

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: Radio Communications Officer – Voice of Love

Term: August 16, 2022 – July 15, 2023

Date Required: August 16, 2022

Location: Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Project Theme: PS Peacebuilding Salt/Yamen

Job Synopsis:

The SALT/YAMENER will serve alongside the Voice of Love Cambodia Organization, a Christian radio station and a member of the international Far East Broadcasting Company (FEBC). The participant will work on variety of tasks including writing and editing newsletters and bulletins, video production and animation, establishing and managing social media platforms for broadcasting visual radio, as well as accompanying field staff to the provinces to record listeners' stories and attend audience relation events.

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.

- Experience in communications, journalism, media relations, or creative writing required.
- Post-secondary education in a related field an asset. Print media training preferred.
- Fluency in English, both oral and written required.
- Ability to edit a wide range of documents i.e., articles, newsletters, bulletins, letters, etc.
- Strong writing and verbal communication skills required.
- Knowledge in graphic design, video production, website maintenance, and animation.
- Able and willing to work collaboratively with his or her Cambodian teammates.
- Willing to travel to countryside to attend audience relations events.
- Creative and outgoing.
- Graphic Arts skills is an asset.
- Self-motivated and flexible.
- Willing to learn Khmer language and live with a local host family.
- Willing to take motorcycles and bicycles for travel.

Key Responsibilities:

Primary Duties

- Write, edit, and format newsletters and bulletins that are sent out to partners, funders, constituency, and listeners.

- Assist staff in website design and maintenance by updating content, help to create simple and attractive web pages.
- Record and document listener letters and photos.
- Maintain a cooperative spirit and commitment to being involved in the life of both the Voice of Love Cambodia and the MCC Cambodia team.

Secondary Duties

- Establish and manage social media outlets such as Family FM 99.5 Facebook page, twitter, YouTube, and mobile applications (if available).
- Serve on the Partner Relations Team and help plan and attend/record specific promotional events in the province and in Phnom Penh.
- Assist staff in updating promotional handouts and advertising banners.
- Co-lead radio show for English Christian music once a week.

Tertiary Duties:

- Attend MCC Cambodia team meetings and staff events.
- Contribute stories of impact and experience for the MCC Cambodia Blog.
- Be a contributing member of the MCC team that supports and cares for one another.

Assignment Narrative:

An important component of the MCC SALT/YAMEN program in Cambodia is life with a host family. While in Cambodia, the participant will be expected to assimilate into the life of the host family. This includes engaging with their church, home, and social life. The participant will be living as an “adult son or daughter” and the goal is for the SALT/YAMENER to be considered as a member of the host family for the assignment.

The ministry of Voice of Love Cambodia was started to produce a radio program through shortwave from Far East Broadcasting Company (FEBC) Philippines to Cambodia. In 1993, a Cambodian-Filipino couple returned to Cambodia with plans to open a local radio station and began to train Cambodians in radio programming. In 2002, Family FM 99.5 was launched in Phnom Penh city and Family FM 99.8 launched in Kampong Thom Province 2016 and is currently dabbling on Broadcasting Visual radio via Facebook and YouTube Channel. Today, the radio station can reach about half of Cambodia’s countryside.

The mission of Voice of Love Cambodia is a Christian radio station co-operating with partners to broadcast the Gospel of Jesus Christ through high-quality, culturally relevant programs which address the audience’s spiritual, emotional, social, and practical needs and generate personal follow-up with listeners. They have a vision for families and individuals to experience healing from the past, receive help now, and enjoy hope for the future.

The participant will report to Voice of Love Cambodia Director and to the MCC Connecting People Coordinator. They will work closely alongside a Cambodian counterpart in meeting the communications needs of the station and developing its outreach further. The SALT/YAMENER should be prepared to work collaboratively with his or her Cambodian teammates.

Holidays for this position will follow the Voice of Love calendar (please note this calendar allowance might differ from the MCC Cambodia calendar). In addition to existing vacation days, the SALT/YAMENER may take MCC’s Christian holidays (Christmas Day and Good Friday), if desired.

Location Description:

Cambodia is located in Southeast Asia between Vietnam and Thailand and bordered on the north by Laos. The population is about 15 million, with about 80% living in rural areas.

The country is still emerging from the genocide era of the Khmer Rouge that killed nearly 1.7 million people. The educational, health, and legal systems were all destroyed, along with the general infrastructure within the country. This conflict created an atmosphere of mistrust, fear, and hopelessness. Open conflict with the last remaining Khmer Rouge faction ended well over a decade ago and Cambodians are thankful for the peace and stability that has reigned throughout the 2000s.

The SALT/YAMENer will be based in Phnom Penh, the capital and largest city in Cambodia with a population estimated at 2 million people. Phnom Penh has numerous busy markets where people buy rice, fruits, vegetables, clothing, DVDs, and housewares. It also has several modern supermarkets where North American foodstuffs are available. Phnom Penh continues to become more cosmopolitan, with new restaurants, stores and coffee shops opening every day, catering to the growing Cambodian middle class and large expatriate community. Recently, the riverside has been renovated into a public promenade, which has become quite a popular hangout for families and young adults in the evenings and weekends.

