



Profile – Expert to contribute to strengthening Africa CDC capacities in preparedness, surveillance, and response to health threats posed by communicable diseases

(Reference CEI/ECDC/DIR/2021/002)

Background

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) is an EU Agency aimed at strengthening Europe's defenses against infectious diseases and it works in three key strategic areas: it provides evidence for effective and efficient decision-making, it strengthens public health systems, and it supports the response to public health threats. Apart from support to EU/EEA countries and externally funded technical assistance to partner countries under EU enlargement policy and European Neighborhood Policy, ECDC has started to implement technical partnership with Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).

In October 2020, ECDC and DG for International Partnerships (INTPA) has concluded Contribution Agreement to implement a four-year capacity and partnership building project entitled “[EU for health security in Africa: ECDC for Africa CDC](#)”. The overall aim of the project is to strengthen Africa CDC capacities in preparedness and response to health threats, facilitate harmonised surveillance and disease intelligence of prioritised outbreak-prone communicable diseases at continental level, and support the implementation of Africa CDC’s public health workforce development strategy. It is expected that the project will result in improved health security in Africa through sharing EU practices and strengthening Africa CDC capacities in preparedness, surveillance, and response to health threats posed by communicable diseases.

The implementation is structured around three technical Work Packages (WP) to deliver key results (and a fourth WP to support their implementation). The implementation of these WPs is preceded by a one-year inception phase in 2021 which entails extensive needs assessments, situation analyses, and fact-finding exercises in Africa CDC headquarters, its Regional Collaborating Centres (RCCs), and a number of African Union (AU) countries. The inception phase for each WP will include:

- ✓ Desk research on selected topics, description and analysis on lessons learned, ongoing activities, partners, donors, tools, materials, and analysis of needs
- ✓ Identifying and engaging with key stakeholders, establishing links with technical networks (e.g. [African Volunteers Health Corps](#), [Africa CDC laboratory networks](#), [EDCTP](#))
- ✓ Fact-finding and needs identification missions and webinars

Work package 1. Preparedness, outbreak response, and emergency operations

Expected result 1: Increased capacities of the Africa CDC and its RCCs to support national CDCs, laboratories and health workforce in preparedness, outbreak response and coordinated emergency operations

Key deliverables:

- ✓ Analysis of needs and priorities.
- ✓ ‘Bank’ of networks, contacts, and knowledge.
- ✓ Capacity development plan on PHEP planning, based on the situation and needs assessment conducted during the inception phase.

Work package 2. Surveillance, data management and sharing, epidemic intelligence

Expected result 2: A pilot model is accomplished, with lessons learned documented, for harmonised surveillance of communicable diseases and early warning, harnessing existing regional integrated surveillance and laboratory networks

Key deliverables:

- ✓ Report on analysis of needs and priorities describing gaps, challenges, opportunities, and recommendations for establishing continent-wide infectious disease surveillance or threat management system.
- ✓ ‘Bank’ of networks, contacts and knowledge.
- ✓ List of diseases for which AU level surveillance would add value to national and regional surveillance systems in isolation.
- ✓ Agreed case definitions for diseases under harmonised AU surveillance.
- ✓ Specific disease surveillance protocols, as relevant, describing minimum national surveillance systems requirements, core information to be reported to Africa CDC, including format of the information to be reported, frequency of reporting, analyses to be performed, outputs to be produced.
- ✓ Technical guidelines for harmonisation of data, data transmission and sharing.
- ✓ Training workshops for African CDC experts on Epidemic Intelligence, implementation of standard operational procedures and external evaluation.
- ✓ A robust cooperation network for early detection with stakeholders such as AU MS, WHO/AFRO and other key partners (e.g. bilateral donors, UNICEF, UNAIDS, NGOs).

Work package 3. Public health workforce development and capacity building

Expected result 3: The establishment of a sustainable African-based public health workforce development programme in epidemiology is promoted by the Africa CDC

Key deliverables:

- ✓ Analysis of needs and priorities.
- ✓ Report on analysis of training needs of the defined target audiences. Training needs assessment of the target population, or from a sample will be conducted. Surveys at national or supranational level will require development of questionnaires and data collection tools for the subnational and local levels.
- ✓ Bank of networks, contacts and knowledge.
- ✓ Multiannual road map for training, including guidance and tools for sustainability of training programmes, aligned to the broader Africa CDC workforce development strategy.
- ✓ Instructional/curricular design responding to the context and tailored to the needs.

In order to support delivery of mentioned outputs, ECDC invites experts to express their interest to provide their expertise in one or more of the following areas:

Work package 1. Preparedness, outbreak response, and emergency operations

Tasks expected from the external expert in this technical work package of ECDC4Africa CDC project:

- Review technical documents and conduct desk research (e.g. collate and analyse ongoing activities, partners, donors, tools, materials), leading to gap analysis.
- Supporting preparedness and response activities including contingency plans, risk mapping risk ranking.
- Offering tools and methodologies to support the performance of after-action reviews.
- Contributing to simulation exercise guidance and related training packages to check preparedness and contingency plans.

- Contributing to risk assessment training and improvements to the risk assessment methodology.
- Support the development of emergency operation centres and public health emergency plans.

