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Technical Specialist – Microbiology - LSS - Bihar

Organization:

Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND) is established in India as an independent non-profit organization created under Section 8 (Indian) Companies Act, 2013 with its office in New Delhi. FIND India is the key implementing partner of Central Tuberculosis (TB) Division, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India, for strengthening and expanding TB laboratory diagnostic capacity within the Revised National TB Control Program (RNTCP) supported by the Global Fund. FIND India is a subsidiary of FIND, an international non-profit organization based in Geneva, Switzerland. The organization is dedicated to activities that result in; 1) new diagnostic tools; 2) expanded access to these tools; and 3) strengthened diagnostic testing capacity for poverty-related diseases in low- and middle-income countries.

For more information, please visit www.finddx.org

Project Background

A responsive, accessible, and pandemic resilient public health system is critical towards early detection, accurate treatment, and continued care management. This is especially true for Bihar, India with its high proportion of rural population (88.7%) and persons below the multi-dimensional poverty line (51.9%- highest in the country). Bihar faces many challenges towards building an adequate public health laboratory diagnostic capacity to meet its demand. Public health laboratories are cornerstones of a public health system with availability of high-quality diagnostics, the first step towards accurate disease detection and containment. Recognizing the need to establish a uniform code for equitable access to quality diagnostics, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) under the aegis of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has developed India's National Essential Diagnostic List (NEDL) recommending tests for both communicable and non-communicable diseases at each health facility (HF) level based on utility, demand, infrastructure & personnel availability. In the absence of suitable capacity, it recommends following a "hub and spoke model" to drive cost-effective test availability. The recently launched Pradhan Mantri – Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM ABHIM) along with Guidelines on Integrated Public Health Laboratories (IPHL) by the MoHFW, Government of India, focuses on establishing integrated public health laboratories. At district and sub-district levels, providing quality assured diagnostic services aiding clinical management, public health surveillance and supporting outbreak investigations.

The state of Bihar is committed to strengthening and upgrading testing facilities along a "hub and spoke model" - a tiered system designed to provide patient-centric care and minimize patient drop-off. This project is focused on supporting the Government of Bihar in its endeavor to improve the diagnostic services.

Objective and Primary Outcome:

The main objective of the program is improving outbreak preparedness of the healthcare facilities, the proposed activities under the project will ensure adoption of IPHL guideline and follow IPHS-NHM norms at each level of health facilities. The project intends to lead to following outcomes:

- Building diagnostic capacity at all levels of the public health system including strengthening in-house lab services as per Government of Bihar (GoB) strategy and in line with India's NEDL and IPHL norms supporting development and implementation of a public-private partnership (PPP) for diagnostic services (in support of Government of Bihar plan and subject to award of tender by Government of Bihar)

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- Strengthening quality diagnosis across tiers by building and implementing a quality management system (QMS) with continued mentoring mechanism
- Building sustainable laboratory capacity towards disease surveillance (focusing on febrile illnesses) through capacity building.

Location: Patna, Bihar

Job description

The Technical Specialist - Microbiology (TS-MB) will work closely with the Project Team Lead, Team Lead- Microbiologist, Project Manager, and project team at FIND, as well as the State officials and other stakeholders. The specific activities & responsibilities will include but not be limited to:

- Supporting the Project Lead and Team Lead- Microbiologist in implementation of all laboratories technical assistance activities including creation/ review of documents for situational analysis of existing testing capacities.
- Supporting the project lead/ team lead in preparation of an easy-to-use laboratory setup tool kit. The kit would include lab set-up checklist, standard operating procedures (SOP's), QMS and training content. The training content for the laboratories would include testing, data management, lab quality assurance, lab biosafety, biomedical waste management and other areas as defined under the project.
- Supporting the project manager/team lead (MB) in preparation of specific training content related to implementation of IPHL and NEDL guidelines, QMS, infectious disease testing, specimen collection testing, handling, transportation, and biosafety.
- Providing technical support across LSS project district/testing sites as and when required including site visit/handholding/technical support for testing methodologies, QA, biosafety, biomedical waste management.
- Coordination with identified labs/hubs and identified participants for online course, webinars, and onsite/assisted trainings.
- Ensuring that the project activities are conducted as per the work plan.
- Familiar with microbiology lab testing, equipment and able to perform when needed.
- Contribute and support actively the team lead (MB) towards improvising existing training materials and developing new AV material on lab related trainings including on equipment handling and maintenance.
- Contribute as a lab/site level facilitator for various lab related trainings as required
- Support or provide assistance to team in laboratories assessment visits.
- Identify gaps or challenges in technical functioning or operation of the lab activities and to liaison with concern lab/ sites staff on resolving.
- Provide timely feedback to FIND/ donors/ district official/ stakeholders on performance of laboratories under identified guidelines.
- Compilation and analysis of data related to various project activities and support the preparation of the periodic reports.
- Support external experts and team lead (MB) in publication achievements of the project.
- Any other task assigned time to time.

Qualification and Experience required:

- MBBS and MD/ MSc Microbiology/Medical Microbiology) and PhD in Microbiology with minimum 02 years of experience in laboratory especially in microbiology.

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- Postgraduation (M.Sc.) in Microbiology with minimum 05 years of experience in laboratory especially in Microbiology.
- Experience of conducting lab assessments, developing training contents and conducting training.
- Experience of working in health programs at national and state-level (including IDSP, NTEP, NACP and others).
- Strong scientific background in microbiology, and microbiology related lab testing etc.
- Well familiar with microbiology lab techniques, equipment, and data analysis etc.
- Good coordination skills.
- Strong interpersonal, oral, and written communication skills.
- Strong team orientation.
- Ability to work independently, with minimum handholding and supervision.
- Energetic, resilient, and passionate.
- Good computer knowledge (MS Office – Excel and Word).
- Willingness to travel if required and at short notice.

Nature of Appointment:

The selected candidate shall be initially offered a consultancy contract till **31 December 2023**

Compensation offered:

The gross remuneration budgeted for the position shall be commensurate with the qualifications, experience, and salary history, of the selected candidate.

Deadline to send your application:

Please mail a motivation letter, a detailed resume and three references to HR-IN@finddx.org and by **19 August 2022**.