

MCC SALT/YAMEN Service Opportunity

MCC is an equal opportunity employer, committed to employment equity. MCC values diversity and invites all qualified candidates to apply.

Assignment Title & Partner Organization: SALT/YAMEN: Emergency Response Assistant – MCC
Lebanon, Syria, Iraq

Term: August 16, 2022 – July 15, 2023

Date Required: August 16, 2022

Location: Beirut, Lebanon

Project Theme: DS Humanitarian Assistance Salt/Yamen

Synopsis:

The SALT/YAMENER will provide support to the ongoing humanitarian assistance projects in Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq that MCC is undertaking to address ongoing needs in the region. The participant will assist the MCC Program Coordinator with program planning, reporting, and development of communications pieces for MCC projects. Other opportunities to assist MCC partners in their emergency response efforts may also be available.

Qualifications:

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship; active church membership; and nonviolent peacemaking.

An invitation to an assignment is contingent on the successful completion of a criminal background check.

- Bachelor's degree in humanitarian assistance, international development, or a related field is preferred.
- Ability to communicate effectively in English, both verbally and in writing.
- Strong writing and communication skills essential.
- Experience with project planning and report preparation a strong asset.
- Strong administrative and organizational skills required.
- Comfortable to work as part of a team, often 'behind the scenes' in support of MCC's mission.
- Understanding the complexity of regional dynamics (i.e., the Syrian crisis), openness to listen to all perspectives without judgment, and ability to focus on a politically neutral humanitarian response
- Appreciation for the variety of faith perspectives in the region and ability to respectfully interact with people of all faiths.
- Willingness to learn about the regional context.
- Friendly, faithful, and able to respect the confidential information of the employees and their association.
- Maturity, flexibility, and a sense of humor is necessary.
- Capacity to show compassion in crisis situations, balanced, capacity to be objective enough to overcome distress, and adhere to stated program goals.

- Able and patient to be in settings where English is not the first language; willing to study and learn Arabic.
- Strong coping skills and ability to balance self-care with workload.

Key Responsibilities:

- Assist in the preparation of reports for partner projects.
- Assist in the development of new project proposals for the program in Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq.
- Support with logistics for MCC events and workshops.
- Work with the MCC Representatives to compile and edit stories, media, and other reports related to MCC's emergency response that in collaboration with MCC Communications department, can be shared with donors.
- Work with the MCC Representatives to support various work needed for advocacy.
- Work with team in other various administrative tasks needed.
- Work with partner organizations, as requested, to support their emergency response work through both administrative and collaborative tasks.
- Communicate regularly with MCC Representatives and Program Coordinator.
- Attend regional and in-country retreats, weekly team meetings, weekly program meetings, partner conference and other possible MCC events.

Assignment Narrative:

The MCC Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq (LSI) program has had a large humanitarian response to the Syrian and Iraqi conflicts over the last nine years. The program has included work in food aid, distribution of non-food items (NFIs), cash assistance, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), livelihood support, education, health, psychosocial support, and peacebuilding.

In addition to responding to the Syria and Iraq crises, the program also works with Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and vulnerable Lebanese communities. The SALT/YAMENER will assist the LSI Program Coordinator in the preparation of plans and reports related to MCC's program. The participant will also assist in developing stories and resources to help with education, advocacy, and fundraising efforts.

As needed, the SALT/YAMENER may also be requested to work with MCC partner organizations and churches on other non-MCC work related to their emergency response efforts. Examples might include proposal development, editing of news articles and reports, and data analysis. In addition to the main tasks above, the participant may also aid in preparing and organizing events and workshops for MCC LSI.

At certain times of the year, reporting deadlines may lead to heavier than normal workloads. Meetings with partners, especially international partners visiting Lebanon, can occur in the evenings or on the weekends. Flexibility in one's schedule is required.

Daily work tasks are highly administrative. Though the SALT/YAMENER has occasional opportunities to work in partner offices or do field visits, this may be difficult for some people who struggle with working behind the scenes on these projects.

Unless there is a significant change in the situation inside Syria, the Emergency Response Assistant should not expect to travel to Syria or Iraq during the assignment period.

Location Description:

Lebanon is a small but extremely diverse country in the heart of the Middle East, situated on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Beirut is Lebanon's capital and largest city, home to around 2 million of the country's 6 million people and now hosting many of the country's refugees. The city is composed of diverse faiths, including Shia Islam, Sunni Islam, Druze, Christians and 14 other communities. The assignment will also include work in Southern Lebanon, a largely Islamic region and home to many Palestinian refugees.

The climate ranges from hot and humid in summers to rainy and cold in the winters (homes do not have central heating/cooling but often have wall units for heat and A/C). Lebanese are extremely well-educated and often speak at least three languages, making it easy to navigate the city and most of the country in French or English. Beirut has a few English-speaking churches in the Protestant tradition, as well as many other Christian worship options (Orthodox, Maronites, Armenian etc.) in Arabic and other languages. Local transportation by shared taxi or minibus is common in Beirut. There are also minibuses that go to other parts of the country.

