



Scope of Work



Country: **Namibia – Windhoek**
Host site: **Polytechnic of Namibia,
Department of Applied Health Sciences**
Partner organization: **University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS)**
Assignment title: **Researcher**
Length of assignment: **9-12 months**

OVERVIEW OF VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENT

Namibia's response to its HIV/AIDS epidemic has been hindered by a lack of qualified medical technologists, who play a crucial role in HIV care and treatment by informing decisions related to ART, as well as the diagnosis and treatment of opportunistic infections. Currently, there are only 160 medical technologists in the country and the infrastructure and expertise to train more lab professionals does not exist. Namibia's Visions 2030 projects a healthy and prosperous nation in less than 21 years. To achieve this challenging mandate, it is necessary build human resource capacity within laboratories across the country.

In-country placement site:

The American International Health Alliance (AIHA) manages the HIV/AIDS Twinning Center, a program funded by the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and designed to strengthen human and organizational capacity to provide quality HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and treatment services through volunteer-driven activities. With this goal in mind, the HIV/AIDS Twinning Center has linked the Polytechnic of Namibia in Windhoek with the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) in Little Rock to develop and launch a new medical technology degree program at the Polytechnic.

Specific partnership objectives are to:

- Enhance the quality of medical diagnostics services in Namibia by increasing the number of medical technologists (Bio-medical Scientists);
- Strengthen the Polytechnic's capacity to provide continuing education to practicing scientists; and
- Strengthen the Polytechnic's the capacity to deliver a medical technology curriculum in keeping with international standards and ensure that key student competencies are achieved.

Drawing on UAMS's extensive experience training medical technologists and managing an effective medical technology program, partners are working to build the institutional and human resource capacity needed to effectively support Namibia's laboratory services.

Staff and faculty at the Polytechnic need to better understand the current and projected needs for laboratory personnel and other allied health professionals in Namibia to determine the size of student cohorts; forecast staffing, infrastructure, and other needs; and most effectively align current and expected resources in implementing the medical technology and other programs. The volunteer will conduct a thorough analysis of the laboratory personnel needs in the public and private laboratories and other allied health professional human resource needs, both countrywide and disaggregated by district.

Length of the assignment: 9-12 months, full time
(8 hours per day; 5 days per week)

Name and title of supervisor: TBD

Name and title of counterpart: TBD

Volunteer qualifications:

Required:

- An advanced degree in a research-oriented area (public health, biomedical sciences, education, etc.)
- At least 5 years research experience in the health care sector
- Familiarity with qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis and experience working at various levels of data collection
- Ability to develop data cleaning and storage systems and creating databases
- Experience writing reports for both internal and for external use by stakeholders such as the Ministry of Health, and interested parties
- Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to work with staff and individuals at all levels
- Positive, enthusiastic, and self-motivated approach to work
- Organized, thorough, and meticulous approach to work
- Adaptable with the ability to multi-task and prioritize
- Ability to ensure all tasks are seen through to completion
- Attention to detail and quality
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Relevant computer skills
- Experience in research, including the production of publications
- Strong written and oral communication skills in fluent English

Preferred:

- Previous experience working in a developing country
- Experience in healthcare

OBJECTIVE OF THE VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENT

Objective: The Researcher will provide the Polytechnic with information critical to its strategic planning process, thus enabling the institution to provide the number of allied health professionals necessary for the country to meet its national long term vision of a healthy nation by 2030 in a sustainable fashion.

ACTIVITIES OF THE VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENT

Volunteer activities:

- Establish a data base of health professionals and practitioners in the country
- Conduct a thorough analysis of the laboratory personnel needs in the public and private laboratories and other allied health professional human resource needs, both countrywide and disaggregated by district.
- Identify courses/qualifications to meet needs for these professionals and practitioners
- In partnership with stakeholders, identify continuous training needs
- Develop a training plan for the Polytechnic to meet the needs
- Identify cost of implementing this plan
- Communicate findings to staff to enable them to update their program activities appropriately
- Participate in the development of best practices, communication and training materials, and journal articles as necessary
- Other ad hoc responsibilities in line with the nature of the role

EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENT

Deliverables:

- Monthly reports to host site and AIHA's HIV/AIDS Twinning Center tracking experiences, successes, and challenges
- Data base of health professionals and practitioners in the country
- Action plan with timeline to conduct research, gather information, conduct site visits, draft research article, submit for academic review, edit article, submit final article, and disseminate final results.
- Site visit schedule
- Draft research article
- Final article
- Presentation of findings

RESPOLYTECHNIC SIBILITIES OF PARTICIPATING STAKEHOLDERS

Volunteer:

- Complete the scope of work in the timeframe outlined
- Complete organizational assessment within the first two weeks of assignment
- Complete monthly monitoring and evaluation reports
- Submit a post-assignment final report and participate in an exit interview
- Interact with clients, community members and local staff in a manner that is consistent with social, cultural, and traditional norms and values
- Adhere to the AIHA Volunteer Code of Conduct

Partner organization/host site:

- Provide resources necessary for the volunteer to carry out assignment successfully
- Identify a placement site for the volunteer to ensure sustainability of volunteer activities
- Submit performance assessment reports on the volunteer to the Twinning Center

AIHA Twinning Center:

- Conduct pre-assignment orientation and training for volunteer and placement site staff
- Provide volunteer with monthly allowances, medical evacuation coverage, and travel-related costs to and from placement site
- Provide ongoing support of volunteer as needed