

ADVERTISEMENT

Terms of reference (TOR) for the Post of Research Assistant on Temporary basis for the Research Studies conducted by the Research Unit, Family Health Bureau: Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care Needs (EmONC) Assessment and Child Nutrition Service Provision in-depth Assessment to Identify the Root Causes for Service Provision Gaps in Selected Sentinel Sites of Sri Lanka

Duties and responsibilities for the recruited Pre-intern Medical Graduate

- Facilitating consultative meetings, sensitization programmes and training workshops relevant to researches at FHB, hospitals and field as necessary.
- Support with preparing necessary documents, minutes, reports and proposals.
- Travelling to peripheral districts with relevant research teams, when necessary to help the supervisory visits.
- Data collection of research studies by using data collection tools/instruments and coordinating focus group discussions.
- Facilitating the data collection process by coordinating with the regional staff members and Institutional heads.
- Co-ordinating the data collection groups with the central team.
- Follow up with the field if needed (by phone).
- Support with data entering, analysis and report writing and final submissions.
- Any other duties assigned by the Head of the Research Unit.

Desired qualifications and experience for the post

- Pre-intern Medical Graduate with M.B.B.S. qualification, who is getting the internship in 2027.
- Hard working and motivated individual.
- Ability to work with Microsoft Office applications (word, excel...etc.).
- Previous experience in scientific research, proposal writing, obtaining ethical clearance, data collection, data entry and analysis will be preferred.
- Good command of English and Sinhala and/or Tamil languages.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Ability to work independently and within a team.

Duration

- For a period of five (5) months (September 2026 – February 2027)

Nature of work:

- **Full time/ part time:** Full time
- **Place of work:** Research Unit, Family Health Bureau, Colombo-10 - (But as per the requirement may need to travel districts with the relevant research team)

- Usual working hours per day: Eight (8) hours - 8.15 am to 4.15 pm on 5 weekdays (But as per the requirement during weekends and beyond the usual working hours may have to work)

Monthly remuneration: LKR. 94,265.00

(Basic salary - LKR 76,465.00 + Cost of living allowance -17,800.00)

Candidates are requested to email an updated CV including copies of relevant documents, and contact details to research.fhb.un@gmail.com before 08.09.2026.

Terms of reference (TOR) for the Post of Research Assistant on Temporary basis for the Research Studies conducted by the Research Unit, Family Health Bureau: Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care Needs (EmONC) Assessment and Child Nutrition Service Provision in-depth Assessment to Identify the Root Causes for Service Provision Gaps in Selected Sentinel Sites of Sri Lanka

Background and Justification

The EmONC assessment will follow the standard methodology prescribed by the Averting Maternal Death and Disability (AMDD) of University of Columbia, USA (Averting Maternal Death and Disability Program (AMDD), 2024) which has been adapted to the local setting. It consisted mainly with 8 proper data collection modules and one online service statistics data collection module. The data collection was done by teams of 3 and a team was comprised a field supervisor, team leader and 9-10 enumerators, who were pre-intern medical graduates. There were three field supervisors who were responsible for two groups each and a central team comprising of a coordinator.

Proper EmONC data collection was completed in all the base and above hospitals, a sub sample of the divisional hospitals and a sub sample of private hospitals which have delivery facilities(n=282). Online service statistics data collection also by now completed. Data entry and cleaning are by now completed. The data validation and data analysis will be an equal important parts of this survey with selected variables. For that needs to create specific tables, review data carefully, cleaning, processing and final analysis. In addition, regular research committee (technical working group) meetings need to be conduct to obtain the technical discussions and Steering Committee meetings for administrative decisions.

Under-5 child nutrition is vital for survival, growth, and development, forming the foundation for long-term health and cognitive potential. Proper nutrition, especially in the first 1,000 days (pregnancy to age two), contributes to the prevention of stunting,

wasting, morbidity and mortality, while supporting brain development and immune system strength, that lead to educational attainment and lifelong productivity.

Child nutrition in Sri Lanka faces a double burden of malnutrition, with significant rates of underweight (16.1%), wasting (8.6%), and stunting (10.1%) among children under five, alongside rising obesity in school-aged children, irrespective of vigorous preventive measures. While exclusive breastfeeding is high (>80%), micronutrient deficiencies and low dietary diversity are major challenges. Moderate Acute Malnutrition is high at 7.7% in 2025, where Sever Acute Malnutrition (SAM) is 0.81%, often stalling progress in nutrition goals. Overweight and obesity had increased from 0.49 % in 2024 to 0.57% in 2025 among children under 5 years of age. The sector wise distribution of mentioned indicators varied from urban, rural and estate sectors and most high rates of underweight, wasting and stunting are recorded in the estate sector of Sri Lanka, where as the prevalence of obesity is high in urban sector.

The global target for reduction in stunting to be achieved by 2030 is to reduce the number of children under 5-years who are stunted by 40%, but the level of stunting in Sri Lanka does not show any significant recent reduction. Childhood wasting also had not reached the national or global target of less than 7.5%, which has to be achieved in 2030. It seems, despite of the extensive preventive measures and capacity building of the health staff, child nutrition outcome indicator targets and certain service delivery are not achieved up-to the requirement. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a child nutrition service provision in-depth assessment to identify the root causes for service provision gaps in selected sentinel sites of Sri Lanka to improve the service provision.

For these activities, additional human resources are required to arrange meetings, perform data entry, assist in data cleaning, processing, final analysis, final preparations of the outcomes and results dissemination workshops at central/provincial/regional level, coordination of data collection and note taking in child nutrition assessment survey. A pre-intern medical graduate is needed to the Research Unit, Family Health Bureau to handle the following duties and responsibilities for a period of six months.

Proposed activities for the recruited Pre-intern Medical Graduate

- Facilitating consultative meetings relevant to researches at FHB, as necessary.
- Support with preparing necessary documents, minutes, reports and proposals
- Travelling to peripheral districts with relevant research teams, when necessary to help the supervisory visits.
- Data collection of research studies by using data collection tools/instruments and coordinating focus group discussions.
- Facilitating the data collection process by coordinating with the regional staff members and Institutional heads.
- Follow up with the field if needed (by phone)
- Support with data entering, cleaning, processing, analysis and report writing and final submissions
- Facilitating results dissemination workshops relevant to researches at FHB at central/provincial/regional level., as necessary.
- Maintain a research repository at Research Unit, FHB
- Any other duties assigned by the Head of the Research Unit

Duration

- For a period of five (5) months (15.09.2026 – 15.02.2027)

Nature of work:

- **Full time/ part time:** Full time
- **Place of work:** Research Unit, Family Health Bureau, Colombo-10 - (But as per the requirement may need to travel districts with the relevant research team)
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Monthly remuneration: LKR. 94,265.00

(Basic salary – LKR 76,465.00 + Cost of living allowance -17,800.00)

Attested and countersigned



Name: Dr Chandima Sirithunga
Designation: Director (Maternal and Child Health)
Family Health Bureau

Date: 10/8/2026

Dr. Chandima Sirithunga
MBBS, MSC, MD Community Medicine
Director Maternal and Child Health
Family Health Bureau

Activity Manager



Name: Dr. K.C.M. Perera
Designation: CCP/Research Unit
Family Health Bureau

Date: 10/8/2026