Homes in the city are often made of cement, lined with tile on the floors and walls, and iron grates cover the doors and windows. Most MCCers in Phnom Penh live in apartments. Electricity in the city is widely prevalent and usually consistent; however, power outages do occur somewhat regularly during the hot season (March-May), though, these usually only last for a few hours at a time. Most homes do not have phone lines; however, MCCers have cell phones.

The Cambodian diet consists primarily of rice, soup, vegetables, fish, meat, and fruit. It can be challenging to find vegan/vegetarian dishes, as almost all dishes contain meat or fish in some form or another. A well-balanced diet will ensure SALT/YAMEN participants stay healthy and strong throughout their MCC terms in Cambodia. Particularly while living with a host family, the expectation is that the SALT/YAMENer will eat the meals that have been provided. Keeping an open-mind and an open-palate while trying new Cambodian dishes and delicacies is advisable.

Scheduled buses travel daily between Phnom Penh and the provincial capitals throughout the country. Bicycles are the main mode of transport at the disposal of SALT/YAMEN participants. On occasion, participants may need to ride in a tuktuk or on a motodop, both of which are readily available.

Ninety-five percent of Cambodians are Buddhist, 4% are Muslim, and about 1% is Christian. In Phnom Penh, there are a wide variety of Cambodian churches, as well as four major English-language international churches. SALT/YAMENers are expected to go with their host family to church or connect with an alternative Cambodian church. If the host family is not Christian, the understanding will be that the SALT/YAMENer will regularly attend a local Christian church.

As mentioned above, there is a large expat population living in Phnom Penh, comprised of development workers, missionaries, businesspeople, government personnel, and long and short-term volunteers.

Medical care is continually improving in Phnom Penh. Recently, two hospitals affiliated with Bangkok Hospital Medical Center have opened in Cambodia. Both branches provide reputable, basic care: one in Phnom Penh and one in Siem Reap. Additionally, there are several clinics with expat doctors. In the past, MCC workers have traveled to Thailand for more extensive and specialized treatments. Major health concerns in Cambodia are malaria, dengue fever, typhoid fever, and Japanese encephalitis. However, the most common illnesses are from food and water. Bouts of diarrhea may occur occasionally throughout the MCC term. Most prescriptions can be filled in country.

There are many national holidays, which provide plenty of opportunities for visiting and exploring Cambodia. The Temples of Angkor near Siem Reap are a must-see and will give some perspective on the great history of art and culture of Cambodia.

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.
- Living with a host family can be challenging for young adults who have experienced independence. Most host families are very protective of both their biological and host children, particularly daughters. (For example, many host families do not feel comfortable if their host child is out past 8pm.) Patience, understanding, and mutual respect are needed as the participant navigates life within a Cambodian family.
- Professional counseling and mental health services are available, though only in Phnom Penh. Professional physiotherapy is limited, and reputable chiropractic services are not available. Medical facilities outside of Phnom Penh and Siem Reap are well below international standards and are absolutely not recommended.
- Finding appropriate spiritual support may be a challenge living within a Buddhist community and host family.
- MCC service workers have been able to form meaningful relationships with MCC national staff, Cambodian staff at partner organizations, and other Cambodians in general. But these relationships can take time to develop, and—in the meantime—you may experience significant periods of time alone. Learning Khmer will help to enhance relationships with Cambodian people and is important for building these relationships. MCC provides 60 hours of language study at the beginning of your term, and continued study after this is encouraged.
- Significant cultural/religious differences exist regarding gender roles, interfaith relations, stereotypes, etc.

- Modern Phnom Penh, a dense city of 2 million people, is a very dynamic place to live. Everything seems to be changing at a very rapid pace. A common challenge for most MCCers in Phnom Penh is the growing traffic congestion, as more and more people are purchasing cars. At first, traffic in the city seems very chaotic and sometimes feels life-threatening, but quickly you will learn that it does have its own set of unwritten rules and ebb and flow. Developing strong bicycle-riding skills will be imperative to the safety of the SALT/YAMENER, as a bicycle will be the main mode of transport provided for navigating the hectic traffic.
- Corruption is rampant, and can be seen in daily life, but violence in Cambodia is rarely a problem and usually easy to avoid. Within Phnom Penh, there is the occasional mugging or theft, but these are not usually violent. Participants should be diligent in keeping wallets, cameras, purses, backpacks, etc. under personal control; and, if possible, should avoid carrying these items after dark. Even in an office or house, participants should secure their valuable items. (MCC can provide a locked cabinet, if needed, to store valuables).
- Generally, perceptions of LGBTQ+ individuals are negative and more so in Christian communities. An LGBTQ+ Christian may face challenges in feeling supported 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