

Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme

Terms of Reference

GENERAL INFORMATION

Title: Associate Programme Specialist, Division of Water Sciences, UNESCO

Grade: P2

Sector: Natural Sciences Sector

Organizational Unit: **Section on Groundwater Sustainability and Water Cooperation (GSW)**, Division of Water Sciences, Natural Sciences Sector

Location: Headquarters, Paris (France)

SUPERVISION

Direct supervision by: Chief of Section, Groundwater Sustainability and Water Cooperation

Under the direct supervision of Chief of Section, Groundwater Sustainability and Water Cooperation and the overall authority of Director of the UNESCO Division of Water Sciences and Secretary of the International Hydrological Programme, the JPO shall assist the IHP Secretariat in implementing the [Ninth Phase of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme \(IHP-IX\)](#), with a particular focus on the Areas related to Groundwater, Water Cooperation, Water Management and Governance. The geographical focus of the work will mostly be [UNESCO Priority Africa](#), with a focus on (i) the Mediterranean Region, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Libya, (ii) East Africa, with focus on Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia, (iii) West Africa, with focus on Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mauritania and Senegal.

The objectives of UNESCO's intervention will be to support the sustainable development of the Member States listed above, with a focus on achieving SDG 6 on Water and Sanitation. The work will align also with priorities on water and sanitation of global, regional and national agendas, such as, for example, the Agenda 2030, Agenda 2063 *the Africa we want*, the Paris Agreement and the [Mattei Plan for Africa](#).

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the direct supervision of the Chief of Section, and the overall authority of the Director of the UNESCO Division of Water Sciences and the Secretary of the International Hydrological Programme, the incumbent of the post shall assist in the following tasks:

1. Contribute to the design and implementation of activities of the IHP IX, with a focus on the Thematic Areas of Groundwater and Water Cooperation, and the Priority Areas of Water Management and Water Governance, and the geographical focus of priority Africa, including:
 - a. Design and develop project proposals in the thematic and geographical areas listed above. The proposals will be targeted mainly to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and to the Adaptation Fund (AF). In terms of geographical scope, these will mostly focus on the Mediterranean Region and priority African countries.
 - b. Provide technical backstopping and contribute to the coordination, monitoring and reporting of activities implemented by UNESCO field offices. In particular, the incumbent will provide technical expertise and support tracking progress of Groundwater, Water Cooperation, Water Management and Water Governance projects implemented in region covered under UNESCO Priority Africa and the [Mattei plan for Africa](#), with a focus on the Mediterranean region (Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Algeria, Libya), in East Africa (Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia) and West Africa (Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mauritania and Senegal).
 - c. Support the implementation of existing projects in the thematic areas and regions listed above.
 - d. Contribute to the preparatory work for UNESCO contribution and participation in Major water-related events, such as the UN Conference of Water (December 2026), the 11th World Water Forum (March 2027), and the World Water Week (September 2026, 2027, 2028).
2. Act as UNESCO alternate focal point for the UN-Water expert groups on Transboundary Water and on Groundwater (<https://www.unwater.org/about-un-water/governance/expert-groups-and-task-forces>);
3. Act as a focal point for UNESCO Priority Africa for the **GSW** section;
4. Act as a focal point for the [IHP Flagship initiatives](#) for the **GSW** section;
5. Contribute to the organization and execution of IHP statutory meetings and provide technical input for the preparation of scientific reports and policy briefs;
6. Act as **GSW** focal point for activities implemented in cooperation with the World Water Assessment Programme, UNESCO Regional Offices (including the [Regional Office in Venice](#)) and the [Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics \(ICTP\)](#).
7. Act as **GSW** focal point for activities related to the Global Network of Water Museums – WAMU-NET.
8. Act as **GSW** focal point for cooperation with the [African Ministers' Council of Water \(AMCOW\)](#)

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Education: Advanced university degree (Master's or equivalent) in the field of Water Sciences, Hydrogeology, Hydrology, Geology/Earth Sciences (the latter with specialisation on water) or similar academic background.

Work experience: At least two years of professional experience in the areas of Groundwater and/or Water Cooperation and/or Water Sciences, with a focus on development activities at the regional and/or international level. Experience in resource mobilisation, donor relations and project management will be considered as an asset.

Competencies and skills: Good adaptation skills and ability to work in a team and to maintain effective working relationships in a multicultural environment; ability to communicate effectively and clearly on technical and scientific issues; analytical skills to examine material and to prepare and process documents for statutory meetings; good IT skills, including knowledge of standard office software (MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint are mandatory).

Languages: Excellent command of written and oral English. Knowledge of French is an asset.

LEARNING ELEMENTS

The JPO will be able to apply their skills to complex and diverse projects and experience the various aspects of project cycle management. Further to lessons learned from project implementation, the JPO will experience the policy environment an International Organisation faces and participate in meetings related to global agendas, such as the Agenda 2030, Agenda 2063, the Paris Agreement, and others.

Throughout the assignment, the JPO will be fully trained to work in an intergovernmental setting. In particular, she/he will develop competences to work in an inter-cultural environment and to work with representatives and professionals Member States and with colleagues from all regions of the world; understand UNESCO's divisions and structure and the UN system in general; learn how to fundraise and manage (design, implement, monitor...) sustainable development projects in line with the objectives of UNESCO.

In summary, the JPO will receive experiential training from a team of seasoned scientists and programme managers (with a minimum of 15 years of experience) in an intergovernmental setting.

Finally, UNESCO has several e-learning modules available that the JPO could benefit from.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP) is the only intergovernmental programme of the UN system devoted to the scientific, educational, and capacity-building aspects of hydrology. UNESCO has long recognised the importance of hydrology for the rational utilisation of water resources. Since its inception in 1975, IHP has evolved from an internationally coordinated hydrological research programme into a comprehensive programme that facilitates education and capacity building and enhances water resources management and governance. Originally implemented in six-

year phases and in eight-year phases since 2014, IHP stimulates and encourages hydrological research and assists Member States in research and training activities. IHP facilitates an interdisciplinary and integrated approach to watershed and aquifer management that incorporates the social dimension of water resources and promotes and develops international research in hydrological and freshwater sciences.

Based on the needs and priorities of Member States, the ninth phase of IHP (IHP-IX)¹, approved in 2021, focuses on five thematic areas: 1. Scientific research and innovation; 2. Water education in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, including Sustainability; 3. Bridging the data-knowledge gap; 4. Integrated water management under conditions of global change; 5. Water governance based on science for mitigation, adaptation and resilience.

¹ Science for a Water Secure World in a Changing Environment