



## DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENT

### Preamble:

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that promotes volunteerism to support peace and development worldwide. Volunteerism can transform the pace and nature of development and it benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer. UNV contributes to peace and development by advocating for volunteerism globally, encouraging partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing volunteers.

In most cultures volunteerism is deeply embedded in long-established, ancient traditions of sharing and support within the communities. In this context, UN Volunteers take part in various forms of volunteerism and play a role in development and peace together with co-workers, host agencies and local communities.

In all assignments, UN Volunteers promote volunteerism through their action and conduct. Engaging in volunteer activity can effectively and positively enrich their understanding of local and social realities, as well as create a bridge between themselves and the people in their host community. This will make the time they spend as UN Volunteers even more rewarding and productive.

### General

<b>Assignment title:</b>	Project Specialist - Agriculture
<b>UN Host Entity:</b>	UNDP
<b>Country of assignment:</b>	Sri Lanka
<b>Duty station:</b>	Colombo
<b>Volunteer category:</b>	International UN Volunteer- Specialist
<b>Duration:</b>	24 months
<b>Expected starting date:</b>	1 October 2024
<b>Sustainable Development Goal:</b>	13. Climate Action

## **Details**

### **Organization mission and objectives**

As the development arm of the United Nations, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the leading organization working to end the injustice of poverty, inequality and climate change, as well as the technical lead in the UN System's socio-economic response to COVID-19. Working with a broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, UNDP helps nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet.

UNDP's mandate is to end poverty, build democratic governance, rule of law, and inclusive institutions. We advocate for change, and connect countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life.

Since 1967, UNDP has worked in close partnership with the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) for over five decades, providing strategic support in crisis prevention and recovery, governance, poverty reduction, environment, and sustainable development. UNDP together with the GoSL work towards a sustainable Sri Lanka, building up institutional, legal and individual capacities to respond to the effects of climate change and natural and man-made disasters.

### **Assignment context**

The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka ("Sri Lanka") had achieved steady economic growth since the end of the internal conflict (1983-2009), but a combination of factors, including excessive borrowing, fiscal deterioration, and significant tax cuts, caused the country to default on its external debt in 2022 due to insufficient foreign reserves. The impact of the foreign currency reserve shortfall also affected agricultural inputs such as seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers, and combined with the impact of the issuance of a ban on the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers, production of agricultural and livestock products fell sharply in 2022. The rural economy, dependent on natural resources, has been battling increasing climate externalities for years, and has recently been subject to consecutive crises, starting with COVID19, ill-conceived government policies, the war in Ukraine increasing import prices, particularly fuel and, agricultural & production inputs, followed by the economic crisis. An example of the drastic transformation of agriculture and food industry triggered by an economic crisis is the introduction of structural adjustment policies during the Asian currency crisis in the 1990s and the accompanying shift in agricultural promotion policies and farmer support measures in various countries. For example, in Indonesia, subsidies for farmers, especially for rice, and irrigation investment were curbed in order to restore fiscal soundness after the crisis, and the emphasis was shifted to the promotion of export crops, which were considered more cost-effective. In the years that followed, the government's role is said to have shifted to creating an environment conducive to agricultural investment. The Sri Lankan government, which is aiming to emerge from the economic crisis, also urgently needs to consider measures to increase agricultural output in rural areas, where

economic conditions are becoming increasingly severe due to the current surge in energy and other prices and the country's economic and debt crises. Since previous efforts have mainly focused on the producer/supplier side, it is necessary to identify demand in overseas/domestic markets and analyze the value chain from the consumer side, not only from producers, but also from the collection, wholesale, transportation, related manufacturing and retail industries, as well as from consumers, in order to identify impediments to improving agricultural production value, and to identify the most important factors to improve the agricultural production value. The value chain is not only from the producer's side, but also from the consumer's side, from collection, wholesale, transportation, and related manufacturing to retailers, and from the consumer's side.

Interventions that ease the impacts on smallholder farmers, especially women and youth in rural farming communities, enhance cultivation engagement and productivity, and support food security, and ultimately ensure human security and resilience. UNDP Sri Lanka has been implementing a programme that advances crisis-relief and the revival of the rural agricultural economy, while also setting conditions for enhanced resilience in the long-run. This includes, among other projects, two Japan Supplementary Budget funded projects (Strengthening Smallholder Farmers and Micro/Home-Based Agriculture industries for Enhanced Food & Livelihood Security Project & Enhancing Food and Energy Security through the promotion of Green Technologies & Renewable Energy for wider uptake among Vulnerable Smallholder Farmers in Sri Lanka Project). Building on these interventions, the CO seeks to enhance its programming in the agriculture sector, focusing on livelihood resilience and sectoral transformation.

