UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL

OFFICER REQUEST

General Information

Post Title: JPO, Associate Expert on Emerging Technologies for Environmental Sustainability

Office/Division/MEA: Office of the Chief Digital Officer

Unit: Office of the Chief Digital Officer

Location: Nairobi, Kenya

Duration: 2 years with possibility of extension. The extension of appointment is subject to yearly review concerning priorities, availability of funds and satisfactory performance.

Background information on UN Environment and the requesting Unit

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations (UN) system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.

In February 2021, the UN Environmental Assembly approved a new Medium-Term Strategy for UNEP covering the period 2022-2025. The strategy commits UNEP to tackle the triple planetary crises faced by humanity: climate change, loss of biodiversity and toxic pollution. Within the strategy, a Digital Transformation cross-cutting enabling programme was also adopted to accelerate and scale environmental sustainability by applying data, digital technologies and solutions in UNEP's key activities. UNEP's Digital Transformation sub-programme works to accelerate and scale climate action, nature, protection, and pollution prevention through the innovative use of data and digital technologies in UNEP's activities. The need for innovation and collaboration in digital technologies is key to:

- build a digital ecosystem of data for the planet,

- shift market incentives and consumer behavior through digital channels and partnerships,

- enhance e-governance through inclusive policy development, digital literacy, innovation support and stakeholder engagement,

- transform UNEP into a fully data-driven and digital organization.

To achieve these digital transformation goals, UNEP has established a new director level position of Chief Digital Officer (CDO). The CDO reports to the UNEP Executive Director. The CDO offers advisory services to all thematic divisions and regions. It is supported by a distributed network of experts located in each regional office plus a network of focal points located in each division.

Why is the Junior Professional Officer requested/needed?

As digital transformation increasingly becomes a priority for member states and technology applications continue to emerge as solution for environmental challenges, UNEP is responding by growing its capacity to use digital for tackling the Triple Planetary Crisis. Therefore, the newly established Office of the Chief Digital Officer must continue to grow.

The requested Junior Professional Officer (JPO) will be key to map out and engage the organization with forward-looking technologies. The work of this JPO will greatly contribute to the development of future-fit organizational strategies that consider emerging trends in AI, IoT, Blockchain, and other new technologies, keeping the whole of UNEP informed of their role in environmental sustainability, as well as the risks they pose and ways to mitigate them. Ultimately, this additional human resource will ensure UNEP is at the forefront of technological developments and therefore well equipped to achieve climate stability, living in harmony with nature and a pollution free planet in the digital age.

Supervision

The JPO will work under the direct supervision of the Chief Digital Officer (CDO).

The JPO and Supervisors will use Inspira, the UN Secretariat platform for online e- Performance, to structure the timing and methodology of feedback and tracking of performance. The performance evaluations will be made available to the donor Government.

Content and methodology of the supervision

The Subprogramme Coordinator for Digital Transformation will conduct an induction which includes:

- A formal brief on the organization.
- The staff in the Division and the functions of and Digital Transformation Subprogram.

The Junior Professional Officer will have monthly meetings with the CDO to discuss performance, assess accomplishments, review problems, discuss job satisfaction, and adjust the development plan and learning objectives. The CDO will provide guidance on the development of the workplan and project implementation.

This way, desired results and anticipated problems are discussed beforehand with the Junior Professional Officer. Regular feedback on the progress of activities is obtained by the CDO (supervisor) through review of work in process. The Junior Professional Officer is expected to carry out the duties under general supervision and to consult with the CDO on issues of policy or other sensitive matters. Results of each set of activities are reviewed on a monthly basis for assessing the attainment of objectives and quality of work as well as reviewing and when necessary, adjusting the workplan.

First appraising officer: Ms. Golestan Radwan

Title first appraising officer: Chief Digital Officer

Unit first appraising officer: Office of the Chief Digital Officer

Location first appraising officer: Nairobi, Kenya

Second appraising officer: Ms. Magda Biesiada

Title second appraising officer: Global Subprogramme Coordinator for Digital Transformations

Unit second appraising officer: Policy and Programme Division

Location second appraising officer: Nairobi, Kenya

Duties, responsibilities, and output expectations

Terms of reference

The incumbent is expected to conduct the following task.

- Monitoring and horizon scanning: Monitor internal and external developments and trends on digital transformation, including in countries and regions to determine how UNEP's work can be strategically aligned with emerging technologies. This includes conducting research in support of major UNEP policies and programmes on forward-looking technologies.

- Knowledge diffusion and capacity building inside and outside UNEP: Acting as technical liaison regarding new technologies with other UN agencies, such as ITU, WHO, etc. Writing policy briefs on emerging trends in IoT, Blockchain, and other emerging technologies to spread knowledge on their role in environmental sustainability, as well as the risk and mitigation measures.

- Best practices: Monitor national digital transformation strategies for best practices on digital sustainability. Contribute to the development of best practice guidelines that consider future technology developments.