Selection criteria for the profile in Work package 1

- a. University or post-university degree in the field of public health, epidemiology, health sciences, medicine, biomedical sciences, nursing, veterinary medicine, pharmacology, microbiology, virology, bacteriology, infectious diseases or a related area
- b. Minimum of 3 years relevant experience in performing tasks related to emergency preparedness, threat detection and outbreak investigation in the area of infectious diseases
- c. Proven experience in preparedness and response activities such as preparedness plans, simulation exercises, risk mapping and ranking, risk assessment and outbreak response
- d. Knowledge and ability to work with databases, epidemiological tools and statistical software packages, to manage, share and analyse epidemiologic information and conduct outbreak investigations
- e. Proven experience in communicating scientific information to authorities, scientists as well to a wider audience, especially through oral presentations, technical reports and by publishing scientific articles
- f. Quality driven, service minded and results oriented
- g. Ability to work collaboratively with international partners and build strong working relationships
- h. Strong organisational skills and ability to work under pressure
- i. Minimum C1 level of English both written and spoken according to the Common European Framework for Reference for Languages¹
- j. Good knowledge of MS Office applications
- k. Good knowledge of epidemiological tools and statistical packages

Work package 2. Surveillance, data management and sharing, epidemic intelligence

Tasks expected from the external expert in this technical work package of ECDC4Africa CDC project:

- Conduct desk research on surveillance systems and their outputs; this should also include the regulatory framework in place for disease surveillance at continental, regional, national levels; desk research and review of existing frameworks should lead to gap analysis and recommendations.
- Review technical documents, including reporting protocols.
- Develop guidelines for disease prioritization.
- Develop guidelines for preparation of routine outputs.
- Develop reporting protocols, case definitions.
- Conduct desk research on early detection procedures and tools.
- Review output for early detection and Epidemic Intelligence.
- Implement early detection for infectious diseases according to Africa CDC mandate and objectives.
- Support the network development of a network for early detection.
- Strengthen capacity and tools for early detection.

¹ See http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Cadre1_en.asp

Selection criteria for the profile of Work package 2

- a. University degree in in public health, epidemiology or a related area
- b. At least 3 years, following the award of the diploma, of professional experience acquired in either surveillance/epidemic intelligence
- c. Proven experience in infectious disease epidemiological data analysis at regional, national and/or international level
- d. Proven experience in communicating scientific information through technical reports or peer-reviewed articles
- e. Quality driven, service minded and results oriented
- f. Ability to work collaboratively with international partners and build strong working relationships
- g. Strong organisational skills and ability to work under pressure
- h. Minimum C1 level of English both written and spoken according to the Common European Framework for Reference for Languages²
- i. Good knowledge of MS Office applications

Work package 3. Public health workforce development and capacity building

Tasks expected from the external expert in this technical work package of ECDC4Africa CDC project:

- Review technical documents and conduct desk research (e.g. collate and analyse ongoing activities, partners, donors, tools, materials), leading to gap analysis.
- Share experience and provide guidance for the strategic development of training programmes (e.g. Field Epidemiology Training Programmes, or continuous professional development), contributing to their continuous quality improvement.
- Contribute to develop technical guidelines, procedures and multiannual training road maps for harmonisation and sustainability of training programmes in field epidemiology, including defining the core competencies and curricula.
- Define competency-based learning objectives and design and develop curricula and training materials for face-to-face, blended and online learning in the area of prevention and control of infectious diseases including preparedness, surveillance and response, public health laboratory leadership, and/or public health informatics.
- Develop tools to collect participants feedback and assess the effectiveness of the proposed training activities.
- Deliver online, blended or face-to-face training activities, workshops, webinars in the area of prevention and control of infectious diseases.

Selection criteria for the profile for Work package 3

- a. University or post-university degree in medicine, veterinary, biology, public health, social and behavioural science, or a related area
- b. Minimum of 3 years of work experience in public health training, in the area of infectious diseases
- c. Proven experience in conducting qualitative and quantitative assessments and gap analysis, in particular for training needs assessment

² See http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Cadre1_en.asp

- d. In-depth knowledge of curriculum design, instructional design methods, and adult learning techniques. Experience on the use of participatory methods for teaching and experience in the use of training tools that can support the learning environment
- e. Sound pedagogical skills and teaching abilities, proven experience of development and delivery of training, and/or supervision in on-the-job settings (e.g. Field Epidemiology Training Programmes)
- f. Proven experience in communicating scientific information through technical reports or peer-reviewed articles
- g. Strong communication skills, capacity to convey information to others effectively and efficiently verbally and in writing
- h. Quality driven, service minded and results oriented
- i. Ability to work collaboratively with international partners and build strong working relationships
- j. Strong organisational skills and ability to work under pressure
- k. Minimum C1 level of English both written and spoken according to the Common European Framework for Reference for Languages³
- l. Good knowledge of MS Office applications

The expression of interest might be targeted to specific areas that are described in three technical Work Packages. Communication between ECDC and experts will be done in English.

The selection criteria will be verified against the CV in the Expert Directory. Candidates who do not meet the selection criteria will not be considered for assignments.

Place of delivery

The assignment can be delivered in the country of residence of selected experts. Follow-up field visits to partner countries might be organised, in which case these costs will be reimbursed separately in accordance with the contract. Regular virtual meetings with ECDC may be organised during the assignment as per contracted agreement.

Time limit to express interest for this profile and validity of the list

The list resulting from this notice is valid until 31 December 2025. Interested parties may submit an expression of interest at any time prior to the last 3 months of validity of the list, meaning no later than 30 September 2025.

Exclusion criteria

Before being offered a contract, any selected candidate must provide a declaration on honour (see link at [Declaration on honour](#)), signed and dated by an authorised representative, stating that they are not in one of the situations of exclusion listed in that declaration on honour.

How to express interest

Experts may express their interest to this profile by uploading their CV to [ECDC expert directory](#) and inserting the Reference Number of this call for expression of interest from a drop-down list under the tab “Reference” in Expert Directory.

³ See http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Cadre1_en.asp