### **Task description**

Under the direct supervision of Team Lead – CET, the UN Volunteer will undertake the following tasks:

- Support the implementation of projects that reflect the strategies of the Government of Japan and JICA at the field level.
- Promote linkages between agricultural sector projects implemented by JICA and those implemented by UNDP to maximize the development impact.
- Facilitate resource mobilization and pipeline development initiatives, in alignment with both UNDP's and JICA's development priorities.
- Support project monitoring activities, including but not limited to, monitoring project progress against the results framework, compiling periodic progress data, and data collection at the field-level and results reporting.

- Support communication needs of the projects, including but not limited to, preparing visibility and knowledge management products (articles, case studies & etc), and other material (Briefing Notes, Talking Points, & etc).
- Facilitate information sharing between JICA Sri Lanka office and UNDP Sri Lanka office in the agricultural sector.
- Prepare periodic reports on various analyses and evaluations of projects.

Furthermore, UN Volunteers are required to:

- Strengthen their knowledge and understanding of the concept of volunteerism by reading relevant UNV and external publications and take active part in UNV activities (for instance in events that mark International Volunteer Day);
- Be acquainted with and build on traditional and/or local forms of volunteerism in the host country;
- Reflect on the type and quality of voluntary action that they are undertaking, including participation in ongoing reflection activities;
- Contribute articles/write-ups on field experiences and submit them for UNV publications/websites, newsletters, press releases, etc.;
- Assist with the UNV Buddy Programme for newly-arrived UN Volunteers;
- Promote or advise local groups in the use of online volunteering, or encourage relevant local individuals and organizations to use the UNV Online Volunteering service whenever technically possible.

## **Requirements**

**Education:** Bachelor's degree in Agriculture, Rural Development, Value-Chain Development, Development Studies, Climate Change & Environment related fields, or other relevant field.

**Minimum experience:** 3 years in agriculture, rural livelihood and economic development, climate action & sustainable development.

## **Skills and experience description**

- Demonstrated interest and/or experience in agriculture, rural livelihood and economic development, climate action & sustainable development; experience in working in similar development contexts to Sri Lanka, and at the field level is an asset, as is working in the UN or other international development organization.
- Excellent oral and written skills, particularly in English; excellent drafting, formulation, reporting skills.
- Accuracy and professionalism in document production and editing.
- Excellent interpersonal skills; culturally and socially sensitive; ability to work inclusively and collaboratively with a range of partners, including grassroots community members, religious and youth organizations, and authorities at

different levels; familiarity with tools and approaches of communications for development.

- Ability to work and adapt professionally and effectively in a challenging environment; ability to work effectively in a multicultural team of international and national personnel.
- Solid overall computer literacy, including proficiency in various Microsoft Office applications (Excel, Word, among others), email, and internet; familiarity with database management; and office technology equipment.
- Self-motivated, ability to work with minimum supervision; ability to work with tight deadlines.

### Language skills

English                      mandatory ☒ optional ☐  
   basic ☐ fair ☐ working knowledge ☒ fluent ☐ mother tongue ☐

### Competencies and Values

- ☒ Accountability
- ☒ Adaptability and Flexibility
- ☒ Building Trust
- ☒ Client Orientation
- ☒ Commitment and Motivation
- ☒ Commitment to Continuous Learning
- ☒ Communication
- ☒ Creativity
- ☒ Empowering Others
- ☒ Ethics and Values
- ☒ Integrity
- ☒ Judgement and Decision-making
- ☒ Knowledge Sharing
- ☒ Leadership
- ☒ Managing Performance
- ☒ Planning and Organizing
- ☒ Professionalism
- ☒ Respect for Diversity
- ☒ Self-Management
- ☒ Technological Awareness
- ☒ Vision
- ☒ Working in Teams

**Driving license needed:**

**No**

**Living conditions**

Sri Lanka is an island nation located off the south coast of India. It's home to an estimated population of over 21 million people. It is a multi- ethnic, multi- cultural and multi- religious country. Colombo is situated in the Western Province of Sri Lanka and is the commercial capital of the country. The city is located on the west coast of the island, adjacent to the administrative capital, Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte. Bandaranaike International Airport is located 35km from Colombo and is served by the main international airlines.

Sri Lanka is a tropical country with moderate temperate and high humidity all throughout the year. Average temperature in Colombo ranges between 27 and 30 degrees Celsius. The island experiences two main monsoon seasons, where heavy rainfalls occur, from May to August and October to January. Sri Lankan food is characterized by fragrant spices, all forms of coconut, and rice. Rice and curry are the main dishes. Sri Lankan cuisine tends to be quite spicy.

There are hotels and other types of accommodation options available in Colombo. Supermarkets, banking and medical facilities are present within the city. Telephone and Internet service is widely available. Phone plans and data are inexpensive; however, you should not expect internet service to work consistently or at high speed.

Sri Lanka became a member of the United Nations on 14 December 1955.