- Project and programme design, monitoring, and reporting: Propose new projects and engagement ideas based on new technologies. This includes assisting with the development and design of new projects/programs in the digital transformation portfolio in close coordination with the relevant units, government authorities, international and regional institutions, and partner organizations in public and/or private sectors.

- Emerging technology governance: Research and contribute to the development of standards for data privacy, protection, cybersecurity, and compliance inside UNEP and as guidance for member states regarding environmental data and new technologies.

The Junior Professional Officer will be provided with regular feedback on his/her performance and progress, with special attention granted to goal setting and overcoming challenges.

Output expectations

The work of the Junior Professional Officer will contribute to the achievement of the following outputs:

- Research on emerging technologies and trends for internal planning and partnerships strategy.

- Suggest and monitor important guidelines and governance practices for emerging technologies.

- Identifying use cases for emerging technologies that advance environmental goals.

- Serve as technical liaison regarding new technologies with other UN agencies, such as ITU, WHO, etc.

Travel

Missions and costs of travel envisaged during first year of assignment: Estimated 2 missions per year of on average 4 days.

Missions and costs of travel envisaged during second year of assignment: Estimated 2 missions per year of on average 4 days.

Missions and costs of travel envisaged during third year of assignment (if applicable): Estimated 2 missions per year of on average 4 days.

Training and Learning Elements

Training

The Junior Professional Officer will be offered the opportunity to undertake the following training courses:

- Results-based management training and career development planning: The Junior Professional Officer will be offered opportunities to participate in UNEP's results-based management training and undertake relevant training programmes organized by the UN system

- UN and UNEP's online training programmes: The Junior Professional Officer will be provided with the opportunity to undertake a variety of programmes provided by the UN and UNEP, on topics including data science, digital transformation, and innovation.

- On the job training: The supervisors of the Junior Professional Officer are committed to providing daily on the job training for the Junior Professional Officer's effective operation in the UN system

- Specialized training will be agreed upon in consultation with the supervisor

Learning elements:

After one year the Junior Professional Officer will be:

- Able to independently conduct research on future technologies and communicate their positive and negative environmental implications to senior management, partners, and member state representatives.

- Having a good understanding of the UNEP programme planning cycle and the role of digital technologies to accelerate climate action, nature protection and pollution prevention.

- Able to provide project formulation, monitoring and reporting as evidenced by the ability to draft project concepts for use cases for environmental data or digital technologies.

After two years the Junior Professional Officer would:

- Be able to provide advisory services to UNEP programmes and projects on the opportunities and risks of digital transformation and emerging technologies.

- Have knowledge of the UN system and have contacts in and outside the UN system.

- Gained understanding on multicultural work-environment, as well as familiarity with rules and regulations of the UN.

- Be able to independently design, develop and deliver policy briefs for decision making on thematic digital transformation topics.

- Have the ability to conduct inter-agency consultations on data and technology.

- Draft project concepts that can support the mobilization of financial resources.

After three years (if applicable), the JPO would:

- Have the ability to independently function as a professional in the field of digital sustainability

- Be ready for similar appointments in the UN system and other organizations of international repute.

Qualifications and experience

Qualifications

Education: Master's degree in environmental science, data science, digital transformation, or related field. A first-level university degree in combination with four years of qualifying experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.

Skills

- Strong interest in new technological developments.
- Excellent writing and presentation skills.
- Good data analysis skills and visualization including both statistical and geospatial analyses and Power BI/Tableau.
- Knowledge of Microsoft Office 365.
- Knowledge of the theory of change and - results based management is seen as an asset.

Working experience

At least 4 years of experience at the national level, or 2 years at the international level of progressively responsible experience in the field of digital transformation or data

science in the context of sustainable development or environmental-related programmes are required.

Languages:

Fluency in oral and written English is required. Working knowledge of other UN languages is an asset.

Competencies

- Commitment to continuous learning: Keeps abreast of new developments in own occupation/profession; actively seeks to develop oneself professionally and personally; contributes to the learning of colleagues and subordinates; shows a willingness to learn from others; seeks feedback to learn and improve and keeps abreast of new developments in own occupation/profession.

- Teamwork: Works collaboratively with colleagues to achieve organisational goals; solicits input by genuinely valuing others' ideas and expertise; is willing to learn from others; places team agenda before personal agenda; builds consensus for task purpose and direction with team members; supports and acts in accordance with final group decisions, even when such decisions may not entirely reflect own position; shares credit for team accomplishments and accepts joint responsibility for team shortcomings.

- Client orientation: Considers all those to whom services are provided to be "clients" and seeks to see things from clients' point of view; establishes and maintains productive partnerships with clients by gaining their trust and respect; identifies clients' needs and matches them to appropriate solutions; monitors ongoing developments inside and outside the clients' environment to keep informed and anticipate problems; keeps clients informed of progress or setbacks in projects and meets timeline for delivery of product or services to the client.

Living conditions at duty station

Normal living conditions for developing countries in Africa.