Position Title: Representative, D-1, Freetown, Sierra Leone

If you are a committed, creative professional and are passionate about making a lasting difference for children, the world’s leading children’s rights organization would like to hear from you.

For 70 years, UNICEF has been working on the ground in 190 countries and territories to promote children’s survival, protection and development. The world’s largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments.

Purpose for the job:

The Representative serves as the accredited representative of the UNICEF Executive Director in the Country and reports to the Regional Director for general direction. The Representative is responsible for establishing dialogue with the government to develop the framework of cooperation in the country and for working closely and collaboratively with the government and national institutions, stakeholders and partners, to develop the UNICEF Country Program of Cooperation in support of UNICEF’s and national and international development efforts to advance children’s rights to survival, development and well-being as established under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, international treaties/framework and UN intergovernmental bodies.

As Head of a large size Country Office, the Representative is responsible for leading and guiding managers of programs/projects and operations supporting the CO programs, providing leadership and vision to the UNICEF country programme team in managing and leveraging resources for the achievement of results and fulfilment of the rights of children. The Representative leads and oversees the various program sectors and operational service teams ensuring delivery of quality results in accordance with the UNICEF Strategic Plans, standards of performance and accountability framework, ethics and integrity.

Key function, accountabilities and related duties/tasks:

- Developing and planning the Country Program
- Leading and managing the CO
- Monitoring and quality control of the Country Program
- Representation and external relations at global/national level
- Building alliance, resource mobilization and UN System coordination
- Leading innovation, knowledge management and capacity building
- Safety and security of staff, programs and organizational assets

Minimum Requirements:

- An Advanced University Degree in social sciences, international relations, government and public relations, public or social policy, sociology, social or community development or other related fields, is required.

- A minimum of 12 years professional development experience that combines intellectual and managerial leadership in development cooperation at the international level, some of which served in developing countries is required. Relevant professional experience in any UN system agency or organization is an asset.

- Oral and written proficiency in English is required. Knowledge of another official UN language or a local language is an asset.
Country Typology:

- Sierra Leone is a Low Income country, with a population of 6.592 million and a GDP per capita of USD 774.8 in 2014.
- Freetown, Sierra Leone is a Family duty station.
- Freetown, Sierra Leone is a "D" Duty Station. (Source: International Civil Service Commission, effective 01/Jan/2016)

Brief country context:

- While the government of Sierra Leone was staying the course of pursuing the MDGs to an end, as well as Sierra Leone’s Vision 2035 of becoming a middle income country with the implementation of its Agenda for Prosperity, the nation was struck by yet another crisis, the Ebola virus disease (EVD) in May 2014. Sierra Leone is one of the West African countries worst affected by the Ebola virus disease. As of end March 2016, there have been 8,706 confirmed cases of Ebola and 3,590 persons have died of the disease including women and children; 8,624 children who lost one or both parents due to Ebola are registered; and over two-thirds of those infected are in the economically active age group. The outbreak impacted almost all of the country’s districts, across social and economic sectors. It exposed the country’s already weak and fragile healthcare system, disrupting the delivery of lifesaving non-Ebola healthcare for children and pregnant women. The Ebola outbreak put a considerable strain on the already fragmented and poor households, including children, while undermining service delivery and safety nets in all areas of child protection. It further increased children’s vulnerability to abuse, exploitation, neglect and separation from their primary care-givers.

- Before the disease struck, Sierra Leone had generally recorded encouraging achievements in the implementation of the MDGs in a range of development areas. For instance, poverty headcount had declined from 70 percent in 2003, to 52.9 percent in 2013; prevalence of underweight children reduced from 20 percent in 2004, to 16 percent in 2013; school completion rate recorded at 76 percent in 2013; the ratio of girls to boys in primary school was getting to 100 percent; HIV/AIDS prevalence dropped from 1.5 percent in 2005, to 0.22 percent in 2013; access to safe drinking water increased from 36.7 percent in 1990, to 62.6 percent in 2005; mobile cellular subscribers increased from 14.3 percent in 2007, to 76.7 percent in 2014. Serious challenges did remain in a number of other areas, especially in reducing maternal and child mortality—in 2013, maternal mortality still recorded at 1,165 deaths per 100,000 live births; under-five and infant mortality rates recorded at 156 and 92 deaths per 1,000 births, respectively.

