 3rd, 2023** using the following naming convention:

surname_name_cover letter for the cover letter
surname_name_CV for the CV