MCC staff are expected to dress appropriate to the culture. This sometimes means wearing more modest clothing than would be the norm in Western countries. Lebanese culture has certain expectations for the ways unmarried males and females relate to each other; spending time with the other gender in mixed groups is a safe way to help steer clear of missteps.

The SALT/YAMENER will be living in a seminary setting alongside other students from the region. The participant will be required to audit courses at the seminary during the term under their Studies in the Middle East program which will help broaden one's knowledge as well as provide opportunities for informal relationship building with other students from the region.

Since October 2019, Lebanon has been experiencing a severe economic crisis where its currency has lost over 90% of its value. There have been regular protests in the country who are advocating for change to the current status quo in the country. There are ongoing banking challenges and limited health services due to the current economic crisis.

Lebanon is currently experiencing severe fuel and electricity shortages. This creates challenges of no electricity for long periods of time in homes and offices, as well as the ability to move around the country easily. This is especially challenging during hot and cold months. There are occasional water shortages, especially during the summer months.

Lebanon ranks as one of the most expensive cities in the Middle East. MCC covers basic living and assignment costs for simple and healthy living. SALT/YAMENERS should be aware that their monthly MCC stipend for personal expenses may not go as far as it would in other countries where MCC has programming.

Internet service is very expensive, can be slow, and is charged by the amount of data used. While email and occasional zoom calls are encouraged, the SALT/YAMENER should not expect to spend large amounts of time on zoom calls or streaming music and videos

Challenges:

- COVID-19 remains unpredictable both at home, and around the world. MCC strongly recommends vaccination against COVID-19. Safe and effective vaccines against COVID-19 are a vital part of prevention, by reducing individual risk of disease and risk of transmission to others. Vaccination is particularly important for those who are interacting closely with members of the community, those staying with host families, who are traveling, who live in contexts with limited healthcare resources, or who are at higher risk of serious disease. Proof of vaccination may be required in individual cases to fulfill job expectations, for example, if it is required for travel by an airline, a government requirement to enter a country, required by a local partner organization, etc.
- To prioritize wellness and limit risk to our participants and the local community from COVID-19, assessments of each task will continue on a regular basis. If an assignment is found to be no longer viable, we will do our best to help you secure an alternative assignment.
- Frequent political instability and occasional possibility of armed conflict. The SALT/YAMENer must be willing to adhere to strict security and communication guidelines and heed the advice of the MCC Representatives on security issues.
- It is encouraged for workers to bring a year's supply of any needed medication due to a lack of medicine currently available in Lebanon.
- There is a lack of mental health services available in the country.
- High levels of pollution are evident within Beirut during non-rain periods. The participant may occasionally sit in rooms and meetings where others are smoking cigarettes.
- Contact with refugees living in difficult situations and stories of trauma experienced has the potential to bring sadness and feelings of helplessness.
- Common foods in Lebanon include bread and other wheat-based products, salads, olives and olive oil, and beans; allergies to any of these foods would create a challenge to the participant.
- Lebanon immigration law does not permit those who have visited or lived in Israel and Palestine to enter Lebanon. Questions about this restriction can be discussed with the SALT or YAMEN Coordinator.
- In Lebanon, perceptions of LGBTQ+ individuals are predominantly negative, this is equally so in Christian communities. An openly LGBTQ+ individual may face significant challenges with acceptance in this context.
- Managing frustration when things don't turn out as expected can be hard. While we do our best to determine and outline job responsibilities with our local partners, assignments really come alive based on the passions, skills, and giftings of an individual. Responsibilities may change or be refined over time in communication with supervisors to meet the ongoing changes and needs within a local context. As such, the greatest characteristics a participant can bring to an assignment are adaptability, flexibility, patience, a willingness to get your hands dirty, and humility to complete even mundane tasks.
- For those who are very task oriented, it can be a challenge to recognize the importance of "being" instead of always "doing" as building healthy relationships and mutually transformative learning is an important part of the participant experience. We hope participants will come with a desire to walk alongside our local partners, rather than see the assignment solely as a way to "get things done".

Benefits:

For all SALT/YAMEN assignments, MCC provides:

- All basic needs related to assignment i.e., travel to and from assignment, food & household costs, housing, in-country transportation, etc.
- Modest monthly personal allowance
- Modest monthly worker care allowance
- Full medical coverage—no co-pay
- Educational loan reimbursement
- Vacation days
- Orientation and Re-entry Retreat costs
- MCC in-country meetings and retreat costs
- End-of-term benefits

For more information, see mcc.org/salt or mcc.org/yamen