Size of the country office: Large size office with a budget of 123 million and a staffing size of about 145 staff members.

Focus of country programme, targets, challenges:

- The overall goal of the country programme for 2015-2018 is to support national efforts to accelerate the realization of the rights of children by improving access to services, developing the capacity of systems, building resilience among households and communities, and providing social protection to the poorest and most vulnerable families. This is expected to significantly contribute to achievement of the post-2015 development goals. It also will support achievement of the global goals in the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017. The programme strategies, emphasizing sectoral convergence, will include (a) developing capacity for service delivery that is equitable and sensitive to conflict issues, particularly for vulnerable groups such as children under age 5 in underserved areas, children who are orphaned or living without their biological parents, children with disabilities, children involved in child labour, adolescent girls and out-of-school children; (b) strengthening systems for real-time programme monitoring and evaluation; (c) building community resilience and empowerment through community-centred development;
(d) supporting upstream policy reforms, advocacy, institution-building and decentralized planning and budgeting to ensure more responsive and accountable service delivery; (e) collaborating with the private sector, communities, civil society and governmental entities to leverage resources for realization of child rights; (f) promoting behavioural and social change in households and communities to enhance child survival, education and protection outcomes and build resilience; (g) building emergency preparedness capacity and humanitarian response; (h) innovating for better delivery of services; and (i) strengthening the role of zonal offices to support engagement with decentralized structures, especially district and local councils.

- Child survival and development component aims to ensure that under-five and school-age children, adolescents and women have access to and utilize essential, high-quality and high-impact child survival and development services incorporating prevention, treatment and care. Education component support development of institutional capacity in the education sector, including by strengthening systems to enhance school enrolment and right-age entry, retention, completion and transition, as well as improved quality of teaching and learning. In line with the education sector plan and the Global Partnership for Education, interventions will focus on programming both in and out of school through support to school readiness, mentoring programmes for girls and greater participation by parents and communities in school management.

- Child protection through an inclusive and integrated child protection systems approach, this programme component will increase national and decentralized capacity to provide equitable access to child-friendly services that prevent and respond to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. Social policy, planning, monitoring and evaluation component strengthen the capacities of ministries, agencies and local councils for planning, monitoring and evaluation, data management and social policy analysis to reduce multidimensional child poverty and exclusion. Through the roll-out of the Monitoring Results for Equity System, it will further strengthen the use of national and decentralized planning and monitoring systems that aim to systematically identify and reduce bottlenecks to equitable service delivery for children and women. It will engage in high-quality research on gender issues, adolescents and children.

**Person Profile:**

Previous experience as a Representative or in a managerial role (e.g. Deputy Representative or Chief, Field Office), preferably in a low-income country – sub-Saharan Setting. In particular:

- Strengths in both upstream programming, and information and knowledge management to support a Government in need of high level technical expertise. Hands on experience of development issues. Experience of emergency/recovery programming through an equity lens an asset.
- Understanding of integrated community-centered capacity development and human rights based approach to programming
- Capacity to strategize / analyze / manage and at the same time achieve results in all UNICEF priority areas
- Political savvy, tact and capacity to ensure high level representation and advocacy.
- Strong networking and partnerships skills, particularly within the UNCT and bilateral.
- Capacity to lead and motivate a large team – including sub-offices.
- Strong resource mobilization and fundraising skills.

**Competencies of Successful Candidate:**

**Core Values**

- Commitment
- Diversity and inclusion
• Integrity

**SSR competencies**

• Delivering results
• Managing complexity and change
• Impact and partnership
• Innovation and risk taking
• Leading, engaging and nurturing
• Self-awareness

Applications will be considered only if accompanied by an updated Cover Letter and CV, as well as the two most recent PERs (for internals) / Evaluations (for externals). Regret letters will only be sent to shortlisted candidates.

*UNICEF is committed to diversity and inclusion within its workforce, and encourages qualified female and male candidates from all national, religious and ethnic backgrounds, including persons living with disabilities, to apply to become a part of our organization.*